Public Affairs welcomes Dean Banaian

King Banaian will take permanent helm as dean of School of Public Affairs beginning July 1. He will bring his more than 30 years of teaching experience at St. Cloud State to the position, which he has held as interim dean since July 2014.

“I look forward to continuing the great work we’ve been doing to improve our offerings for students and the research provided by the School of Public Affairs to our community,” Banaian said. “I am honored to continue serving as leader to the talented faculty and staff who are dedicated to producing Minnesota’s next generation of public affairs leaders.”

As a professor of economics at St. Cloud State, he served as chairman of the economic department for nine years. He has authored or co-authored more than 30 papers and introduced several new courses and a five-year bachelor’s and master’s program in economics. He also served as director of the School of Public Affairs Research Institute in 2013-14.

As interim dean, Banaian has overseen the launch of a new master’s of public administration program and a partnership on a 3+3 law program with William Mitchell College of Law.

From 2011-2013, Banaian was the District 15B representative in the Minnesota House of Representatives where he served on the State Government Finance, Higher Education, Capital Investment and Rules committees.

Banaian holds a doctorate and master’s degree in economics from the Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, and his bachelor’s in economics from St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire.

“During his career he also served as an economic adviser to the National Bank of Ukraine and as a modeling expert to the Central Bank of Egypt under the USAID/NIS Monetary Restructuring Project. He also was a debt sustainability expert to the ministry of finance of Indonesia, as well as work for the ministries of finance of Armenia and Macedonia on several short-term assignments.

Banaian holds a doctorate and master’s degree in economics from the Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California, and his bachelor’s in economics from St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire.

“I am excited to see the great work King will do to continue growing the School of Public Affairs,” said Earl H. Potter III. “His commitment to leadership and St. Cloud State will serve well to prepare students for life, work and citizenship in the 21st century.”

Alumna dines at the White House

Kadra Mohamed ’15 dined with President Barack Obama June 22 at the White House.

The Twin Cities Metro Transit police officer and criminal justice graduate was part of a social function marking Ramadan, a Muslim month of fasting that commemorates the first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad.

Mohamed, is seated opposite the president, wearing her brass badge and dark-blue hijab.
Mikhail Blinnikov, director of the Department of Global Studies and professor of geography and planning, Jeff Torguson professor in the geography and planning department, and Michael Wilson, travel and tourism graduate student, traveled to Russia this summer as part of Blinnikov’s Provost Action Grant to explore potential partnerships with three Siberian universities: Tomsk State University, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University and Altay State Academy of Education (ASAE) in Biysk.

The delegation, led by Blinnikov, met extensively with administrators, faculty and students from those universities. They met with the Provost at ASAE who reiterated interest in continuing work with St. Cloud State and expressed hope that more faculty and student visits would result from our trip. They are interested in receiving English as a second language instructors for their summer programs either at the faculty/staff or student level. ASAE has faculty in geography, economics, and political science who would be interested in working with the School of Public Affairs.

In Novosibirsk, Blinnikov was interviewed by a local TV station about the visit, and Torguson delivered a keynote lecture at the ASAE on geography information systems and cartography.

Shawn Schooley teaches state and local government, organization theory and other core classes. His research focuses on using the Appreciative Democracy Model to increase direct citizen participation in local government. His work has appeared in the International Journal of Public Administration, Public Administration Quarterly and the International Journal of Social Science Research. He has served as a supervisor in both juvenile justice and social services, as a moderator for local elections in Alabama, and has taught several seminars around the country in elections administration. Prior to St. Cloud State, Schooley taught at Auburn University and James Madison University. He earned a doctorate in public administration and public affairs at Virginia Tech as well as a master's in public administration (MPA) from the University of West Florida. He enjoys reading, fishing, golfing and spending time with his wife, Amye.

Darla Hamann teaches courses in public administration, nonprofit management, human resource management and research methods. She previously taught in the University of Texas at Arlington's Public Administration program and at the University of Minnesota’s Carlson School of Management. She conducts research on organizational behavior, human resource management and strategic management in the nonprofit sector and long-term care industry. Her research is published in many leading scholarly journals, including “Psychological Bulletin,” “Review of Public Personnel Administration,” “Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly” and “Nonprofit Management and Leadership.” Hamann is an alumna of St. Cloud State, where she obtained her bachelor’s degree in economics. She earned her doctorate from the University of Minnesota.

Geography and Planning explore Siberian university partnerships

Professor attends Harvard inaugural Junior Faculty Workshop

Luis Estevez, professor of geography and planning attended the inaugural Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) 2015 Junior Faculty Workshop June 18-20 at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The workshop was exclusively designed for a small group of faculty members selected from a national pool of applicants.

The workshop aimed to provide early-career, tenure-track faculty with the skills and knowledge to flourish in the planning professoriate. Hosted by Harvard’s planning program, the event provided close interaction with senior faculty from various types of ACSP institutions. The workshop focused on the areas including developing an initial research and publishing agenda, making service and teaching effective, obtaining grants and planning a long-term career trajectory that will make an impact.

Luis Estevez at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
Public Affairs sponsors fall events

**Education Abroad Fair**

September 16
10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Atwood Main Lounge
Explore the world! Learn about St. Cloud State study abroad opportunities.

**Constitution Day Trivia**

September 17
10 a.m. - Noon, Atwood Memorial Center Mall
Come and test your knowledge of the U.S. Constitution.

**Social Studies Fall Social and Constitution Day Celebration**

September 17
5-8 p.m., Stearns History Museum, St. Cloud
Come and learn about new opportunities and resources in social studies education.
Please RSVP to Cindy Fitzthum at cjfitzthum@stcloudstate.edu

**“St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report” Review & Regional Outlook**

September 17
7:30-9 a.m., Sauk Rapids Government Center
Presenters King Banaian, dean, St. Cloud State School of Public Affairs and co-author, “St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report,” and Steve Simon, Minnesota secretary of state, will discuss economic and business conditions in the St. Cloud region. Event sponsored by Great River Federal Credit Union.

**Children of the Civil Rights Q & A with Director Clifford**

September 23
Noon-1 p.m., Ritsche Auditorium
For six years, a group of kids went into restaurants and asked for service. It never got violent; it never made national news; but, together, they turned around every restaurant except for one before the 1964 Civil Rights Act took place. Fifty years later, “Children of the Civil Rights” documentary film shares their six year odyssey to freedom. Watch clips of the film and reflect with Film Director Julia Clifford.

**Children of the Civil Rights Film Screening and Panel Discussion**

September 24
5 p.m., Miller Center Auditorium
Watch the documentary “Children of the Civil Rights” and reflect via expert subject matter panelists and Film Director Julia Clifford.

**Out of Poverty: Sweatshops in the Global Economy**

September 29
11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Atwood Theatre
Economics expert and director of the Free Market Institute at Texas Tech University, Ben Powell, will explain how sweatshops provide the best available opportunity to workers and how they play an important role in the process of development that eventually lead to better wages and working conditions.

**Career Day**

October 6
10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Atwood Memorial Center Ballroom
This is the largest on campus job and internship fair. It brings a variety of employers to campus to promote their opportunities and recruit for internships and full time positions.

**Business Leaders Ethics Panel**

October 15
4-5 p.m. Atwood Theatre
Learn from business leaders about their business philosophy, the benefits and sacrifices of conducting business in an ethical manner and have an opportunity to ask questions.

**Government and Non-Profit Career Fair**

October 23
10 a.m. - 3 p.m, University of Minnesota, Coffman Union
Free job fair for St. Cloud State students or alumni interested in internships and jobs in government agencies. For more information and online registration visit http://www.togpartners.com/govnonprofitfair.

**Business Etiquette and Networking Program**

November 13
Noon - 3 p.m., Atwood Memorial Center, Cascade Room
Cost: Early Bird $15; after Oct. 27, $20 (cash or check only).
Meet employers and Professor Mary Soroko, certified etiquette coach, will demonstrate how to conduct yourself at a business meal. The first hour of the program is dedicated to networking. The remainder of the program will be taught over a full course meal. To register, contact Mary Soroko at mpsoroko@stcloudstate.edu.

**A Meal to Change the World: Oxfam Hunger Banquet**

November 18
5:30-7 p.m. Atwood Cascade Room
This unique meal and several hands-on activities will give students and community members an opportunity to learn more about social issues around local and global hunger, homelessness and poverty.

**Life Happens: A Work, Class and Access to Resources Exercise**

November 20
10 a.m. - Noon Atwood Memorial Center, Cascade Room
Participate in this hands on activity to better understand the impact of socioeconomic status on an individual’s life chances.

**“St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report” Review and Regional Outlook**

December 17
7:30-9 a.m. Location TBD (Tentative location: Sauk Rapids Government Center)
Presenter King Banaian, dean, St. Cloud State School of Public Affairs and co-author, “St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report,” will discuss economic and business conditions in the St. Cloud region. Event sponsored by Great River Federal Credit Union.
Market trends research surveys of key stakeholders, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT), and geographic information systems mapping applications are all components of a $25,000 land use study that the St. Cloud State School of Public Affairs Research Institute (SOPARI) will be conducting for the City of Waite Park over the next 10 months. With the help of St. Cloud State graduate assistants Joe Kucan and Paul Ryan, SOPARI will be developing the land use study over three phases with the final report delivered on April 30, 2016.

In the first phase this summer, SOPARI researchers are working with Waite Park officials on goals of the land use study, general descriptions of the community and region, and detailed characteristics of existing land use. Preparation of survey questions and data collection for market trends research is also being undertaken this summer. SOPARI will ultimately prepare a SWOT analysis to help inform the second phase of the project.

In phase two of the land use study this fall, SOPARI researchers will be conducting market research and trends analysis, preparing tables, graphs, charts and maps, and will be surveying key stakeholders in the community. A first draft of the study will be prepared at the conclusion of the project’s second phase.

The project culminates with a three month phase in which stakeholder input is sought in shaping the final draft of the report. This study will make considerable use of local and regional data in making long-term projections of key variables as the regional work force, composition of business and industries, potential earnings capacity, regulatory changes and challenges, population/demographic change, transportation needs and housing demands, among others. The opportunity for St. Cloud State students to be involved in an applied research project that utilizes skills across SOPA disciplines through community engagement and experiential learning is one of the most exciting features of this study.

For more information about the Waite Park land use study or other projects offered by SOPARI, please contact Rich MacDonald, interim director of the St. Cloud State School of Public Affairs Institute at 320-308-4781 or ramacdonald@stcloudstate.edu.

Submit your ideas
The School of Public Affairs is always looking to add speakers and events to the Colloquia. Submit your ideas for speakers and events to Kristy Modrow, experiential learning and outreach director at kkmodrow@stcloudstate.edu

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Slower growth ahead for St. Cloud area

Data analysis by Rich MacDonald and King Banaian suggests the St. Cloud area will experience solid, but slower economic growth in coming months.

The School of Public Affairs Research Institute economists reported the lowest May reading of future business activity since 2011. Since March, Banaian and MacDonald have suggested the economic expansion may be maturing — a possible sign the business cycle may drift toward stagnation or contraction.

That finding and others are published in the St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report (QBR), Central Minnesota’s definitive, survey and analysis-based review of economic activity. The QBR is published by Times Media, Greater St. Cloud Development Corporation, and the School of Public Affairs Research Institute. MacDonald and Banaian are key faculty members in the economics department, whose notable alumni include James Bullard ’84, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Banaian is dean of the School of Public Affairs. MacDonald is interim director of the research institute.

Other QBR findings, including survey results from 69 businesses:

- Nearly 60 percent of area businesses surveyed predict a future increase in business activity.
- The national business activity reading is the lowest May reading since 2009.
- The St. Cloud Index of Leading Economic Indicators was flat, save for a small increase linked to increased filings for business incorporation.
- The April St. Cloud area unemployment rate was 3.8 percent, down from 4.3 percent in April 2014.
- Healthcare and education sectors recorded 737 new jobs over the past year, an increase of 3.5 percent.
- Professional and business services employment decreased 9.1 percent.
- The QBR’s special survey question revealed perceived barriers to immigrant employment.
- More than 38 percent of area business reported language concerns.
- Nearly 35 percent reported education/skills deficiencies.
- Cultural and work ethic constraints came in at 14.7 percent.

St. Cloud Area Quarterly Business Report has been published four times a year since 1999.

MacDonald’s doctorate is from Binghamton University, State University of New York.

Banaian holds a doctorate from Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, Calif.

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Students showcase K-12 project at Community Engagement Celebration

Geography and planning Professor Belkis Kambach and students presented their project “Saving an Endangered Species One MN K-12 Student at a Time” at the campus Community Engagement Celebration on April 23. Thirty-seven Minnesota K-12 schools were project partners. The students were enrolled in ecotourism and the environment (GEOG 496/596).

The Community Engagement Celebration provides the opportunity for students and student organizations to showcase their service learning, internship or community project with campus and the local community.

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Whitney MacMillan (left) and Wheelock Whitney Jr. (right) and Ben Whitney (not pictured) met with School of Public Affairs Dean Banian (middle) in June and took a tour of the Whitney House.

The Whitney House was owned by Macmillan’s and Whitney Jr.’s grandparents Albert Whitney and Alice Wheelock. The home was gifted to the University in 1954. Alice Wheelock hosted famous personages such as First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and vocalist Marian Anderson.
Associate professor becomes Certified Federal Surveyor

During his spring 2015 sabbatical, Eric Fuller, an associate professor of geography and planning, completed coursework and passed exams to become a certified federal surveyor (CFedS). Fuller joins a small group of professional land surveyors nationwide who have demonstrated mastery of the knowledge required for the certification which is administered through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The CFedS program is approved by the Secretary of Interior and was designed to specifically enhance the level of knowledge and expertise in the professional land surveying community for survey work related to federal lands, especially on Indian trust lands.

Fuller plans to use the knowledge gained to benefit students in courses he teaches in the Land Surveying and Mapping Science program. He has gained knowledge in the areas of details of the CFedS program and its benefits, Indian customs, history, interactions, and law; special methods used in the original land surveys for the Public Land Survey System, current federal surveying methods and procedures and federal court decisions impacting federal land surveys.

Alumnus tours centuries old colleges on Italy study abroad experience

Alfredo Oliveira ‘14, political science alumnus and graduate student, spent May 16-31 studying abroad at the University of Macerata in Italy along with fellow students in the Higher Education Administration master’s and doctoral programs thanks in part to a $1,000 Italian Cultural Center (ICC) Scholarship.

“This has been more powerful and life changing than any international trip I have ever been on,” Oliveira wrote in the blog. “It has impacted me in a deep and personal way.”

He was one of eight students to attend the program, which included classes in Italian, the history and culture of Italy, critical issues in Italian higher education system and a 20-hour internship working with University of Macerata faculty and staff. The students toured universities in Camarino, Perugia and Macerata to learn about their organizational structure, education system and accreditation.

“I’ve learned so much in less than two weeks,” he wrote. “This is a great trip because it balances the educational with cultural. We get to come to Italy and learn about their educational system in a way that would not be possible if I had traveled alone or for leisure. But best of all, I learned about myself.”

Oliveira is the recipient of the first Italian Cultural Center Scholarship to support St. Cloud State students studying abroad through the Higher Education Administration program.

Professor Christine Imbra, a long-time supporter of the ICC, and Peggy Hansen, an ICC member, worked together to create the scholarship. Hansen said she’s long been interested in the Macerata study abroad program organized by Imbra.

The Minneapolis organization, formed in 2006, promotes knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Italian culture.

Oliveira’s blog kept the group’s members informed about his journey.

“The blog entries were phenomenal,” Hansen said. “…They make his journey, and Italy, come to life. We looked forward to each entry we received.”

Oliveira will maintain strong memories from the trip and treasure Italy and the people he met while studying at Macerata.

“Italy has left a positive experience and a lifelong memory thus far,” he wrote. “And I know that once I return home (Minnesota), I will only remember the good times and the laughs I had while I was here.”

In addition to growth academically, Oliveira saw personal growth through studying in another country. The experience has helped him to compare and contrast critical issues in higher education and to think critically and innovatively.

“The more I travel, the more I see how similar we are,” he wrote. “We all want to be successful, happy and live in peace – regardless of what peace might mean to each one of us. We might be different on the outside – color, language, costumes, clothing – but we are all the same inside – we all have more space for love and happiness, and the ability to reduce space for fears and worries.”

Oliveira also earned assistance from the Caldecott and Higher Education Abroad scholarships.

Oliveira will speak about his experiences at the University of Macerata from 7-8:30 p.m. Sept. 9 at the Italy Cultural Center’s open house held at the Hennepin Center for the Arts building, 528 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis.
Faculty/Staff Highlights

Patricia Bodelson (political science) co-authored a global disaster response model paper with Vicki Kouskouna, professor of geophysics and geometries at the University of Athens, Greece. Kouskouna presented the paper at the International Conference on Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management in Kristiansand, Norway in May.

Luis Estevez Jimenez (geography and planning) presented his research at the 2015 American Collegiate of Schools of Planning Junior Faculty Workshop for faculty of color this summer at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Eric Fuller (geography and planning) passed the Certified Federal Surveyor (CFedS) exam this summer. Fuller attended the CFedS program during his spring sabbatical. Fuller was interviewed for a Discovery Channel’s episode of the TV series ‘Fear Thy Neighbor’ which aired in April.

David Switzer (economics) was appointed as the Faculty Fellow for Assessment at St. Cloud State. The University Assessment office coordinates assessment of student learning at the program level providing workshops, consulting services and small grants to assist programs to meet learning goals for their students. Furthermore, the office provides faculty support including funding for grants, conference attendance and other activities.

Alumni/Student Highlights

Kyle Imdieke (geography and planning) attended Colonial Williamsburg Teachers Institute. The Teachers Institute enrollment is competitive and historically is for in-service teachers, not college students, with the exception of St. Cloud State social studies majors.

Andrew Gronli ’14 (criminal justice) was sworn in as a officer with the University of Minnesota Duluth Police Department. He previously worked as a public safety officer at St. Cloud State.

Casey Gwost ’13 (geography and planning), technician at the West Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District, is one of two people working on a buffer ordinance compliance in Otter Tail County. A $290,000 grant was secured from the state’s Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment for the five-year project.

Kendra Mohamad ’15 (criminal justice) was an invited guest of President Barack Obama to attend the White House Iftar dinner in honor of Ramadan. Mohamad was the state’s first Somali-American police officer and works for the Metro Transit Police Department.

Alfredo Oliveira ’14 (political science) received an Italian Cultural Center Scholarship and studied abroad at the University of Macerata in Italy this summer. Oliveira is a graduate student in the St. Cloud State Higher Education Administration program.

Pat Robinson (criminal justice) was named deputy chief of the Sarasota Police Department. Robinson is a 15-year veteran of the Sarasota Police Department and has served as a patrol officer, detective and commander of the Patrol Division.

Jessica Rosier ’08 ’11 (geography and planning) is the Barker Mansion director in Michigan City, Indiana. Rosier began her career at the Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site in Little Falls. She was also an interpretive naturalist and educator with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Rosier plans to significantly increase the programs and events at the mansion.

Daniel Schaible ’15 (geography and planning) is survey crew chief at Belton & Menk, Inc. in Mankato. Schaible is excited to continue to grow his knowledge in the field as well as meet new people. He will be responsible for performing survey duties in the field as well as assisting the licensed land surveyor.

Jeff Wood ’81 ’87 ’95 (political science, elementary education, special MN studies) director of web communications at St. Cloud State, was recognized in April for his outstanding leadership promoting the 2014 Central Minnesota Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event. The American Cancer Society event is hosted annually at St. Cloud State to raise awareness and funds to support breast cancer research, services and programs.

Tou Xiong ’12 (economics) is running for Maplewood City Council. After attending St. Cloud State, Xiong graduated from William Mitchell College of Law. Xiong serves as a member of the Senate District 53 Executive Committee and has worked for the Policy and Community Development Division in the Minnesota Housing Financial Agency as well as for Minnesota Legal Aid and the Public Health Law Center. If elected, Xiong will be the first Hmong City Council member.
The School of Public Affairs wants to hear from our alumni and friends, through newsletters like this and emails. If you would like to receive information, or wish to contribute a story or update, contact us at (320) 308-6080 or kkmodrow@stcloudstate.edu.

Fighting Saints Battalion trains new leaders at St. Cloud State

The Fighting Saints Battalion of the Army Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) began at St. John’s University in 1952. The program expanded to St. Cloud State University in 1968 and opened to women in 1974 when female students from St. Cloud State and the College of St. Benedict joined the program. Today’s program serves about 120 students including about 45 from St. Cloud State — 11 of whom are women.

In October the battalion earned the Best ROTC Company Award for outstanding performance in two of three award categories for the 2013-2014 academic year at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) annual national meeting and exposition.

The battalion also earned the Most Active Company Award, which recognizes participation in ROTC program-sponsored activities, and the Largest ROTC sub-chapter award.

Captain Brian Riverman, ROC operations officer and St. Cloud State military history instructor, estimates the battalion is the No. 2 battalion in the company in the nation based on physical fitness test scores, GPA and cadet rankings on the National Order of Merit List, although the U.S. Army does not publically rank ROTC programs.

The Fighting Saints Battalion Army ROTC program is designed to train cadets to be leaders within the Army — either as active duty officers or as officers in the National Guard or Army Reserve. ROTC offers scholarships to assist students in the program.

Freshmen start off in the program learning about the Army organization and terms used in the Army. Leadership lessons take over in the sophomore and junior year culminating with a four-week summer field exercise to learn how to be a platoon leader at Fort Knox.

Senior year cadets mentor the younger students and work one-on-one with a professor of military science. At the end of the year they are commissioned as second lieutenants.

“We want them to think critically, be adaptive and thrive in chaos,” Riverman said. “The leadership skills translate to corporate America as well as they do to leading a platoon in the Army,” he said.

Members of the Fighting Saints Battalion participate in a Patriot Day ceremony at St. Cloud State.

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