Alumni Spotlight

Victoria Davis MS 1986

Victoria S. Davis is the current Managing Partner of Urban Atlantic Development, a firm focused on transforming the landscape of real estate development and investment in urban growth markets. Davis began her academic and professional journey when she obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Maryland. She later went on to receive an MBA in Finance from American University and a Master of Science from UT’s CEPM program in 1986.

Prior to her time at Urban Atlantic, Ms. Davis served as the Deputy Director of the Maryland Housing Fund. There, she oversaw the fund’s $3 billion loan portfolio. The fund works to assist Maryland state citizens, with low to moderate incomes, secure housing by stimulating the flow of private investment capital through a number of mortgage insurance programs. Before her time at the Maryland Housing Fund, she handled troubled loan resolutions and managed a $200 million portfolio of land for multifamily and single-family properties for MNC Financial-South Charles Realty. Furthermore, during her time working at Trammell Crow Residential, a multifamily real estate company, she oversaw acquisitions and developed over 2,000 multi-family units.

At Urban Atlantic, Davis is responsible for the acquisition, planning, design, and implementation of the firm’s projects. She and her partners have developed over $2 Billion in real estate projects. One of her favorite projects, is a public-private partnership initiative called Rhode Island Row in Washington D.C (pictured above). This project is a green roof, transit-oriented development that includes 20% affordable housing. Thanks to the joint venture between Urban Atlantic and A&R Development, the project has managed to transform an underused commuter parking lot into housing and retail space in a historically low to moderate income neighborhood.

Ms. Davis continuously strives to bridge the existing socioeconomic structure with new, inclusive economic development, to transform emerging markets into vibrant communities by creating a new mix of the urban and social fabric through her numerous development projects. Rhode Island Row was the recipient of the Urban Land Institute - Jack Kemp Workforce Housing Models of Excellence Award in 2008 and 2012. This award recognizes and celebrates inspiring developments which exhibit creativity in the expansion of housing opportunities for working families in the United States.

“There is real social value in having mixed-income communities so we don’t have economic segregation.” Davis said.

Ms. Davis is married to Jim Jones, also a graduate of the UT CEPM program. They have three children, Eddie, David, and Lily.
CEPM News

Dr. Cho visits UT

In August, the CEPM program hosted alum Yong Cho (PhD 2000) for a visit and guest lecture on Visualization and Data Sensing for Construction Operations. Dr. Cho is an Associate Professor at Georgia Tech. He was joined by two of his PhD students, Yihai Fang and Jay Park, who co-presented to a group of students and faculty.

Alumni luncheon hosted by Dr. Tucker

Alum Allison Kiger (MS 1995) prompted a luncheon with other CEPM alums from the same year. Richard Tucker hosted the group, which grew to alums from other years and faculty, at the Lost Creek Country Club early September. Pictured from left to right are: Luis Rangel (MS 2002), Prof. Richard Tucker, Kenneth Grajek (MS 1995), Prof. Fernanda Leite, Mike Pappas (PhD 2004), Allison Kiger (MS 1995), and Stephen Mulva (MS 1996). Later that day, part of the group enjoyed the UT vs UTEP football game on campus.

CEPM research at CII Annual Conference

At this year’s Construction Industry Institute (CII) Annual Conference, over 700 construction industry owners, contractors, and members of academia gathered in National Harbor, Maryland. Over the conference’s three-day span, the consortium got the opportunity to discuss industry trends, attend research findings presentations, and listen to a number of renowned guest speakers. At the conference, several research teams presented their findings, of which Dr. O’Connor and Dr. Leite served as PIs for Research Team 320 and Research Team 323, respectively. RT 320 investigated problematic design deliverables and the importance of detailed design deliverables. RT 320 focused on finding leading indicators to prevent premature starts to construction.

Research Team 320’s project, “Engineering Deliverables: Get It Right the First Time,” investigated the 11 most problematic design deliverables and the importance of detailed design deliverables. They developed a number of leading-indicator metrics that can be used to provide early warning of potential design defects. This indicator tool can be used to identify potential design quality defects and can also facilitate team planning of the corrective actions.

Research Team 323’s project entitled “Ready... Go... Set! Finding Leading Indicators to Prevent Premature Starts, Assuring Uninterrupted Construction,” explored the issues involved in the premature start of construction projects. The project’s main focus was to not only pinpoint which business drivers had the greatest impact on the decision to start construction prematurely, but to learn how to identify indicators that could signal a premature start. The team’s presentation focused on the impact a premature start can have on construction projects and how the Premature Start Impact Analysis (PSIA) tool could help communicate with project decision makers and stakeholders.

Graduate Women in CEPM Dinner

In September, our CEPM graduate women met with Drs. Faust and Leite, and Jessica McLarty from the Lower Colorado River Authority over dinner to discuss navigating graduate school and possible career paths. Through sharing experiences, this networking event provides encouragement and support for our graduate women, as well as an opportunity to connect with other female students in the program. With the incorporation of mentoring experiences such as these in our program we hope to increase retention of women in the workforce and recognize the wide array of opportunities possible after leaving UT.

Fall Barbecue and New Student Welcome

CEPM kicked off the year with our annual Welcome Back BBQ. Students and faculty were able to relax, catch-up, and eat at the park next to ECJ. New students were welcomed by the CEPM department, and everyone was able to take a social break following the first couple weeks of this fall semester. Dr. Leite’s baby even made her first trip to the University of Texas campus.

The evening of September 15th was clear and sunny for cooking out. We tested the concrete grill built in CE 351: Concrete Material Engineering + Project Management. Later that day, part of the group enjoyed the UT vs UTEP football game on campus.

Previously Featured Alumni


Please send alumni updates to: Fernanda.Leite@utexas.edu