

Central Michigan University
ICMA Student Chapter
2016-2017 Annual Report

During the 2016-2017 year, the newly established ICMA Student Chapter at Central Michigan University continued to grow and increase its visibility on campus and within the mid-Michigan area. For the first time, the Chapter actively participated in a variety of events during the year that related back to “economic development” and its important role in sustaining local communities. Additionally, the Chapter started to plan a series of events for 2017-2018 that will examine the role of leadership and management in successful economic development endeavors. Examples of activities by the ICMA Student Chapter in 2016-2017 include the following.

On October 17, 2016, students in the ICMA Student Chapter participated in the “Overcoming Urban Challenges in the Era of Globalization” conference held in Detroit, Michigan and sponsored by TIGRE-Net (the Transatlantic Initiative on Governance Research & Education) and Central Michigan University’s MPA program. Students in the ICMA Student Chapter were active participants in the conference. They participated in the ‘deliberative panels’ with economic development scholars on developing a sustainable economic development strategy for Southeastern Michigan and also took notes during the proceedings. These notes are now being used to assemble an edited volume from Routledge on the economic development strategies identified at the conference.

During the year, students in the ICMA Student Chapter also worked closely with students in our program’s Nonprofit Leadership student chapter in providing services to citizens and organizations in the mid-Michigan area. In the fall of 2016, these students worked with the local Habitat for Humanity and volunteered service hours to help rehabilitate residences in the mid-Michigan area. In the spring of 2017, these students also worked with the Mt. Pleasant Discovery Museum to implement new services to citizens. In both of these endeavors, students in the ICMA chapter directly witnessed how the need for local services (i.e. housing) and the need for value-added services (i.e. museums) relate back to economic development in the mid-Michigan area.

Finally, on May 27, 2017, students in the ICMA Student Chapter participated in the “Community Financial Health Forum” sponsored by the Michigan Municipal League and the cities of Mt. Pleasant, MI; Alma, MI; and Clare, MI. In this forum, students learned how declines in state revenue sharing are currently prohibiting sustainable economic development in most local governments around Michigan. This forum also allowed our student chapter to connect with the City Managers of Mt. Pleasant, Alma, and Clare. For the next year, we hope to have those managers speak directly to the ICMA Student Chapter on the role of leadership and management in successful economic development endeavors.

In summary, the ICMA Student Chapter at Central Michigan University continues to make progress. The Chapter has decided to emphasize economic development in its activities and during the last year participated in a variety of activities showcasing the different dimensions of economic development (e.g. the academic side, the service side, and the financial side). During the 2017-2018, the chapter will continue their efforts in this area by focusing more on what leaders and managers can actively do to make economic development more successful.

Submitted by:
Nancy Quarles & Thomas Greitens
ICMA Chapter Faculty Advisors