



Living Smart

Big ideas for small lots



Legacy Vision of Portland, Oregon
Behind the Curtain
Fredrick H. Zal, Atelier Z



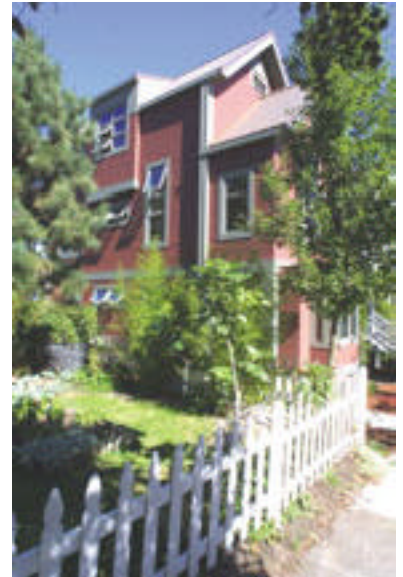
Legacy Vision of Portland, Oregon – Behind the Curtain
Living Smart: Big Ideas for Small Lots Design Competition
Bureau of Development Services, Portland, Oregon, 2004

by Fredrick H. Zal, Atelier Z



IMAGES:
Design Excellence Merit Awards
1052: © Jill Dau, Blair Payson, Scott Passman
1164: © Wayne T. Chevalier, Adin Dunning, Jeremy Fredrichs
1071: © Michel Laflamme, Jim Ralph
2007: © Hannes Wind, Julia Zeleny

The City of Portland, Oregon has witnessed tremendous growth in popularity of affordable homes built on small in-fill lots. In a number of neighborhoods, where the typical development occurs on 5,000 square foot lots, the underlying historic plat allowed the property to be divided in half, to become a pair of 25-foot wide by 100-foot deep parcels. Such houses are allowing first-time homebuyers, and a diversity of other important family types, to buy into near-urban communities, which would otherwise be cost prohibitive.



The “Living Smart: Big Ideas for Small Lots” Design Competition arose from growing neighborhood opposition to this necessary in-fill development that is not being designed responsively to surrounding neighborhood and has also triggered the demolition of existing houses to financially exploit the underlying raw land parcels. Many of these semi-historic houses were woven into the character of the neighborhood, and have hence their removal initiated a rift in the urban fabric.

After careful consideration of the public outcry, Portland City Council reaffirmed its commitment to the region’s urban growth boundary by supporting in-fill development on these narrow lots. The final zoning code decision keeps the narrow lot housing option in the main detached single-family zone with added design requirements, but restricting development to currently vacant lots. The City Council also expanded the provisions to two higher-density zones where detached houses are now allowed on small lots.



To put these urban principles to the test, the City of Portland, Oregon’s Bureau of Development Services [BDS] under Commissioner Randy Leonard’s Office of Neighborhood Involvement established the goal of the Living Smart project to create a broad spectrum of house designs that can be built on these narrow lots and that can be customized easily for homebuyers to ensure design compatibility with a variety of neighborhoods and living situations. But, instead of limiting the goal to a few one-off custom homes, they have wisely focused their sights upon market education and applicability in a broad spectrum of communities. More important that a specific product, Council should be lauded for their efforts to remove the stigma of bureaucracy and move towards open communication and dialogue in collectively forming our urban vision. Therefore, the aesthetically diverse results of this international competition have become tools for Council and staff to adjust these above mentioned design requirements at the heart of the City’s zoning code and design review processes.

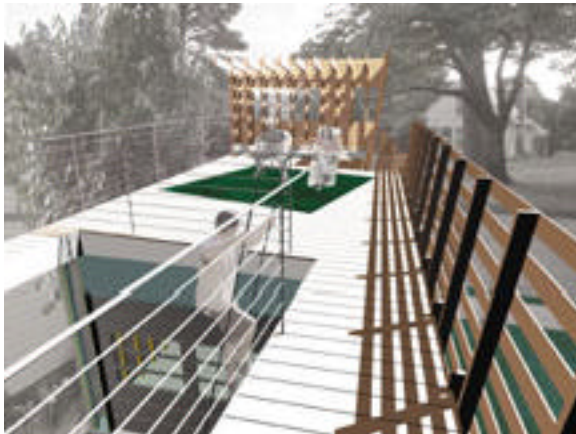


IMAGES: People’s Choice Awards
3035: © Bryan Higgins
1011: © Tony Wai
1144: © Roxana Vargas-Greenan, Trent Greenan



Logo: Leslie Wilson, ©BDS
Cover: © Fredrick H. Zal





Competition Process:

The design competition had 839 registrations from about the world; with 426 submissions from these twenty-three countries: Albania, Australia, Austria, Canada, Columbia, France, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Venezuela.

The competition was judged in two phases. The jury for Phase I [Design Excellence Monograph] was Rex Burkholder, Metro Regional Government; Christine Caruso, Portland Planning Commissioner; Douglas Garofalo, Garofalo Architects; Suenn Ho, MulvannyG2 Architecture; John T. Holmes, Hol/St Architecture; John Patkau, Patkau Architects inc.; and Loren J. Waxman, developer. The jury for Phase II [Portland Catalogue] was Christine Caruso; Jeff Fish, Home Builders' Association; Suenn Ho; John T. Holmes; Marcy McInnelly, AIA; Loren J. Waxman, and Suzanne Zuniga, affordable housing architect. Susan Feldman, City of Portland project manager, and Fredrick H. Zal, Atelier Z competition advisor, served as moderators for the jury and co-authors of the competition. Martha Richards and Anne Hill were competition staff managed by Feldman. Journalist Randy Gragg and Brian Libby were silent observers during discrete aspects of the jury processes.

The juries in both phases of this competition based their decisions primarily on the degree to which submitted designs addressed and satisfied the Design Values inherent to the City of Portland's policies on urban and building design. These policies embrace design approaches that place non-automobile and transit modes above the automobile, help create an excellent pedestrian environment, and create high quality livable and walkable neighborhoods. The Design Values also support creative designs for interior spaces, areas that transition from public to private, encourage the use of sustainable development practices and innovative building techniques such as mass customization. While as the jury in both phases had the option of interpreting the judging criteria at their discretion, they chose to follow their rigorous requirements.

Phase I - Design Excellence Monograph Jury:

In Phase I of the competition, the Design Excellence jury panel reviewed the 426 eligible anonymous submissions and narrowed the field to forty-eight winners. This group of Design Excellence winners was published in a full-color monograph that is being distributed across North America. The monograph intends to serve as an idea book, demonstrating a wide range of possibilities for narrow-lot development.

Phase II - Portland Catalogue Jury:

In addition to the Design Excellence criteria, this second jury evaluated the feasibility of constructing the 426 designs to be affordable to median-income, entry-level homebuyers in the Portland area, and the compatibility of the design with Portland's existing neighborhoods. Portraying both their design excellence and construction potential, 76% of the Phase II winners were also such in Phase I.

Submission Categories:

Portland Dilemma: PDX 1

[Three Merit Awards from the 246 submissions]
Most closely reflects Portland’s current development regulations that apply to 25-foot wide by 100-foot deep lots and market demand for an attached garage. Typical situation would be an urban in-fill lot.

Portland Dilemma: PDX 2, 3, & 4

[One Merit Award from the 167 submissions]
Reflects desire to demonstrate that regulations can be challenged with good design. Typical situation would be an urban in-fill lot.

Changing the Pattern: CTP

[Zero Merit Awards from the 13 submissions]
Allows expanded options for house designs on 25-foot wide lots when narrow lots are being created as part of a planned development or subdivision. Allows for rear auto access from an alley or common tract or for off-site garages.

Awards:

Phase I - Merit Awards

- Team 1052: Jill Dau, Blair Payson, and Scott Passman; Portland, Oregon;
- Team 1071: Michel Laflamme, and Jim Ralph; Vancouver, British Columbia;
- Team 1164: Wayne T. Chevalier, Adin Dunning, and Jeremy Fredrichs; Seattle, Washington;
- Team 2007: Hannes Wind, and Julia Zeleny; Vienna, Austria.

Phase I - Design Excellence Monograph

Please see awards Matrix for all forty-eight [48] winners.

People’s Choice Awards

- Team 1011: Tony Wai; Vancouver, British Columbia;
- Team 1052: Jill Dau, Blair Payson, and Scott Passman; Portland, Oregon;
- Team 1144: Roxana Vargas Greenan, and Trent Greenan; Berkeley, California;
- Team 3035: Bryan Higgins; Portland, Oregon.

Commissioner’s and Mayor’s Awards

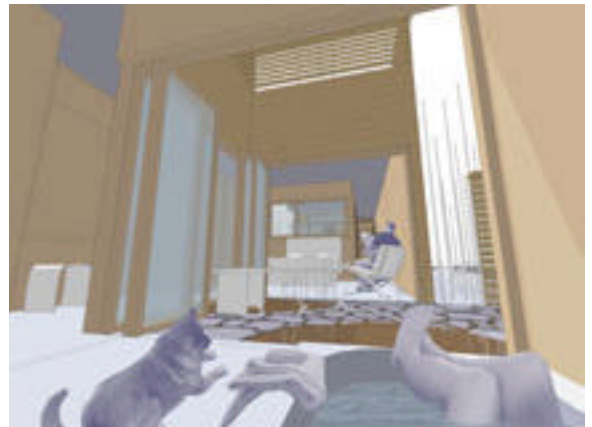
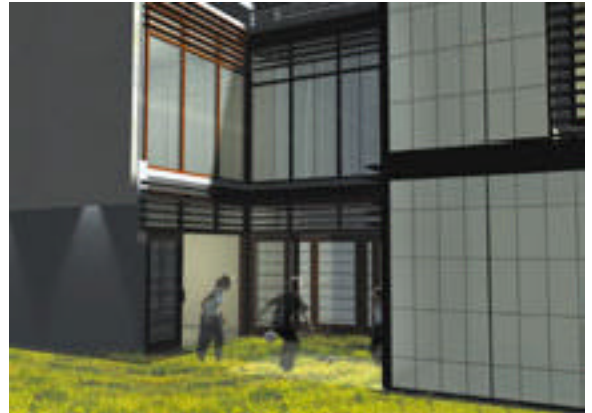
- Team 1151: Eric Schnell; Portland, Oregon.

Phase II - Portland Catalogue

Please see awards Matrix for all twenty-one [21] winners.

IMAGES: PDX Design Values
counterclockwise

- 3015: © Jelena Porovic, Lejla Odobasic
- 2041: © Tyler Runner
- 5009: © Katya Garanovskaya, Lynn Harritt
- 1166: © Emily Draper Refi, Karl Refi
- 1143: © Brock Danner, Peter Provost
- 3035: © Bryan Higgins





Portland's Progressive Vision:

The City of Portland is endeavoring to boldly restart the currently fractured dialogue among the differing parties that compose the housing market: legislators, designers, builders and homeowners. Due to market conditions over the last two decades, homeowners have stopped expecting houses and environments to be personalized; even though they do expect such thoughtful customization of their less expensive cars, sneakers and coffee. Favoring a more protective 'stick' role for neighborhood maintenance, some legislators across the nation have become less proactive with potential 'carrot-like' zoning requirements. And designers have seemingly lost their place in over 95% of the discussion altogether. This has cumulatively led to many new communities across the globe merely reflecting watered-down market conditions of a common denominator, versus addressing the diversity of families, community needs, and desires for urban environments.

Therefore, we decided that the results of the design competition must go beyond a single 'winner' to be truly visionary and proactive. By providing accessibility to a broad audience, the results are invigorating both the City of Portland and other communities beyond. The first action of the project, Phase I, created the publication of a nationally distributed full-color "Design Excellence Monograph" that beautifully displays 48 prototypical design visions. Then Phase II resulted in the "Portland Catalogue of House Designs for Narrow Lots", a compendium of 21 developable designs that respond to the variety of Portland neighborhoods and market demands. Both publications, with contact information for the exemplary design teams and intellectual property notice, are being heavily marketed in Portland and across North America. [Contact BDS for a free copy of either publication: www.livingsmartpdx.com]. We believe that many of the designs can be affordably built using standard construction methods, while implementing contemporary technologies and sustainable practices.

The significance of this competition is not just the distributed publications, but one should rather peer behind the curtain at the greater context and legacy creating vision of Mayor Vera Katz and her supportive City Council. As this project is an example of how the City of Portland actively seeks opportunities to collaborate with international designers, builders and neighborhood interests alike to generate creative design options that promote "living smart".

IMAGES: Site Engagement
 counterclockwise
 1148: © Brook Meier, Sweta Khilani
 1242: © Francisco Gomes, Dabney Staub, David Hardin, Jack Monroe
 2015: © Jeffrey Stern
 3062: © Derek Warr
 2008: © Robert Berry, Clover Linne
 1027: © Jazz Kalirai, Isabel Tobar, Santiago Morales
 4002: © Jairo Bernal, Ismael Torres



The density of the region's population is exponentially growing, so Portland's long-term commitment to the delineation of a regional Urban Growth Boundary yields both rewards and challenges. In order to protect the outlying open spaces and agricultural lands, this visionary approach to regional planning requires advocacy for in-fill development in the urban core and existing neighborhoods. As a result, the City has seen significant redevelopment and growth in the downtown area and can boast about an efficient light rail system and truly walkable neighborhoods. Issues of growth management are not just a local or regional dilemma, but ensure quality of life in urban areas worldwide. Recognizing that the great cities of the world have achieved their articulation through years of careful vision planning, the City of Portland has been actively engaging other civic, regional, national and international leaders in discussion about their urban processes. To supply energy for these visions, cities such as Barcelona, Brugge and Groningen have harnessed the power of design, and the economic diversity that it intrinsically develops, through a series of interwoven projects. Portland's design initiative is adapting the Richard Florida model to similarly empower the city.

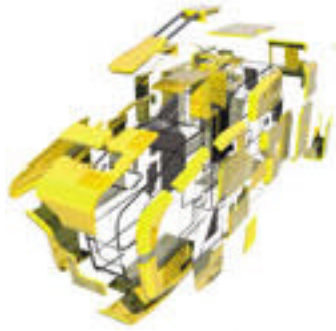
After the international flogging that Portland received back in 1984 for Graves' wrapped birthday cake of a public services building over finalists Erickson and Mitchell/Giurgola, this progressive vision making has been a cautious and uphill battle. But, always seeing herself as a city of innovation, the City of Portland has recovered from Mayor Frank Ivancie's unfortunate kitsch and is beginning to move towards an innovative Request for Design [RFD] process that is rooted in the Federal GSA's "Design Excellence" standards for new buildings. This will revise current RFP/Q and sole-source consultant methods, and endeavor to embrace emerging designers on an equal playing field with more seasoned professionals.

In March of 2002, Mayor Katz gave birth to the City Design Initiative, which would "inspire quality design of all buildings constructed in the City of Portland, beginning with the City's own facilities and signature developments in which it has a significant investment. Demonstrate design excellence is good business and beneficial to the life of the community by producing innovative and enduring works of architecture that will stand the test of time and be deemed remarkable examples of excellent design for years to come." First she created the multi-disciplinary leadership vision of the 29 member City Design Initiative Team, then knighted Bureau chiefs as "Project Design Innovation Team" leaders and lastly created the new position of Chief Urban Designer, to which she appointed Arun Jain to lead the charge. The tri-partite vision is to initiate: 1) Signature Projects; 2) Study and Modification of Current City Regulatory and Review Processes; and 3) Public Design Education for Portland citizens.

IMAGES: Site Engagement
 counterclockwise
 4014: © Gordon Sung, Amy Cheung
 4019: © Kimberly Pannan
 3061: © Atsushi Washio, Amy Kimura
 1114: © Jorge Abad, Rob Anastes, Rhonda Angerio, Jamey Glueck, Ed Gordon, Fred Jernigan, Kenyon Worell
 1224: © Carmen C. Cham, Tyler Goss, Steve Sanderson
 1045: © Stephanie Vermeulen
 2052: © Sisto Tallini



Fredrick H. Zal, Atelier Z



So, in June of 2003, when Commissioner Leonard noted to the press that there was a "dearth of well-designed plans" that could assist communities in their neighborhoods' physical composition, sense of livability and financial accessibility for the diversity of living situations of contemporary families; the City of Portland jumped at the opportunity of presenting the Living Smart design competition to "generate a large pool of options with a diverse aesthetic palette that Portlanders can take pride in.". Certainly Leonard's beliefs are the daily mantra of design professionals, but to have these words embraced by the City marked the saturation of the great change across all city bureaus.

To assure that these design options are desirable and functional for private builders, and to augment the citywide interest in streamlining and improving the City building processes, the City of Portland is identifying and implementing process incentives or other mechanisms based on the Phase II winners to help inform the progressive direction of the City's zoning code regulations and building permit process. With the huge public interest that this project has positively generated, it is Commissioner Leonard's intention that funding will be determined for a future Phase III / IV, with the consent of the new Mayor Tom Potter. In these potential phases, five to eight design teams would be commissioned to create construction documents from these schematic visions and then get them privately built in the Portland metropolitan area. Susan Feldman, manager of the BDS code review division, has also been consulting with the City of Santa Cruz, to adapt their contracting formula so that Portland itself might employ these Phase III designers directly. City staff in Los Angeles and Denver are collaborating with Feldman on a joint-planning session for the 2005 APA conference that promotes "designing the new American dream house" on very narrow urban lots. Jury member Douglas Garofalo is asking the City of Chicago to take similar input from designers during their re-write process. Plus, many developers and home builders, including two on the competition jury, Jeff Fish and Loren Waxman, were deeply impressed with a number of the designs, and have been communicating with some teams for potential design commissions and construction opportunities.

IMAGES:

Sections, counter clockwise

1082: © Yoonhee Choi, Jonathan Bolch

1112: © Joshua May

3070: © Julie Beckman, Keith Kaseman, Aaron Campbell, Brittany Macomber, Tyler Moore

1042: © Carlo Carbone

2030: © Anna Grasso

1042: © Carlo Carbone, opposite top

3041: © Benjamin Ellefson

3028: © Sarah Etingen Ayers

Panelization, top

3062: © Derek Warr

Mass Customization Product Families, opposite

1082: © Yoonhee Choi, Jonathan Bolch

Legacy Vision of Portland, Oregon – Behind the Curtain
 "Living Smart: Big Ideas for Small Lots" Design Competition

AWARDS

426 Submissions from 23 Countries

Team	Design Excellence [48] with Jury Merit [4]	Portland Catalogue [21]	People's Choice [4], and Mayor's / Commissioner's [1]	Team Members	Affiliation	City	State	Country
PDX1: 246 Entries				15-foot wide base, 25-foot max height, Garage required				
1011	DE		PC	Tony Wai		Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
1013	DE	CAT		Patrick Cheung		Markham	Ontario	Canada
1016	DE			Omar Gandhi, Julian Carnrite		Brampton	Ontario	Canada
1027	DE			Jazz Kalirai, Isabel Tobar, Santiago Morales		Derbyshire		UK
1031	DE			Diana Tiron, Celia Phillips	Atelier 1	Toronto	Ontario	Canada
1037		CAT		Erick Villagomez	Metis Design-Build	Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
1042	DE	CAT		Carlo Carbone		Montreal	Quebec	Canada
1045				Stephanie Vermeulen		Toronto	Ontario	Canada
1046	DE	CAT		Steven Lamothe		Weymouth	MA	USA
1051	DE			Ed Calnitsky, Greg Woloszyn, Lindsey Glushka, David Calnitsky, Sheldon Tara, Otto Cheng, Allen Nixon, Ron Ifody, Shauna Calnitsky, Diane Swan, Rachel Tennenhouse	Calnitsky Associates Architects	Winnipeg	Manitoba	Canada
1052	DE:M	CAT	PC	Jill Dau, Blair Payson, Scott Passman		Bellevue	WA	USA
1070	DE			Jim Ralph, Michel Laflamme	Michel Laflamme Design Studio	Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
1071	DE:M	CAT		Michel Laflamme, Jim Ralph	Michel Laflamme Design Studio	Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
1080	DE			Andrew Liang, Li Wen, Eiko Hamada-Ano, Gregory Haynes, Eri Kazari	Studio 0.10 Architects	Los Angeles	CA	USA
1098	DE			Peter Albertson, Michael Boes	MEK	San Francisco	CA	USA
1105	DE			Jason Roberts		Portland	OR	USA
1114	DE	CAT		Jorge Abad, Rob Anastes, Rhonda Angerio, Jamey Glueck, Ed Gordon, Fred Jernigan, Kenyon Worell	The Smith Sennett Associates, P.A.	Raleigh	NC	USA
1115	DE			Christo Logan, Marcy Wong, Donn Logan, Joyce Sima		Princeton	NJ	USA
1128	DE			John Szot		Brooklyn	NY	USA
1138	DE			Brian Phillips, Kelly Anderson	Interface Studio	Philadelphia	PA	USA
1139	DE	CAT		Paul Laurendeau		Montreal	Quebec	Canada
1143	DE			Brock Danner, Peter Provost	Grup LLC Design Cooperative	Nutley	NJ	USA
1144	DE	CAT	PC	Roxana Vargas-Greenan, Trent Greenan	Vargas Greenan Urban Design	Berkeley	CA	USA
1151			M/C	Eric Schnell	Alan Mascord Design Associates Inc.	Portland	OR	USA
1164	DE:M	CAT		Wayne T. Chevalier, Adin Dunning, Jeremy Fredrichs	bracket	Portland	OR	USA
1165	DE			Adin L. Dunning, Wayne T. Chevalier, Jeremy J. Fredrichs	bracket	Portland	OR	USA
1168	DE	CAT		Paul McKean, Amy Donohue		Portland	OR	USA
1193		CAT		Kevin Fischer, Collin Robinson	Alice Design	Portland	OR	USA
1224	DE			Carmen C. Cham, Tyler Goss, Steve Sanderson	frontOFFICE	Los Angeles	CA	USA
1225	DE			Clover Lee, William Koh, Thaddeus Zarse	William Koh and Associates, Structural Engineers	Los Angeles	CA	USA
PDX2: 42 Entries				15-foot wide base, 25-foot max height, No garage required				
2007	DE:M	CAT		Hannes Wind, Julia Zeleny	zeleny wind architects	Vienna		Austria
2011		CAT		Peter Albertson, Michael Boes	MEK	San Francisco	CA	USA
2015	DE	CAT		Jeffrey Stern		portland	OR	USA
2030	DE			Anna Grasso		Austin	TX	USA
2036	DE			Kristen Sidell, Peter Buffington		Berkeley	CA	USA
2039	DE			May So		Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
2042	DE			Mark Myers	Farm architecture	new york	NY	USA
2045	DE	CAT		Tom Gregg	TGA Architecture	Portland	OR	USA
2053	DE			Benjamin Luddy, Makoto Mizutani	Bluddy Design	Los Angeles	CA	USA
PDX3: 71 Entries				15-foot wide base, 30-foot max height, No garage required				
3006	DE			Bill J. Berry, Alexi Karavokiris		Tampa	FL	USA
3011	DE			Mark Dennis, Brett Kwong Hing, Christa MacArthur, Mona Tsui		Toronto	Ontario	Canada
3018		CAT		Matthew Berislavich		Independence	MO	USA
3025	DE			Ricardo Antón, Ann B. Harmon, Guillermo Muñoz, Jose Manuel Jimenez, Pablo Garcia	Anton-Harmon & Asociados architects	Madrid		Spain
3035	DE	CAT	PC	Bryan Higgins		Portland	OR	USA
3042		CAT		Bruce Fisher		Brooklyn	NY	USA
3043	DE			Cass Calder Smith, Lev Weisbach, Laura Mans	CCS Architecture	San Francisco	CA	USA
3051	DE			Brent Hinrichs, Kina Voelz, Simone Goldfeder		Portland	OR	USA
3061	DE			Atsushi Washio, Amy Kimura		San Francisco	CA	USA
3062	DE			Derek Warr	Adiabatic	North Miami	FL	USA
3070	DE			Julie Beckman, Keith Kaseman, Aaron Campbell, Brittany Macomber, Tyler Moore		Alexandria	VA	USA
PDX4: 42 Entries				19-foot wide base, 25-foot max height, Garage required				
4014	DE			Gordon Sung, Amy Cheung	GS Designworx	Burnaby	B.C.	Canada
4019	DE	CAT		Kimberly Pannan		Portland	OR	USA
4026	DE			studioGO	studioGO	San Francisco	CA	USA
CTP: 13 Entries				19-foot wide base, 40-foot max height, No garage required, Rear access to property allowed				
5003	DE			Rufina Wu		Vancouver	B.C.	Canada
5007	DE			Steven Mankouche	University of Michigan	Ann Arbor	MI	USA
5008		CAT		Jim Kudrna, Casey J. Hull, Mack Caldwell	University of Oklahoma	Norman	OK	USA
5009	DE			Katya Garanovskaya, Lynn Harritt		Portland	OR	USA