

DCRP STUDENTS BO CHUNG AND JAIME LOPEZ AWARDED USAID GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

College of Environmental Design master's students [Jack "Bo" Chung](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jack-bo-chung-7545606/) (MCP/MPH '18) and [Jaime Lopez](https://iurd.berkeley.edu/urban-equity-student-fellows-2016-2017-bios#Top) (MCP '18) are the recipients of a competitive United States Agency for International Development (USAID) grant through the [Global Development Fellowship](https://mdp.berkeley.edu/global-development-fellowships-about/) (GDF) at UC Berkeley, which supports cutting edge solutions to address pressing sustainable development challenges in countries where USAID operates. Both Chung and Lopez will be traveling to South America this summer to research and find solutions for an ongoing housing and infrastructure crisis caused by natural disasters over the past few years.



Launched in 2014, the GDF is a three-year cooperative agreement with the [Global Development Lab](https://www.usaid.gov/GlobalDevLab), a new entity within USAID that brings together a diverse set of partners to discover, test, and scale breakthrough solutions to end extreme poverty by 2030. The GDF program provides Berkeley graduate students with access to funded summer fellowship opportunities working with USAID partners in countries around the world.

"I'm very much looking forward to talking and interacting with locals and engaging with all levels of people, from government employees to community members" explained Chung, who will be visiting Chile, Medellin, Argentina and Belo Horizonte, Brazil. "The issues I'm going to be researching are new issues, but at the same time they're not -- city planning and health issues have been around as long as there have been cities."

Instead of a typical project proposal and paper, Chung hopes to involve audio and visual media into his research, recording interviews and experiences along the way to make for a more digestible and visually compelling report when he returns. Although he has traveled to South America before, he hopes to approach his research this summer through a news lens which considers all he has learned since arriving at CED.

“I want to take everything I’ve learned in my city planning and public health classes and see how they play out in the real world,” he said. “I am really trying to absorb information through the news tools I’ve gotten from the MCP program -- how has the way I see the world changed from ten years ago when i was an undergraduate?”

Lopez, who plans to center his research around sustainability studies, will focus his scope of work around the Maule region in Chile, south of Santiago and centered in the city of Talca. Several surrounding cities will be included in his research, but Lopez hopes to include additional cities during his three-month stint in the country, possibly even going outside Chile.

“I want to better understand what cities need to do to prepare for climate change and to become more sustainable, all while taking into account increasing urban populations,” Lopez explained. “It’s one thing to have learned and read about these things in my classes this year, but to actually be somewhere where these issues are very real and to have some sort of impact on how those decisions take place is something that will be very useful in the future, to have a more specific point of reference for the challenges that exist and draw from that.”

While Lopez’s scope of work will extend further than just the summer, his three-month stay will determine which metrics he will continue to conduct research and do further comparisons with. He also hopes his work will inform his second year master’s thesis and an anticipated Ph.D. in city and regional planning.

“I’m looking forward to being part of a needed impact in an area that has suffered from earthquakes and fires. There’s a great need for recovering from those types of incidents in a sustainable manner,” Lopez said. “Being part of determining how best to design cities to accommodate growing populations in the future is exciting to me as an urban planner. Also learning a different political context will be interesting: I’m learning more about the government structure and hierarchy and what it takes for a list of recommendations in a sustainability study, for example, to actually be implemented through the political system there.”

Both Chung and Lopez were mentored by Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning [Malo Hutson](https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/malo-hutson) <<https://ced.berkeley.edu/ced/faculty-staff/malo-hutson>>, whose own research in South America and Chile helped guide the students’ research, contacts and scope of work. Both will be consulting Professor Hutson on his valuable knowledge and understanding of the region.

“The key is leveraging contacts I’ve made at CED and the Institute of Urban and Regional Development (IURD) to connect to people in Latin America,” explained Chung. “That’s been one of the biggest pluses. We have the former mayor of Medellin as a visiting scholar this semester, and a number of people I work with in public health have international contacts in governments of Bolivia, Peru, and so on.”

Lopez, whose undergraduate background and interest is in film, anticipates visually documenting the people and landscapes he visits in Chile and may even put together a short film summarizing his findings. He ultimately hopes to gain a better understanding of how citizen participation works and wants to engage communities in his work so that they, too, can have a say in how their cities are redeveloped.

“I don’t view myself so much as an expert, but more as a mediator,” he said. “Ultimately allowing and paying attention to how a population in a given city decides what’s best for them and engaging them in that conversation is very important to me.”

You can learn more about the Global Development Fellowship Program [here](https://mdp.berkeley.edu/global-development-fellowships-about/) `<https://mdp.berkeley.edu/global-development-fellowships-about/>` .