

CD News

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For More Info...

- Visit <http://www.gpidea.org>
- Contact Susan Fey, susanfey@iastate.edu
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This is a program of the Great Plains IDEA.



Student Spotlight: Abbie Gaffey, Iowa State University

Abbie is a student at ISU and a member of the SAC in the Community Development Program. She is a Community & Economic Development Field Specialist for Iowa State University Extension serving the western 40 counties of Iowa. "My specialty area is leadership and organizational development. I also work quite a bit with low-income housing development and urban planning issues."

Prior to joining Extension, Abbie worked for 12 years as the City of Sioux City's Community & Economic Development Project Coordinator, administering the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program, and Emergency Shelter Grants programs. "In what spare time I have, I am a member of the Sioux City Historic Preservation Commission, the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance, the Iowa Community Development Board, the Mary J. Treglia Community House board, and the Siouxland Aging Services housing board."

Abbie refers to herself as a "certified road warrior," because she travels so frequently with her Extension position. This program fits nicely with her schedule

because it is on-line, "Being able to attend class whenever I happen to be and at any time of the day, really fits my busy lifestyle. I appreciate the flexibility of the program. I appreciate the asynchronous nature of the program where each student can progress through the studies at their own pace. I love the diversity of the program and the diversity of the students involved in the program."

She also appreciates all of the new ideas and theories presented in the program, particularly the Community Capitals Framework. "What a perfect tool for community assessment. I've also been spending a lot of time learning about leadership theories, which is making it possible for me to vastly improve my offerings through the Developing Dynamic Leaders course we provide through Extension.



Abbie Gaffey, ISU

Learning to use Appreciative Inquiry and Asset Based Community Development are two other important skills I've been learning about."

In terms of offering advice to new students, she says "she did have trepidations about starting graduate school at 40something on top of a demanding job and busy life. (Cont. on pg. 2)

"The Community Development program matches my professional needs with my personal interests and passions. Everything I learn in the program goes into immediate use helping Iowa's rural communities achieve sustainable economies and retain their high quality of life."

Abbie Gaffey, ISU

The key is to maintain balance and enjoy the experience. It's fun to talk with other people in the field and to make new 'virtual' friends all over the country and hemisphere. This program is empowering, motivating, and self-directed. You can make of this program anything you wish to make of it...This is an advanced degree that not very many people have in an emerging field of study and it is exciting to be a part of something new, relevant, and important."

Another interesting aspect to Abbie's life in Sioux City is that she lives in a castle! "I live in the Castle on the Hill, which was built in 1892 and was Sioux City's main high school until 1972. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and my apartment features hardwood floors, 15-foot ceilings, and a spiral staircase leading to a turret overlooking downtown Sioux City and the Missouri River. The turret features student graffiti dating back to 1913. The Castle was one of several adaptive reuse historic preservation projects I worked on while employed by the City."

In Abbie's free time, she enjoys "antiquing, reading fiction (oh how I miss my fiction....), writing, movies, backgammon or any kind of competitive board game, aimless unplanned and wandering road trips with my brilliant and hilarious friends, the Iowa State Fair, and I am truly gifted at hanging out!"

SAC Meeting

The next SAC meeting is March 18 at 6 PM Central. If you have issues for the group to discuss, please contact one of them:

Lisa Atkinson, latkinson@bluespringgov.com

Karen Blewett, Karen.Blewett@gov.ab.ca

Linda Diehl, lindad@ksu.edu

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Summer Courses

Please visit

<http://www.gpidea.org/prospective/community/cdCourseSchedule.html> to read about the course offerings for Summer 08!

[Orientation](#) (ISU)

[CD II: Organizing for Community Change](#) (ISU)

[Grant Development & Management](#) (KSU)

[Coastal Policy](#) (ISU)

Publication Information

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