With the holiday season coming to a close, we wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you for making the past year the most successful in the history of the Center.

Below we provide brief updates on our past, present, and future research activities, conferences, speakers, and collaborations. Please pay special attention to the section which lists our upcoming Spring 2011 speakers. The theme for the series is “Money and Politics,” and we are very excited about the caliber and range of those who will lecture next semester.

Best wishes for the New Year!

Sincerely,

Itai Sened
Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for New Institutional Social Sciences

Conference honors Nobel Laureate Douglass North

The Center hosted a high caliber conference in November 2010 honoring the legacy and work of Nobel Prize Laureate Douglass North. The three-day event featured the work of numerous leading academics who presented their research and comments about how Professor North led them to where they are today. Participants came from all around the globe from countries including Mexico, France, Sweden, and Croatia. Over 200 students, colleagues, scholars, and friends of Professor North were in attendance. This exceptional event also featured a riveting keynote lecture given by the co-recipient of the 2009 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences, Elinor Ostrom. For video highlights from the event, please visit youtube.com/user/CNISSwashingtonuniv

North Research Fund Supporter Carrie Wrisberg and Douglass North

Look inside for CNISS Lectures

The Center for New Institutional Social Sciences (CNISS) originated with the work of Douglass C. North, Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics in 1993. Central to Professor North’s work is applying economics more effectively in enhancing the growth and development of individual nations.

The Center’s mission is to promote new institutional designs to help foster the political stability and economic growth of developing and transition economies, by drawing on the various social sciences in an interdisciplinary effort.
CNISS Participation in MAGEEP conference on energy

The McDonnell Academy Global Energy and Environmental Partnership (MAGEEP), hosted a “Symposium on the Global Energy Future” from October 1-4, 2010, at Washington University. The four day conference covered a diverse range of issues including the world’s future energy needs, energy resources to meet those needs, and technologies for monitoring emissions due to energy production. CNISS was excited to be asked to participate in the conference and assisted in bringing over Professor Mordechai Shechter and Eric Zimmerman from the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya in Tel Aviv, Israel, to participate on a panel addressing “Global Perspectives on Energy and Environment: Middle East.”

CNISS also provided funding for collaborator Joel Malen, a Ph.D. student from the University of Minnesota who is working on energy issues with the Center, to attend and meet with other colleagues at this event.

Sened presenting at HAIFA conference

The Israel Strategy Conference (ISC) works to promote academic excellence and advance the field of strategic management within the country of Israel by providing the opportunity for scholars to exchange ideas and advance their research in strategic management and related fields. Each year this annual conference invites prestigious keynote speakers and reviews countless paper proposals which are subjected to an extensive and strict review process. Accordingly, The Center for New Institutional Social Sciences is proud to announce the acceptance of a paper by Itai Sened for this year’s conference on “Path Creation and the Learning in Clean Tech.”

At the same time, the Technion Institute of Technology in Israel has invited Professor Sened and University of Minnesota Professor Alfred Marcus to present their work on alternative energy implementation strategies as part of a workshop going on in connection with the above conference.

Upcoming Spring 2011 Speaker Series

“Money and Politics” will be the theme for our Spring 2011 Speaker Series. We are excited to host five lecturers (listed below) who will speak on Mondays from noon-1 p.m. in the Weidenbaum Center Conference Room in Seigle Hall, Room 170 on the Danforth campus of Washington University. Further information on the lectures will be posted on our website at http://cniss.wustl.edu. A buffet lunch will precede each lecture at 11:30 a.m.

Our own Professor Murray Weidenbaum will begin the Spring series with an introductory lecture on January 21, 2011 on “Interest Groups in Politics.” Please make note of this lecture date, as well as those listed below on your Spring calendars:

February 7, 2011
"Political Team Making"
Jack L. Oliver III, Senior Policy Advisor, Bryan Cave LLP

February 14, 2011
“Innovation and Urban Renewal”
Jasmin Aber, Researcher at University of California-Berkeley

February 28, 2011
“Solar Power Generation”
Amos Danielli, Postdoctoral student in Biomedical Engineering at Washington University

March 21, 2011
“Money and Politics”
Robert Kallen, Founder of RSK Strategies and Professor at DePaul University

April 25, 2011
“Medicaid Policy and Mental Health Services for Children in Child Welfare”
Ramesh Raghavan, Assistant Professor in the Center for Mental Health Services Research at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Washington University School of Medicine

CNISS Support

Expansion of our current programs, the creation of new programs, and our research efforts all require funding on a continual basis. For more information on how you can support CNISS initiatives, please contact Mike Worley, Executive Director of Development for Regional Projects, Arts & Sciences, ☎ 314-935-9871, ✉ Mike_Worley@wustl.edu
Fall 2010 Speaker Series

Our Fall series continued the tradition of bringing the best and the brightest to lecture for our CNiSS community. Drawing large crowds of scholars, students, and other members of the Saint Louis Community, the below list of featured lecturers provided informative and entertaining lectures for our attendees:

“Transparency and Legislative Behavior”
John Carey, Wentworth Professor in the Social Sciences and Government at Dartmouth University

“Aiding the Poor Through Research”
Sebastian Galiani, Professor and Director of the Honors Program in Economics at Washington University in St. Louis

“The Threat from Within: A Big Picture Perspective of Israel’s Society and Economy”
Dan Ben-David, Executive Director of the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel and Senior Faculty Member in the Department of Public policy at Tel-Aviv University

“Political Monitoring: Some Critical Questions”
Thomas D. Lancaster, Professor of Political Science at Emory University

“Ingredients that Make for a Successful Revolutionary Group”
Micah Levinson, Junior Fellow at the American Foreign Policy Council

“Law, Culture, and Ethics: How Moral Vision Informs Social Meaning”
Rabbi Tsvi Blanchard, Director of Organizational Development at The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership and Meyer-Strukman Professor of Jewish Law at Humboldt University Law

Energy class
For the Spring 2011 semester, Professors Itai Sened of Political Science and Rich Axelbaum of Engineering, with the help of co-instructors Pratim Biswas, Bill Darby, Jay Turner, Bill Lowry and Sebastian Galiani, are teaching a new short course, “Energy and the Environment.” The ten-day accelerated program will take place January 10-21, 2011 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The course sets out to instruct students on how to understand decision making regarding energy and the environment. Some topics include descriptions of the various energy sources, political, environmental, and social considerations, and regulations, economics, and decision making regarding environmental and energy issues. Top executives of leading energy corporations in St. Louis have assured their attendance. For more information on the short course, please visit our website at http://cniss.wustl.edu

New Collaboration with Washington University groups and ThinkImpact
Washington University groups including the Gephardt Institute for Public Service, the Undergraduate Research office, the African and American Studies program, and the Center for New Institutional Social Sciences, will partner with ThinkImpact to provide students with opportunities to participate in international development projects in Kenya and South Africa. ThinkImpact connects American college students with communities in developing countries to alleviate poverty through leadership and entrepreneurship. Selected students will participate in the CNiSS seminar course, as well as a one-credit preparation course coordinated by the Gephardt Institute for Public Service. Upon return, the Gephardt Institute will convene the students as a cohort to discuss their experiences and strategize ways to apply their experiences to a local context through a service project in St. Louis. Students will also have the opportunity to develop entrepreneurship projects for a fellowship competition sponsored by ThinkImpact.
Redefining the Middle Class

Gyanesh Lama has been conducting research on the Middle Class and Property Rights. In the Summer of 2010, Gyanesh traveled to Nepal to collect contextual geographic information about the Middle Class. During his time there, he conducted a spatial analysis to support the reliability of his measurement of the Middle Class in Nepal. His results indicated correlations between the rate of economic growth and the size of the Middle Class in developing countries. He is currently testing a broad application of his measurement of the Middle Class in other countries throughout the world.

“Improving Lives in Kenya: One Goat at a Time”

Professor Carolyn Lesorogol of the George Warren Brown School of Social Work visited Kenya this past Summer of 2010, to begin the implementation of her current project, Improving Lives in Kenya: One Goat at a Time. The project aims to improve household well-being through a structured intervention to promote highly productive dairy goats in a community of Samburu pastoralists in Kenya. A sample of Professor Lesorogol's activities during this trip included administration of a series of planning meetings, training of her research team and Kenyan participants, and carrying out the initial measurements for conducting research. In the not too distant future, we will post video highlights from her visit on our CNISS YouTube page — [youtube.com/user/CNISSwashingtonuniv](http://youtube.com/user/CNISSwashingtonuniv).

Property Rights and the Middle Class

Kiho Kong, CNISS Undergraduate Hirsch Family Fellow, has been conducting research addressing the shortcomings surrounding current definitions of the middle class. He examines the institutions that protect the property rights and well-being of the middle class, using measurements such as access to education, healthcare, and housing. Kiho has been focusing on a case study comparison between Korea and Japan, and spent the Summer of 2010 in South Korea collecting data on these institutional factors.

Start Up Nation Israel

CNISS Undergraduate Hirsch Family Fellow Renee Kramer has been conducting research about the economy in Israel and the factors that have allowed the small country to attract large amounts of foreign investment. In the Summer of 2010, she traveled to Tel Aviv where she had the opportunity to interview Israeli entrepreneurs, investors, and government officials to gain insight from primary sources about the unique institutional behavior that has contributed to the success of the Israeli economy. Renee is currently writing her thesis which analyzes the unique institutional factors that have lead to the success of the Israeli economy.