



CRIT

Ideas by the Future of Architecture

SPECIAL ISSUE: IN TRANSITION

CRIT is changing to better serve students of architecture.

Representing Architectural Education:

A discussion on the value of design school.

A Mountaintop Experience:

The student voice helps determine how schools are accredited.

Play Perch, A Story:

High-design, small-scale, public service architecture.

Speaking with Vishaan Chakrabarti:

Partner at SHoP Architects

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Thanks to all the students that participated in the Ascension Competition

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-Alan Metcalfe, Architect



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The Play Perch project in Syracuse, NY, in the middle of construction.

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CRIT welcomes editorial and design submissions as well as readers' comments. The Editor-in-Chief and the Board of Directors are committed to the publication of student work. All submissions become the property of AIAS.

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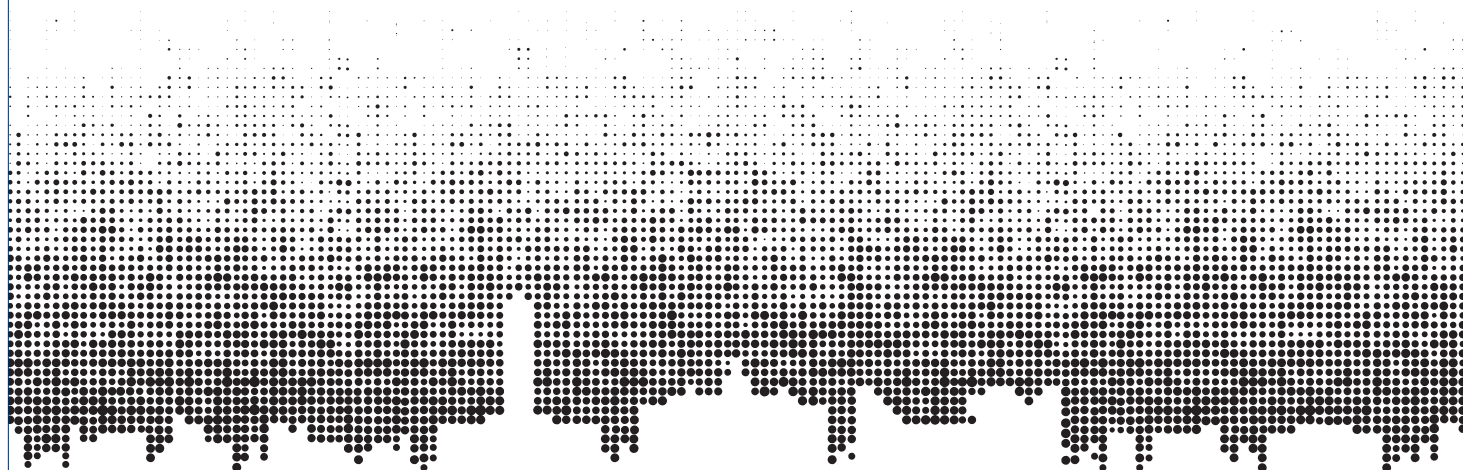


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CRIT welcomes ideas in all stages of development; the Editor-in-Chief will work with you to finalize the work for publication. Submissions that are not published in the upcoming issue will be held by the AIAS to be considered for publication in a future issue or alternate venue such as CRITnewsletter.

All submissions should include a 75-word biographical sketch including full name(s), academic or professional affiliations, and any other information the author(s) feel appropriate, such as leadership experience, work experience, study abroad experience, and research and career interests.

Full submission guidelines are available online.

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convention.aia.org

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aias.org/grassroots

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SPECIAL ISSUE: IN TRANSITION

The AIAS is the official voice of architecture students. CRIT exists to share that voice. As students, we provide a unique perspective on all things architecture: our education, licensure, and the state of the practice. However, our ideas unify only twice a year at our national AIAS conferences. CRIT seeks to bridge that gap in discourse and bring our collective **ideas by the future of architecture** to the public by the most effective means available.

This issue of CRITjournal represents the beginning of a multi-year transition for the official publication of the American Institute of Architecture Students. CRIT has long been the only publication, independent of a school, dedicated to sharing the work and thoughts of students of architecture. Yet, until now, those views were primarily shared with other students of architecture, if not only members of the AIAS. To increase the relevance of CRIT and, by extension, the AIAS and our contributors, we are making changes to expand our distribution, thereby growing our presence in the architectural community and beyond.

Starting with our upcoming 77th issue, CRIT will be an annual print publication released mid-fall. We are seeking content that will appeal to a broader audience of architecture professionals, academics, and even those outside of our tight, built-environment community. We intend to increase the page count of our print issue to create a publication of greater physical substance and intellectual significance. Further, we plan to release an expanded, digital issue each spring. Ideally, this will permit even greater access to CRIT as any design-curious individual will be able to access the publication via iOS or Google Play Newsstand.

Also, @CRITjournal has joined Twitter, embracing its ease of communication. Twitter allows us to engage directly with and preserve fleeting thoughts from our audience and our contributors. Tweet us with ideas you want to write about. Tweet us with questions you have for students of architecture worldwide; we will seek a response. The greater our network of followers becomes, the greater productive discourse we can generate.

We are also developing our new YouTube channel, CRITonAir. This new medium allows us to create and share conversations with students of architecture in dialogue with one another, as well as professionals, academics, and other thought leaders. The channel will feature panel discussions, Q&As, interviews, and more.

In the following pages, you will find a common desire to share what architecture students learn, know, and think with a more inclusive audience. Throughout this transition, the CRIT Editorial Team and I welcome your feedback. Please direct all ideas, questions, and comments to CRIT@aias.org. **CRIT**



George Guarino III
Editor-in-Chief, CRIT

Guarino is a fourth year undergraduate student at the Syracuse University School of Architecture and has been heavily involved with the AIAS since beginning college. In addition to serving as the 2012 AIAS Syracuse Chapter President, he has attended every Grassroots since, FORUM in Phoenix and numerous Quad Conferences. Guarino has served on both the National Membership Committee and Advocacy Task Force.



Westin Conahan, Assoc. AIA
National President of the AIAS

Westin Danger Conahan is a Las Vegas, NV resident, originally from Los Angeles, CA. He is a recent graduate of The University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and a minor in Solar and Renewable Energy Policy. He also obtained an Associate Degree in Business from the College of Southern Nevada. Westin has a deep appreciation for art and design of all types and has a passion for indie rock music. He is an aspiring architect by day and an amateur rock star by night.



Jennifer L. Taylor, Assoc. AIA
National Vice President of the AIAS

Jennifer is a graduate of the Tuskegee University Robert R. Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science, receiving a Bachelor of Architecture in May 2013. Nationally, Jennifer has served as an American Institute of Architects (AIA) Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador, AIA Council of Emerging Professionals Student Representative and Tuskegee Architecture and Construction Alumni Association Secretary of Young Alumni Affairs. Jennifer is also a recipient of the AIA Henry Adams Award.

MOVING FORWARD

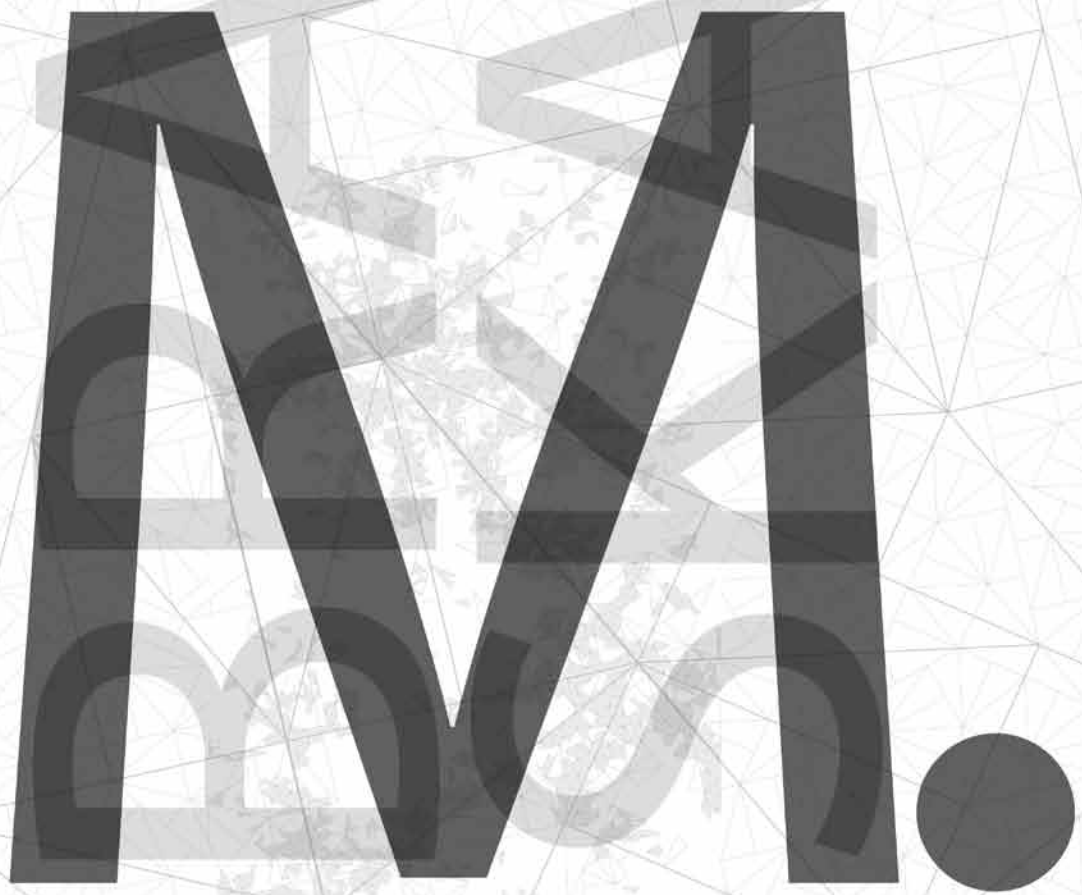
It is an honor to serve as the National President and Vice President of the American Institute of Architecture Students. We are grateful for the opportunity to represent architecture students across the nation, the future of our profession. We are fortunate to have passionate and dedicated members working together to make a difference with their chapters across the nation and world. The organization is currently facing many challenges including student loan debt, a lack of diversity in the profession, and the redefinition of what it means to be an architect. Each of these requires a creative solution. It is up to us as the next generation of design professionals to unite together to tackle these issues.

Nationally, the AIAS serves as targeted training for leadership, advocacy, professional development, and civic engagement. We focus heavily on ensuring that local chapter leaders have all the tools and resources necessary to provide meaningful programming at their universities and colleges, and that they are able to advocate on behalf of their students. Our Grassroots and FORUM conferences do this by exposing our members to these tools as well as to ideas from fellow colleagues and professionals. In many instances, the AIAS has become the primary experience for students who have not stepped foot into an architecture firm, sat for a mock interview, learned about national initiatives, accessed an international network of students, or heard a notable architect speak about the profession.

In addition to national conferences, the national President and Vice President sit at the table with the five collateral organizations of architecture to advocate on behalf of students. Initiatives that have come out of our engagement with the collaterals include changes in IDP, studio culture, and the National Design Services Act.

Although the AIAS creates solutions to the ever-changing face of architecture, students are still unsure of the value of membership. The American Institute of Architects is facing similar problems. For the past couple of years its members have been working toward a repositioning effort that focuses on recent graduates of architecture and young professionals that do not appear to show interest in joining a professional organization. Further, schools of architecture are concerned as their enrollment numbers continue to decrease, with some reporting as much as a thirty-five percent decrease. Overall the national enrollment average is down by five percent. The academy is asking itself "Why architectural education?" and is working toward redefining why prospective students should study architecture. This is largely a consequence of the Great Recession of which we are still recovering. The past five years of a weakened economy have forced everyone to look closely at what is important to them and what will best serve their futures. Unfortunately, architecture organizations and schools have felt some of that impact.

Are we being replaced by professionals in other industries? Is the advance of technology advancing the design process toward design automation? Do we truly need architecture to be designed by architects, or can somebody else with some other background in some



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pg. 25: *(Representing) Architectural Education*, a panel discussion inspired by the film *Archiculture*.

other field design everything instead? In response to these questions, it is important to address the history and spirit of architecture. Since the beginning of time, architecture inherently brings people together. It provides people, towns, countries and nations an identity – a sense of ownership. Many have said:

This is our house. This is our home. It is where our children will be born. Here is where we will worship. This is where I will create my masterpieces. This is our landmark, our milestone. Here we will build a great nation. This is where, today, we will make the world a better place. Within these designed walls, memories are made, meals are prepared, tears of joy and tears of sorrow are shed. Within these spaces we laugh, we dream and we learn to love. Here, inside these walls, is where we will die.

We cannot live without architects; we cannot thrive without architecture. We are the next generation of designers, innovators, creators, and architects. Although we now face many challenges, we must remain positive as we move forward. In a commencement address to graduating students in 2006, Stephen Colbert of *The Colbert Report* spoke to this:

Remember, you cannot be both young and wise. Young people who pretend to be wise to the ways of the world are mostly just cynics. Cynicism masquerades as wisdom, but it is the farthest thing from it. Because cynics don't learn anything. Because cynicism is a self-imposed blindness, a rejection of the world because we are afraid it will hurt us or disappoint us. Cynics always say no. But saying "yes" begins things. Saying "yes" is how things grow. Saying "yes" leads to knowledge. "Yes" is for young people. So for as long as you have the strength to, say "yes."

We cannot let these challenges cripple and discourage us. We must put our talent and skills to the test to come up with solutions. We have a unique set of skills to affect positive change in the profession and in the world. Although architecture is going through an apparent identity crisis, our generation must be part of the solution to get the profession back on track. We are young. We are passionate. We are the rising designers that will shape the future ahead. Say "yes" and make an impact on the world. It is not so much a question of whether architectural education matters, if we need architects or architecture. It is a question of how do we best communicate this irrefutable need to the world around us. Good design matters. Architecture matters. **CRIT**



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PLAY PERCH, *A STORY*

INTRODUCTION

Think back to when you were small, when a treehouse represented the best of what this world could offer. Your small fingers would gingerly grip the bark on that precarious climb up, nervously excited for what might be found as your eyes crossed the threshold. You trusted your instinct that the journey would be worth it, trying to keep focus on the end goal. Heart racing, eyes wide, you felt a sense of exhilaration and completeness as you looked from your outpost. Looking back, perhaps that experience was so special because, for a moment, it became possible to inhabit an entirely new realm of being—to be a squirrel, bird or bee nestled in that safe hideaway. Maybe those moments even came to inform the lens through which you saw the rest of the world. Unknowns were a little less scary. Things simply made more sense there.

This was just like that.

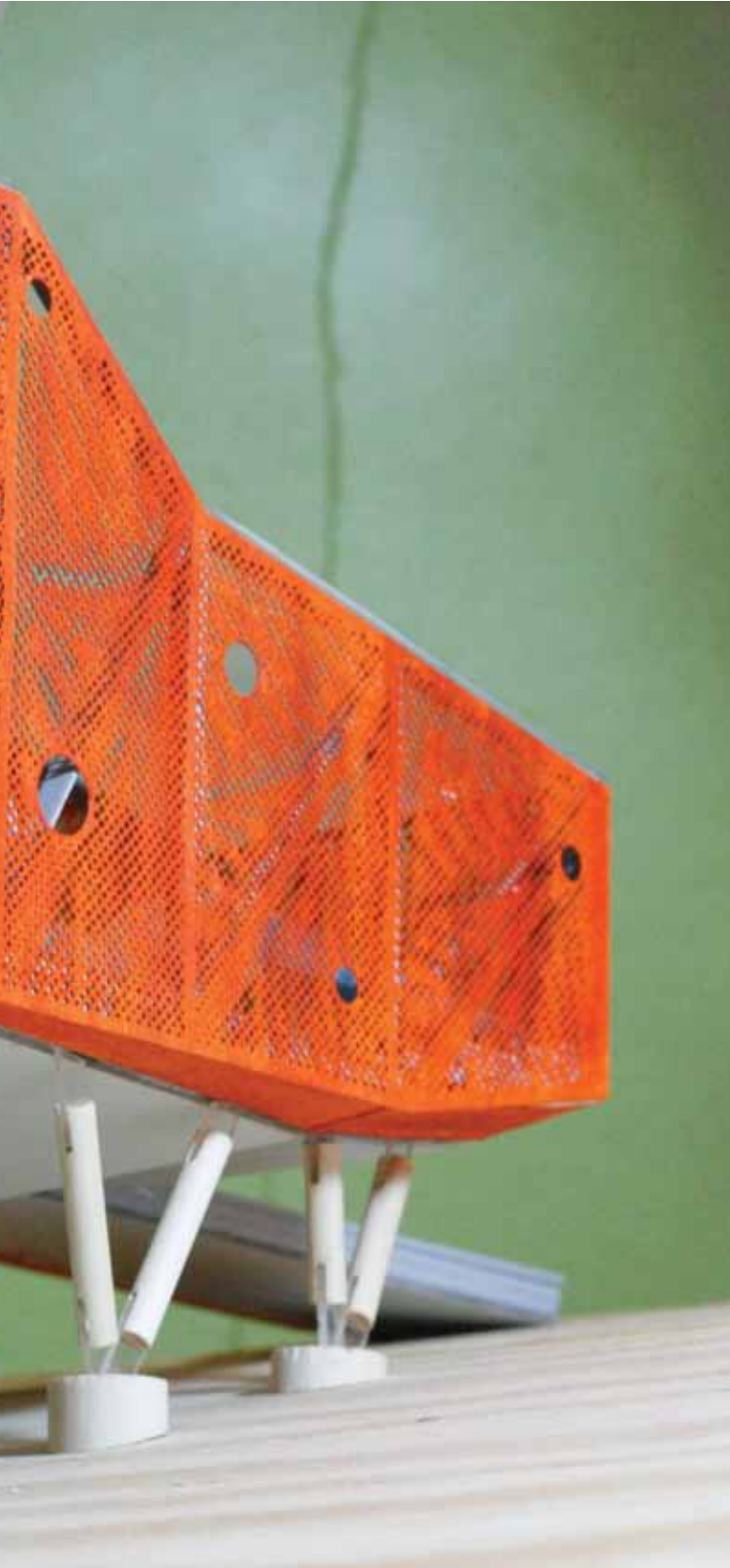
Presentation model produced for a client meeting. The model is made with basswood and plexiglass and is clad in laser-cut paper colored with chalk pastel.

Sally Morrow

BArch Syracuse University '13

Sally is an Intern Architect at Duality Studio in Chattanooga, TN where she and her partner utilize a 60/40 model of practice, donating 40% of their time through community partnerships. Her previous work is characterized by an alternative and inclusive approach to spatial design, including visual display for Anthropologie and community-impact design with the Glass House Collective.

CONTRIBUTOR



EAGER BEGINNING

Last fall, fourteen Syracuse University students and two professors began a collaboration to re-envision what a treehouse could be. Though we were housed in the School of Architecture, we brought an immense range of interests to the table: fine arts, entrepreneurship, sociology, and public policy, to name a few. Despite our range in age and background, we all seemed to look back on our experiences spent in treehouses as formative for our sense of imagination.

We were tasked by our client, a local preschool and kindergarten named the Jowonio School, to create a treehouse that would serve as a new feature on their nature trail. Just that simple. Uniquely, however, Jowonio takes an inclusive-learning approach which places children with the full spectrum of mental and physical abilities in the same classroom. Their teaching method is unique as well: they use hands-on learning as a way to break the divide that might otherwise form between their students. No matter sun, rain or snow, Jowonio students are developing their sensory abilities by exploring nature. Thus, the Play Perch was not to be purely recreational, but to act as an outdoor classroom.

Realizing that this project was beyond the ability of a few students in the two or three weeks we historically allotted for AIAS Freedom by Design builds, a 3-credit independent study course was formed to lead the design and building of Jowonio's new structure with the support of our Freedom By Design team. Having grown out of an AIAS chapter with a particularly enthusiastic and accomplished Freedom by Design team, our course was student-driven and community-focused. We were out to prove that student design/build at Syracuse University could be more than a weekend project and that even as emerging architectural designers we could push the boundaries of our field.

VIGOROUS EXPLORATION

A treehouse seems like a simple enough space. Parents build these in their free time: lumber, nails, and done.

Though we were aware, because of our education and our client's needs, that our process would be much more complex, we were met constantly with unanticipated challenges. We were expecting a manageable weekend hike, but instead, ended up on a nine-month, metaphorical trek through the Appalachian Trail. Nothing about this process would prove to be predictable.



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It took us about two weeks to learn that **each of our early assumptions related to the creation of this structure would be challenged.** The initial site was set upon a slope too steep for a stable foundation and safe working conditions. The 100 square feet initially planned for would not be large enough to accommodate an entire class of about fifteen students and ten adult teachers and aids. Our funding gap was becoming a very real concern.

But for each difficult climb there is a yielding descent. With the assistance of a geotechnical engineer, we located a new site with more stable soil, and recruited engineering students to help us survey the site to develop the most efficient structural plan. We doubled the size of our proposed designs, and adjusted our fundraising goals accordingly.

This was problem-solving at its finest. We learned to deflect rather than absorb the shock of another unexpected obstacle. In those early weeks we were working around the clock—simultaneously designing countless iterations of the form, meeting with the school and university, developing a marketing

strategy, and aggressively fundraising. Our weekly meetings adopted an incredibly professional tone as most of us grappled with real-world building permitting, value engineering, and construction documents for the first time.

Bonds between students of all years and faculty strengthened as we pushed forward together. Learning to trust one another's abilities and discovering strengths within ourselves, reinforced by the weekends on site, led to incredible camaraderie. **Leaders began to emerge** in different areas ranging from administration to design to construction sequencing, as we each had room to stretch our wings.

After weeks of iterative design, the finalized scheme took form.

Our spindly creature-like design emerged as a strange hybrid between a Star Wars AT-AT Imperial Walker and an Eastern Blue Bird, the state bird of New York. Its legs, locally sourced black locust timber, would meet a post-industrial Corten steel body complete with 'beak' lookout window and 'tail feather' accessibility ramp. At approximately 250 square feet it could



Above: The Syracuse weather became a severe impediment to continuing on-site work.

Left: Fabrication continued through the winter indoors in the Syracuse Architecture woodshop: the benefit of panelized construction.



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accommodate an entire class, but with a ceiling ranging from four to nine feet, it was **scaled to prioritize the vantage point of children** rather than their adult companions. Though fully enclosed, a perforated skin with strategically placed windows and a central oculus would reinforce the connection to its natural surroundings. A translucent polycarbonate roof projects leaf patterns and brings a soft ambient glow into the space without the need for artificial lighting. Though visually distinct from its natural environment, the user experience would be dictated by it in every way.

This initial exploration process was much like the precarious climb we made when we were small. Trust your instincts, don't look back, and no matter what, just keep moving.

QUIET EXCITEMENT

A buzz developed in the School of Architecture as we progressed in construction. Each bolt, cut, and bag of concrete made it clear that what only weeks before had been in our imaginations was soon to be tangible. The design and construction sequence ensured that foundations could be poured and structure installed while the details of the body were refined. While largely successful, each unexpected peak and valley in the initial building phases prevented our goal of completing construction by the end of the semester. Each day was an uphill battle against the extreme central New York winter, and by November we were faced with the reality that our work schedule was no longer feasible. Harsh winter

Above: Minor work on the Play Perch sometimes continued past sunset. Here, students are installing perforated panels that will imitate the starry night sky when backlit by the outdoor light fixtures.

Near Right: The Play Perch meets the ground with oversized, dyed concrete footings and custom-welded, powder-coated splines that slot into naturally weather-resistant, locally-sourced black locust posts.

Right: A student installs the copper lining for the Play Perch's main window.

Far Right: Perforated Corten steel panels are fastened to the Play Perch.





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conditions began to overtake the crisp autumn, and our project was nowhere near completion. We carried on regardless—some students even worked over the winter holiday—and finished the semester with completed footings, structural supports, and decking, but with only half of our prefabricated wall panels. Morale was at a low as we watched our goal of December completion finally slip away.

Then Spring semester began and **new life was breathed into the project.** Half of the students in the Fall course were now studying abroad and unable to participate, but those of us left on campus resolved to see the project through—without course credit—on behalf of the group. New leadership for AIAS Syracuse and our Freedom by Design program brought new

voices and resources to the table. Forty new students were looking to get involved thanks to the excitement garnered in the Fall. In one of the most difficult moments in the project, those of us who had lived Play Perch for months had to find a way to gracefully step aside and foster new leadership. We were exhausted and needed the energy and talent of our new team members.

Since finer details of the project, specifically the design of the Perch's underbelly and interior build-out, were largely unresolved, we agreed to hand them over to our new crew. Just as we had done the previous semester, they went through the process of iterative design, prototyping, and client presentations with Jowonio. We watched as their early designs struggled with





material feasibility and budget constraints, looking back on how we had also struggled with the very same obstacles. The rhythm of hills and valleys lived on.

Resolution and vision for the new components only built up the group's anticipation of the project's completion. No longer was it the isolated brainchild of a small group. Dozens of architecture and engineering students, faculty and administrators (including the University Chancellor), as well as hordes of supporters from the Jowonio community had dedicated their time and resources to ensure its success. Having traversed an incredible distance on a trek fraught with stumbles, we were nearly there. "What could it possibly even look like to be on the other side of this journey?" we wondered.

WHOLEHEARTED FULFILLMENT

And there it was, the same feeling of absolute completeness I remember from my childhood treehouse days.

On the morning of the ribbon cutting ceremony in May, I looked around at my classmates and their families standing side by side with Jowonio families, all of us overcome with emotion to see the students exploring the treehouse for the first time. It was just as we had envisioned. They climbed and stretched and jumped just as we had hoped they would. How did they know? We were mesmerized. So many hours of thought had gone into each square inch of its surface that it was difficult not to feel like the day was in some way a celebration of us. Look at the meaningful work we contributed to our community with such a small, dedicated group! Look at all the knowledge we gained in the process! "You did a great job," we were told by those around us. "What amazing work!" And while we were all relieved and proud to hear those words, that moment ultimately was not about us at all. It couldn't be. It was about children whose parents never dreamed their child would experience the simple joy of looking at the world as a bird would. It was about passing along thousands of happy treehouse moments to the next generation, knowing that as emerging architects we have the ability, if not the responsibility, to reshape the conversation about inclusivity in our field and design in our communities. It was about freedom by design. **CRIT**



Above: The completed interior of the Play Perch. At the far window, children are roughly twelve feet off the ground.

Left: The children of the Jowonio School on opening day.



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Image: Garrett Miller, MArch student || More info: cca.edu



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In the United States, most state registration boards require a degree from an accredited professional degree program as a prerequisite for licensure. The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), which is the sole agency authorized to accredit U.S. professional degree programs in architecture, recognizes three types of degrees: the Bachelor of Architecture, the Master of Architecture, and the Doctor of Architecture. A program may be granted a 6-year, 3-year, or 2-year term of accreditation, depending on the extent of its conformance with established educational standards. || Doctor of Architecture and Master of Architecture degree programs may consist of a pre-professional undergraduate degree and a professional graduate degree that, when earned sequentially, constitute an accredited professional education. However, the preprofessional degree is not, by itself, recognized as an accredited degree || The NAAB grants candidacy status to new programs that have developed viable plans for achieving initial accreditation. Candidacy status indicates that a program should be accredited within 6 years of achieving candidacy, if its plan is properly implemented.

(REPRESENTING) ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION



CRITonAir, our growing YouTube channel hosted (Representing) Architectural Education, a panel discussion, on November 14, 2013. The questions and discussion that follow were both inspired by the panel's experiences watching and sharing the short documentary Archiculture, produced by Arbuckle Industries. The film follows a group of young design students through their final semester at the Pratt Institute in New York City. Comments from the Co-Director of Archiculture, Ian Harris, are adapted from a follow-up interview also available on CRITonAir.

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CRIT: What is the essence of our education, and how do we share that with the world?

Rachel Law: Every architect that I speak to always says that sketching is paramount, being able to communicate what you're thinking on a piece of paper. Students and professors have to be responsible for the relationship between drawing and computer technique, and making them harmonious is essential to architectural education right now. It's not one thing overriding the other; it's bringing all of the media together in order to communicate your idea.

Charlie Klecha: I, for one, am absolutely terrible at hand-sketching. Yet, I value the importance of the hand in the work. I expected, coming from a non-architectural undergrad, that as soon as I started, I would be able to draw. I've never picked it up. The importance that is placed on CAD, BIM, Illustrator, and Photoshop is necessary for today's practice. I fear that hand sketching is getting lost along the way. Rapid prototyping and laser cutting are great ways to keep things in the real and the tangible, and to do so in a more efficient way. Even though I still can't draw, I still carry a sketchbook with me everywhere and try. I haven't gotten any better yet, but maybe I will.

Ian Harris: I studied architecture and I am now producing films. That is a tribute to being a generalist in design school. That is not to say that everyone is a generalist coming out of school. Many schools are creating very specialized architecture students that can plug into a firm and use specialized software or excel at a specific task. They are very employable now. How they

develop into licensed, practicing architects concerns me because managing a business takes a lot of other skill sets. Whether you are telling a story in architecture or telling a story in a film, you are orchestrating a symphony. You are always coming back to the napkin drawing or that parti to make sure that there is one primary idea. You are bringing in people that have far more talent than you have, in their niches, and making sure that the whole picture stays aligned. With our society and our systems getting more complex, the term architect is being thrown around to so many different professions. Architects are fighting to keep that word within the building industry because there is a value in being the overarching generalist.

CRIT: Do you think that majoring in architecture is more about learning to design buildings, or immersing yourself in a liberal-arts based major in problem-solving?

Westin Conahan: The real concern is how we define architect and architecture these days. There has been a blurring of the lines of what it means to be an architect and we've seen other industries start to pick up the word, software engineering being one of them. I don't think we can limit architecture to just the built form. Architects are trained to solve problems more than anything, especially in undergraduate education; students aren't focused as much on actual building systems as they are on problem solving. When students are given a program, they are searching for solutions for that specific program, which can be applied to other problems. We need to keep better track of those of us who don't go into

Prior Page: A typical design critique where a student presents, defends, and discusses his work with faculty and other critics.

Right: Students carefully craft models to convey their ideas from raw materials.



Westin Conahan

Westin Danger Conahan is originally from Los Angeles, CA. He is a recent graduate of The University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and a minor in Solar and Renewable Energy Policy. He obtained an Associate Degree in Business from the College of Southern Nevada. Westin has a deep appreciation for art and design of all types and has a passion for indie rock music.



Ian Harris

Ian graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Architecture with a focus in Urban Planning from the University of Cincinnati. He has spent the past seven years developing his cinematic eye. He currently balances time as the head Technology Coordinator for the Center for Architecture, teaching design education to public school students, and producing films on the built environment, including *Archiculture*, through his co-founded company, Arbuckle Industries.



Charlie Klecha

Klecha is in his final year of the Master of Architecture program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He is currently the AIAS SAIC Chapter President and the Student Director on the AIA Illinois Board. His undergraduate degree is in Lighting Design and Stage Production from the University of Michigan. He plans to work in architecture for the performing arts and entertainment, and architectural lighting and digital media.



Rachel Law

Rachel Law is currently studying her third year in the Department of Architectural Science at Ryerson University. Serving as the AIAS Ryerson Chapter President, she is dedicated to raising the standards and public awareness of architectural education and empowering students to be leaders in their profession and communities. Continuing her education, she hopes to gain more insight on interactive and adaptive designs and how the implementation of emerging technologies will impact contemporary architectural practice.



Korey White

Korey is working towards a Master in Architecture and a Master in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Colorado Denver. Korey earned her Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign in 2007. As a student at CU Denver, Korey served as the AIAS Chapter President and Student Director for the AIA Colorado Board of Directors. Currently, she is interning with Path21 Architecture in Denver, CO.

PANELISTS



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architecture practice. We have found that fifty percent of students do not go into architecture as a career, and we need to know what they are doing now. If we keep better track of them and how they are utilizing the skills they learned in architecture school, it would help us communicate what an architect does and what an architect is capable of.

CRIT: How should architecture schools represent themselves to their university, or to other universities?

CK: The lines between design fields are falling away. Fields like theater, lighting, and graphics are related back to how we are trained as synthesizers of experience. The constant interaction with other majors keeps us in the know of what is happening, not only in academia, but also within the broader context. We have gotten ourselves pigeon-holed by giving away a lot of what used to fall under the title of master builder. It is essential for us as an academy and as a profession to start reaching out again and to build connections to other areas of design and of thought.

Korey White: It's important to be interdisciplinary and not multidisciplinary. There's a point at which multidisciplinary can start to water down what it is we do as architects, and what urban planners do as planners, and what engineers do as engineers.

WC: A lot more can be done at schools. It would be interesting, for example, to have architecture students create a video about a piece of architecture in their city, and therefore need to work with the film department. Right now, the profession is struggling because the general public doesn't seem to understand what an architect does. If we can start to get architects and other majors to interact in school, it would give everyone a better understanding of what an architect does. In turn, it will help us better understand what our clients will need.

CRIT: We've had mention of synthetic thinkers, the merging of fields, interdisciplinary versus multidisciplinary. Are architects particularly suited to be synthetic thinkers, is that what our particular skill is?

CK: It's important that we, as architects, have the big-picture vision, and can manage lots of moving parts, but realistically we are never going to get rid of the profession of structural engineering.

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We're going to continue to specialize, even within the practice of architecture, where there are people who specialize in healthcare, or education, or residential. Understanding the broader picture is what makes us architects. Engineers and contractors are not without that understanding, but our role specifically is to be that big-picture coordinator.

KW: It is an interesting combination of the scientific and the artistic. That is what is unique about architectural education and what will continue to be unique about architectural education. The grounding of architecture in artistry is what makes us different and what makes us great.

CRIT: Starchitecture has undoubtedly had an impact on architectural education. Students still come into architecture school expecting to be the next starchitect. Do you think this is a problem, and that it should be addressed?

WC: Students should come in reaching for the stars. Architecture is about making a difference; whether that is public service or doing architecture in third-world countries or however you choose to do that. I don't think we should discourage our students from wanting to be a starchitect. There is nothing wrong with that. You can not blame someone for branding themselves efficiently and making it profitable and that's all starchitects have done. It's a lot like an Apple product. They have created a great product that they repeat and sell very well. That doesn't speak for the majority of architects. Whether they are dreaming to be the next Zaha Hadid or Frank Gehry, we need to prepare them for all of the opportunities available to them. It's about preparing them for architecture is on all levels.

KW: It is starting to be addressed by students themselves. I've noticed increased enthusiasm in public-interest design. There

is this counter-trend of our generation wanting to go out and make a difference, not that other generations haven't, but by not waiting for something, but just doing it ourselves. Look at design/build programs within architecture, Freedom by Design, those all let students figure out what their dreams are and how to achieve them while they are still in school. I think that is key and the shift is already happening whether or not that is where you want to go personally or professionally. We will continue to see that we have control over what our education is, and how we earn a degree, and what skills we want to graduate with.

WC: It should be stated that the idea of a starchitect is not a new thing. Our media generally glorifies figures in the present day, whether it be a rock star or a movie star. Yet, there have always been big-name architects back to the start of the profession.

CK: That's an important point; that the title is what's new, and that is what people are latching on to. As with every other facet of Western production, architecture has become commodified. It has become something that's been promoted in culture, in media, because certain people do it in a way that gets attention. Those people are elevated to some pedestal, so we've created this term for them. There have always been notable architects who were well-respected and well-known in society. Ambition to do great, to get recognition for your work and changing the way the practice operates is a noble goal.

CRIT: What is architecture students' greatest asset?

IH: At any school you find a crowd of optimists. The asset that a lot of design students have is the optimism and the creative goals to make change for better. There is opportunity all over the place; if more design students were entrepreneurial,



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Right: A student works on an architectural model in studio.

specifically architecture students, then we would have a much better built environment. The financial collapse of 2008 caused a lot of designers and recent graduates to make decisions based on finances alone. They have debt and they need to cover that debt and use the skills that they just built to feel fulfilled. With large firms not hiring, they went out and instigated work by helping and finding holes in their local community have now gone on to start their own design firms that are doing the most innovative and creative work that's out there right now. All of that together is what the biggest asset is, but not all schools are preparing students for that, and not all of them need to.

CRIT: What reactions have you seen from people after viewing *Archiculture*?

WC: I've heard a lot of speculation on the evolution of studio culture and whether studio culture, as represented by *Archiculture*, is still relevant. Does studio culture remain relevant for graduate students, or students that come from diverse backgrounds? Many of those students have families, or have kids, or have to work multiple jobs, and how does architecture accommodate a nontraditional student within the traditional model? From my perspective, studio culture as presented in the film is not so much about sleeping and eating and living within the studio walls, but rather as a collaborative space where ideas flourish and are exchanged by the minute. It's about the camaraderie that is formed in studio. If you ask graduates, even twenty years afterwards, they all have fond memories of the experience and the relationships they formed.

RL: Many of our students commented that it was one of the first times our education was portrayed without almost any bias, and many of them show it to their families and friends to say, "Here is what I am doing in school."

IH: It depends on who is in the audience that night and who is on the panel. I have been amazed by how each screening is a reflection of its venue, whether it's at an architecture school, or at an art or design center. What the film does really well is show how we are developing the skills for the profession, and how that works within different communities. I was at Rogers Williams University that is a completely different place than UT San Antonio. Each of these schools is a reflection of their local design scene, and particularly San Antonio, as the school is located in an urban setting, though San Antonio's urban qualities aren't that robust. The school is located on the fringe of downtown, so how do students feel about going to school and spending all those hours there, because there aren't a lot of residences around there, so that creates a specific culture. At Roger Williams, students live close and there is this robust all-night culture there. Each of these worlds that the film is dropped into has a completely different impact; sometimes it's the AIAS students that want to have a more complex and dynamic discussion about studio culture, so they bring their faculty in and force them to have this conversation. Other times it's students going into the profession feeling disjointed about how they are being trained, so it's different. Each time, the conversations keep going after, so we don't see the conversation dying down. We see the film and the screenings as a way to pull that pin and let all of that air out. All of those emotions from the past come out for people who haven't been there in a while, and they really engage it.



© Arbuckle Industries

From the screenings that I've been to, the most notable responses have come from when we screened it at the AIA National Convention in June in Denver, AIAS Grassroots in DC, and when we screened it at the Association of Architecture Organizations. Each one exposed the film to a new group of people. The most important comment that came out of those came from the AIA. Some of the Board members were in the audience watching the film, and their impetus was to say, 'if we want any of this change to manifest itself, it needs to come from the youth with a strong voice.' The film pulls people studying architecture, practicing architecture, and teaching architecture together; very rarely do you get all three in the same room at the same time.

CRIT: So *Archiculture* gives a fairly accurate representation of our education, but is it the way we should promote architecture?

CK: We should definitely embrace media to get our message out there. We as a society are becoming more visual. Any chance we get to create something that is succinct in content and sparks conversation is prudent and something that we in architecture do very quickly and often. If we can continue that for the general public it would greatly enhance architecture going forward.

KW: It would be interesting to share the film with people who aren't connected with architecture education or the profession, because we all have some similar experience in studio, but it isn't something many people outside understand. The film itself is important, and the conversation that it sparks is even more important, so we should be sharing this with those outside the studio, so that they can be brought into the conversation and we can educate them on what it is that we do.

IH: Looking forward to next summer we are going to stop the individual screenings and we are looking at a wider distribution of the film, maybe online or a PBS-type setting. We are keeping our ears open to all options and we are looking to eventually release a DVD set with the film that will be distributed to high school and colleges to keep these conversations going. **CRIT**



Joshua Seiler

Joshua Seiler is in his fourth year pursuing his BArch at Penn State University. He grew up outside of Pittsburgh where he experienced the resurgence of neighborhoods through community-based design solutions. He has served as the AIAS Penn State Chapter Vice President for 2011 - 2013 and is currently a member of the AIAS National Advocacy Committee.

THE NATIONAL DESIGN SERVICES ACT

As most students of architecture know, an architectural education is almost as costly as it is rewarding. Modeling materials, printing, and that caffeine fix are just some of the costs that architecture students pay in addition to tuition. These costs can often not be met without borrowing money. In response to burgeoning student debt, the AIA and the AIAS have developed a solution.

The National Design Services Act (NDSA) is a bill written to provide architects, and those pursuing licensure, relief from their student loan debt in exchange for work in communities with a need for design. Under the proposed bill, The Department of Housing and Urban Development would provide the loan relief in exchange for work in designated community design centers. Architects and intern architects would provide services, such as designing low-cost housing, overseeing historic preservation, planning energy- and water-saving retrofits, and developing long-range community development plans. While providing a solution for the growing problem of student debt, the NDSA would create an opportunity to keep creative young graduates in the architecture profession and simultaneously benefit underserved communities across the country.

Student loan debt is one of the biggest issues facing emerging design professionals. The AIAS Financial Survey showed that architecture students graduate with an average of \$40,000 in student loan debt. The suggested ten-year repayment plan results in a minimum monthly payment of \$450 and approximately \$11,000 in interest. The scale of this debt, right out of school, creates many problems for emerging professionals as it can affect job opportunities and form a barrier to further education. Currently, doctors and lawyers receive student loan relief in exchange for their services in these locations. Similar to these professionals, architects can improve these communities.

This bill allows the value of design to impact communities that cannot afford it, increasing the awareness of architecture's potential to create change. Using the perspective and skills of architects to improve neglected communities proves to the world beyond the architectural community that the skills of architects are not just a luxury. As our profession and communities continue to feel the effects of the recession, the NDSA gives architects a new opportunity to showcase their ability to bring value to communities with their work.

Architects and emerging design professionals are already using their skills to improve communities. Architecture for Humanity, a non-profit organization funded by donations from around the world, draws a network of over 50,000 volunteers who donate their time and design skills. These volunteers use their resources to improve local communities and areas that have felt the hardship of natural disasters. Currently, there is ongoing work with stakeholders and community members to rebuild Haiti, and the portions of the East Coast battered by Hurricane Sandy. Students are participating through volunteer programs, like AIAS Freedom by Design, bringing small-scale design solutions to communities. The weight of student loan debt discourages emerging design professionals to choose this work in favor of more financially supportive options, but the NDSA allows professionals to continue volunteer efforts and improve communities with federal financial support.

Student loans affect the lives of architecture students for years after their graduation. The potential of these widespread positive impacts has mobilized emerging design professionals and architects to advocate for their profession and their future. Through advocacy, architecture students can shape the future of the field. Architecture students persuade design critics on a weekly basis, defending deeply personal work. Members of the AIAS and other student organizations interact with their communities, faculty, administration, business owners and other students to convince them of the worth of their programming and ideas. Architecture students can use these skills to win over their legislators and stimulate support for the NDSA. Architects are incredibly well connected with business people, politicians, and city officials as it is the only way to accomplish the task of building. These stakeholders are the allies we need to bring it to fruition. As architects and architects-to-be, we have the ability to transform this bill into a law for ourselves, our profession, and the public we serve. **CRIT**

STEP 1

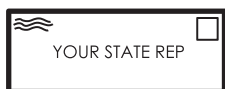
Identify your member of Congress.



Hello... How are you?...I am calling to about the NDSA...

STEP 2

Contact the Member's office and ask to speak to the staffer who manages education issues.



Hello... i am following up about the NDSA...

STEP 3

Offer to send the staff a copy of the legislation and the NDSA: FAQ document.



STEP 4

After forwarding materials, follow up with a request for a meeting to discuss the bill.



Email to: shervansebastian@aia.org
This is how I helped the push the NDSA forward....

STEP 5

E-mail Shervan Sebastian at AIA National with a summary of who you've spoken to and your impressions of the interactions for the AIA's Government Relations team to further the discussion.





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A portrait of Vishaan Chakrabarti, a man with dark hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a dark jacket over a collared shirt and a tie. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

SPEAKING WITH Vishaan Chakrabarti

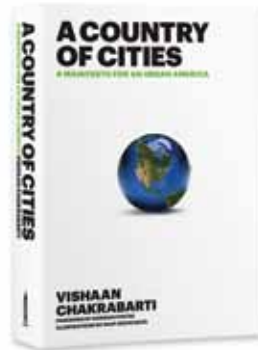
Following is a transcript of an interview with Vishaan Chakrabarti conducted by CRIT Editor-in-Chief George Guarino III. The interview was conducted in his office at Columbia University's GSAPP in New York City on October 25, 2013. This text has been edited for clarity and brevity.

SPEAKING WITH Vishaan Chakrabarti

sh p

Vishaan Chakrabarti is a partner at SHoP Architects leading major architecture and urban development efforts worldwide.

Vishaan is the Marc Holliday Associate Professor of Real Estate Development and the Director of the Center for Urban Real Estate at Columbia University. His recent book, *A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for an Urban America* (Metropolis Books, 2013), argues that a more urban United States would result in a more prosperous, sustainable, joyous, and socially mobile nation.



CRIT: Where do you think architects are most undervalued or overvalued? Where are architects needed most, or wasting their valuable skills?

Vishaan: I think architects are generally undervalued in terms of their ability to problem-solve around a vast array of issues, especially urban issues, because **we're one of the last forms of education that is synthetic and self-generative.** In studio you are handed a blank piece of paper and asked to design as opposed to being tested on something where you are regurgitating information. We're undervalued because people don't understand the power of that education. Where it is overvalued is starchitecture – clearly.

CRIT: How can emerging architects increase their relevance as they enter the profession? How can emerging architects position themselves to have the greatest impact?

V: By understanding the breadth of their discipline. If they are constantly trying to operate along this very narrow bandwidth of design for designers, they quickly reduce their actual impact. Design is very important and very powerful...but, it needs to be thought about within the larger context of other forces at play (in a big city). I think that's how you become a better, smarter, and more relevant architect.

CRIT: What are your thoughts on the current path to licensure for architects?

V: I think there's still a long way to go with the IDP system. If you think about what happens in medicine, the idea that you're in school to learn about theoretical stuff, your first few years as a professional should really be about learning a series of professional things that you can then bring to closure with licensure. I think that there are a lot of firms that just don't see it that way and just take advantage of young employees and don't train them very much. At SHoP, one of the things we try to do is have young people come through projects and not just in the beginnings.

CRIT: ...and how about the massive student debt that most students of architecture graduate with?

V: This issue is tough because you do need three years to study architecture as an M Arch I. It is very hard to get around the expense of that. It's a very expensive education to operate. I'd advise that people not pursue architecture light-heartedly. It is an intense education, you spend a lot of money getting it, and you don't make a lot of money coming out of it, so you have to be dedicated to it. You need to **use the time that you are in school to keep a broad array of interests to stay relevant** and remain valuable when you leave school.



Domino Sugar Refinery, Brooklyn, NY, SHoP

CRIT: What do you think students of architecture should be advocating for?

V: In school, I think students need to be advocating for a truly interdisciplinary approach to pedagogy. Schools talk about having interdisciplinary work but...

CRIT: It's a buzzword?

V: Yea, it's just a buzzword that can be said and thrown away. We're (Columbia GSAPP) trying very hard to implement it. The logistics of it are hard, you have to get over certain faculty preconceptions, but you can do it.

Outside of school, in my opinion, all young architects need to take on ideas and assignments they weren't necessarily asked to do. You can go to a city and say, "I have this idea for this." If it's a sound idea, students will find that people will listen. I think it's really important to keep that field broad. If you think a public space could be designed differently or work differently — say so. Few fields other than architecture have the capacity to understand those issues.

CRIT: Where have you seen yourself have the greatest impact: in academia, private practice, or public office?

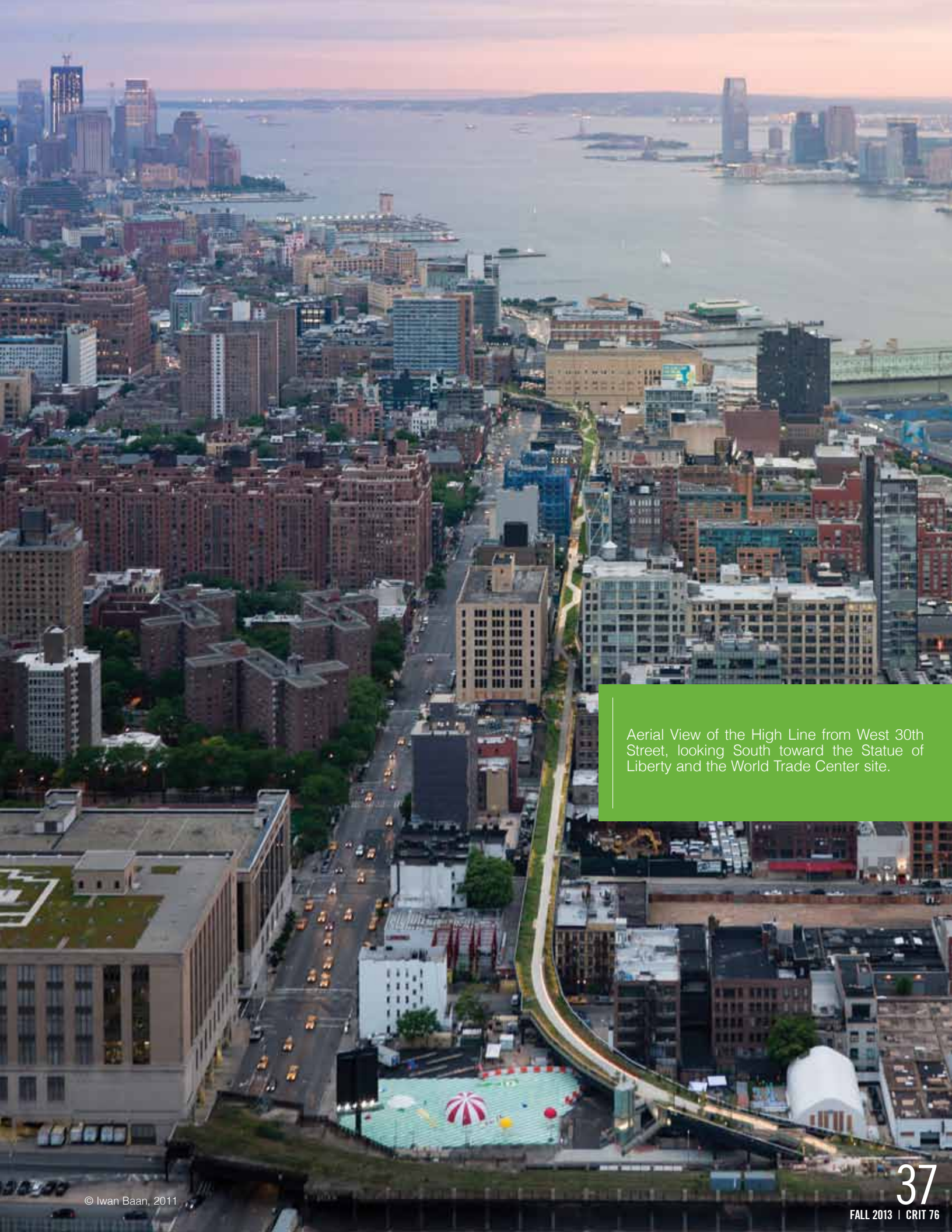
V: I wouldn't say greater impact with any of those, I would say different forms of impact.

Public office is enormously influential if you are working for the right leader. When I walk up and down the High Line, and see the results of the rezoning involved, it is very, very powerful. Amanda Burden and I fought heavily to re-incorporate the street grid at the World Trade Center site, and to now walk those streets is powerful to me. In academia, you are obviously teaching and affecting generations of people and doing research that has its own significance. These things are also very important. It's a bit less direct, you don't feel it as directly. In practice, you feel the impact because you're doing your job, your work gets built...it's more personal.

CRIT: You talk about the ideal of the unified professional (planning, real estate, architecture, etc). Should we be creating a new degree, or title, or advocacy organization?

V: I like the new advocacy organization...I'm less convinced about a new degree or title. I don't call it a unified professional, I call it a hybrid professional. I'm not saying that one person should attempt to do all of those things, and find themselves simultaneously as an architect, planner, developer, preservationist, landscape architect, etc.

Diagram illustrating a 3x3 grid of plus signs, with the bottom row labeled y and 0 .



Aerial View of the High Line from West 30th Street, looking South toward the Statue of Liberty and the World Trade Center site.



Essex Crossing, New York, NY, SHoP

CRIT: ...because they would do it all badly?

V: Exactly correct. To me it's about understanding overlapping logic systems across those disciplines, being able to move across those disciplines, and the language that those disciplines use to be a more relevant professional. I think at the end of the day, most people feel as though they have to root themselves somewhere.

I define myself first and foremost as an architect. I know things about development, I know things about urban planning, I know things about the related fields. That's what I am advocating for, that professionals just be smarter about the other worlds that overlap with theirs.

CRIT: Do you find licensure for architects to be an essential credential, despite its flaws?

V: I think the rigor of it and the safeguards of human health and safety are extremely important for the profession. I think that **the licensing exam itself has some extraordinary anachronisms in it:** you find yourself designing a turn-around for a fire truck in a cul-de-sac. The licensing exam is mostly suburban. The large scale urban issues that most designers will confront don't really get reflected in the exam as it exists.

CRIT: You do something in your talk, and your book, that many architects avoid, which is talk about actual political parties and how infrastructure has been abandoned by both. What role do architects play in fixing that?

The role will be filled by the millennial generation, regardless of whether they are architects or not. However, I think that millennials who are architects and urban planners have a particular responsibility to impact the direction of the country regarding sound urban development.

CRIT: Why do you think that is? What makes millennials predisposed to fix these problems as you see them?

V: I think the millennials have had a series of defining moments in their history: the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina, Deepwater Horizon, the economic crash, and now the full force of climate change being felt across the globe. This has had two results. First is a somewhat selfish claim that, "Jeez, we have to live in this future, let's fix it before it breaks permanently." Second is a very selfless thing when they say, **"we are the generation that will be responsible for saving this planet."** There is a high degree of social conscientiousness, coupled with a deep personal concern for our economic future that leads people away from the consumption economy of the end of the twentieth century and into some new form of shared economy that millennials are driving. I think the challenge for millennials will be how to keep that up in the future.

CRIT: Last quick one: thoughts on LEED?

V: It was a start. The notion that a LEED Platinum office park has a lower carbon footprint than a 1930s office building on top of a subway station is just fundamentally flawed.

CRIT: Thank you so much. CRIT

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A MOUNTAIN TOP EXPERIENCE:

THE NAAB ACCREDITATION REVIEW CONFERENCE

*This past summer, I had the honor of being invited as a Member-at-Large to the National Architectural Accrediting Board's Accreditation Review Conference. The NAAB is one of the five **Collateral Organizations of Architecture** that jointly govern architecture in the United States. Every five years, the NAAB hosts a review of the accreditation process, inviting prominent professionals, academics, and students to evolve architectural education to better reflect the dynamic nature of designing the built environment.*

The beautifully rugged landscape of Utah's Wasatch Mountains was a perfect backdrop for blue-sky thinking. As the sole student amongst a host of architects and educators, it would be easy to be intimidated by the intellectual clout that graced the room. Thankfully, it was a very open, inviting and equitable experience as we collectively delved into reimagining the accreditation process. For the AIAS, having an equal say in the education process that shapes the future of our members is important and reinforces our relevance as an organization. Acting as advocates for issues of shared interest to students, the AIAS has tremendous impact upon both the future of architectural education and the next generation of aspiring architects.

The accreditation process may happen once, if at all, during a student's academic career. This depends upon the school's *Term of Accreditation*, which can typically range from three to

six years. That term is recommended by the **NAAB Visiting Accreditation Team**. The team includes a student representing the AIAS, which is a rare privilege in the history of accrediting professional schools. For example, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education does not include students or internists in its *Survey Teams*. The NAAB Visiting Team absorbs years' worth of student work, course material, and inspects facilities in an intensive review process to ensure that the school is adequately preparing its students. The NAAB creates standards to apply across the country that allow schools to creatively meet and exceed these standards through their unique curriculum. These minimum standards include **Student Performance Criteria**, or SPCs, which cover a diverse range of twenty-seven areas.

Sixty or so architects and academics, all leaders in their field, were invited to the 2013 Accreditation Review Conference. They

COLLATERAL ORGANIZATIONS OF ARCHITECTURE:

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA)
American Institute of Architects (AIA)
American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS)
National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)
National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)

NAAB VISITING ACCREDITATION TEAM:

Each team is composed of members from each of the five Collateral Organizations of Architecture (more depending on the type of visit), and headed by a Team Chair, as well as one or more non-voting school-appointed Alumni Observer(s).

- NAAB Team Chair (*Sourced from the AIA, NCARB or ACSA*)
- AIAS Representative
- ACSA Representative
- AIA Representative
- NCARB Representative
- Non-voting Alumni Observer(s)

Below: Stephen Parker speaks during a session at the conference.



spent a few intense days discussing the future of architectural education. Principal among the topics discussed was streamlining the SPCs to better reflect what skills aspiring architects need in today's world. Eliminating redundancy was an important aspect of this trend, allowing schools to better tailor their curriculum to their interest and strengths while also completing the minimum requirements for a NAAB Accredited program.

One of the issues broached was Comprehensive Design, a cornerstone of the NAAB Accreditation process. Some suggested retooling this critical aspect of the studio process to be less rigid, and renaming it Integrated Design. In our discussion, Integrated Design could be more flexibly achieved, allowing schools to fulfill this requirement more creatively. Hypothetically, Integrated Design could be

achieved with a single student project that satisfies a majority rather than all of the areas associated with Comprehensive Design. Those SPCs not accomplished in the single project would have to be demonstrated in other projects to satisfy Integrated Design. These were some of the discussions that the NAAB will take into consideration and have released to the public for review.

Additionally, the idea of obtaining a license upon graduating with a NAAB-accredited degree is gaining traction. This is common practice internationally and might ease reciprocity when practicing abroad. This is crucial in this age of increased globalization. This was the subject of lengthy debate due to the fourteen years, on average, between graduation and licensure in the US, according to NCARB. As NCARB has instituted

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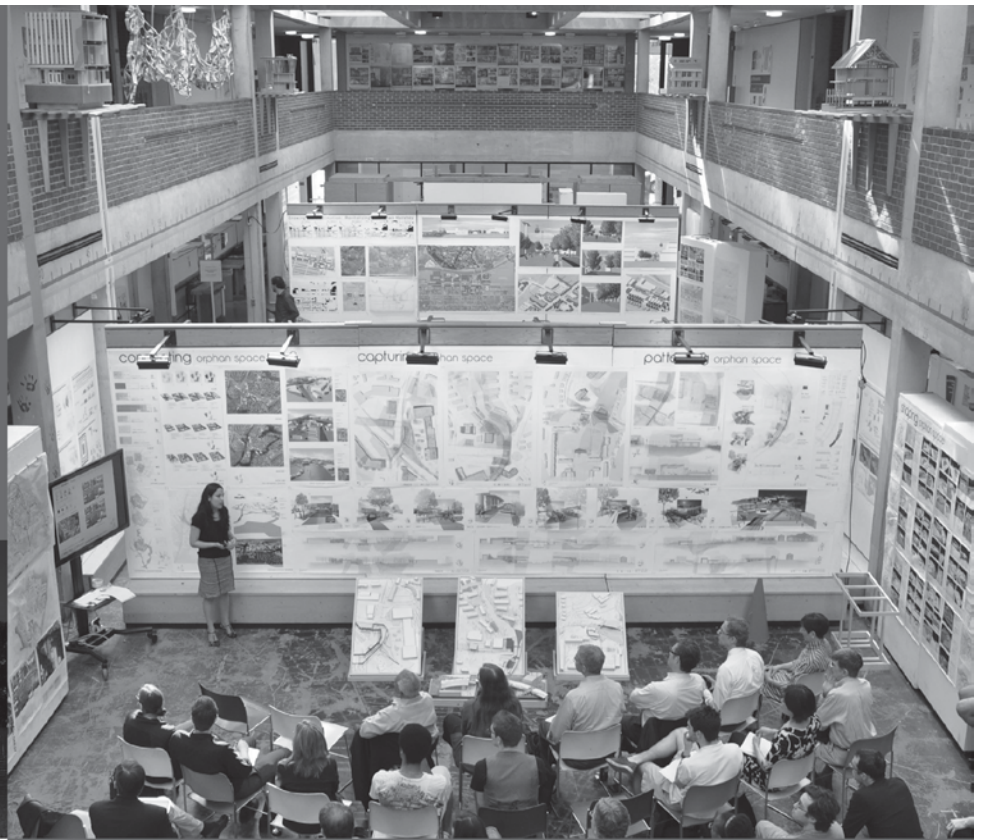
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more flexible IDP guidelines in recent years, it is a viable idea, but it also raises numerous concerns. Namely, that the kind of working experience in an architectural office is rarely translated into studios, save for a few select programs who have institutionalized internships in their curriculums. That experience is essential to the competent execution of architectural services that ensures the health, welfare, and safety of the public.

Internship was also topic of discussion. This was very near to me, having been an architectural apprentice since the age of fifteen. While many professional practice courses cover project and practice management, students who gain professional experience as interns are rarely granted academic credit. A few select schools across the country do incorporate internships in their curriculum, but given the critical need for aspiring architects to gain real world experience, this opportunity should be more widespread. Internship experience can have a profound impact

upon student development and academic work. By giving schools more flexibility in granting students academic credit for their internship experience, the next generation of architects can be better prepared for the rigors of the profession.

Looking back on the NAAB Accreditation Review Conference, I am heartened by the passionate discourse and dedication of the diverse participants. The fervent debates, the proposals, and the ideas that surfaced to solve the myriad issues of architectural education made the ARC a fascinating and exhausting event to be a part of. That much intellect in one place, focused on evolving our education, was an empowering experience for a student of architecture. The fact that students had a voice is even more profound. This conference is not an abstract debate, but an opportunity for students to be active and vocal participants in our own education and our future as aspiring architects. **CRIT**



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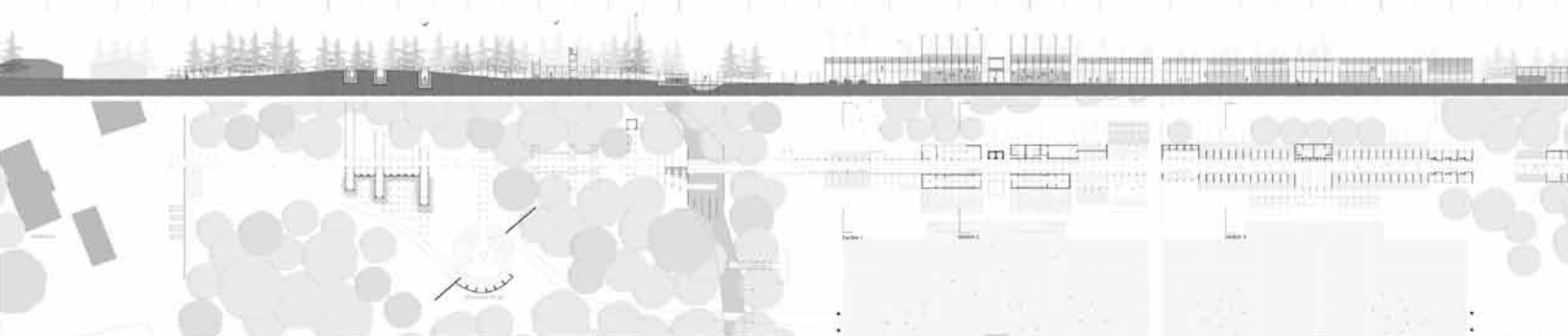
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Awards - hall of lacrosse

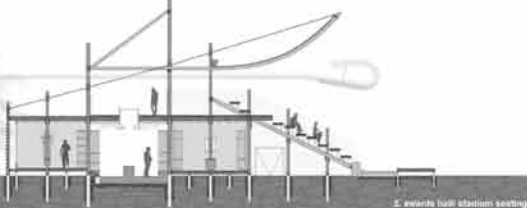


Game field stadium

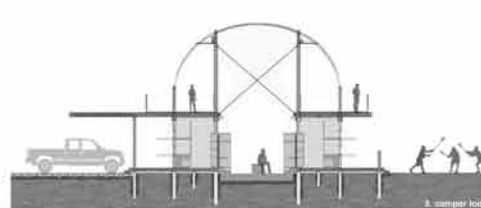


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COMPETITION SPOTLIGHT



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Reinventing HOME®
page 48-56



American Galvanizers Association

ASCENSION
page 59-63

Reinventing HOME

Reinventing HOME® was created as a challenge to student designers to create both innovative homes and workplaces for those who live and work in long-term care settings.

Homes worth living in should lessen all vestiges of depersonalized, transient, institutional care characteristic of acute-care places such as hospitals. At the same time, these new residences are designed to provide the infrastructure to support state-of-the-art medical therapies when they are prescribed.

Places worth working in should deal sensitively with amenities valued by staff working in this new community. The challenge facing long-term care today is how to balance these two needs in light of an increasingly discerning clientele with declining assets.

The competition asked designers to give shelter to those who have lived fully and given freely. They now deserve and need our care. Because this competition focuses on novel environments for housing and caring for frail elders, students were required to equip the Assisted Living Facility residences with the medical infrastructure required of Skilled Nursing Facility residences.

Reinventing HOME® was designed to be a challenge for competitors, and it proved to be this and more. Dozens of teams created inspiring homes for elders and the jury was humbled by many submissions it reviewed. It was a struggle select the best design when so many were deserving of honors. In the end, two groups were chosen as winners: those designs which met all the competition requirements and went beyond, and those which deeply impressed the jury with sensitive solutions to one or more of the competition challenges.

WINNERS

FIRST PLACE:

#49, **Ana Cristina Escobar & Daniel Garcia**, 2nd Year Students, Texas A&M University

SECOND PLACE:

#47, **Abbe Emerson & Amie Akers**, 2nd Year Students, Texas A&M University

INNOVATOR'S AWARD:

#5, **Jeffrey Bak, Chloe Schultz, & Sean Flaharty**, 4th Year Students, Auburn University

MOVING BEYOND THE PROGRAM AWARD:

#60, **Erin Fox**, Master's Student, University of Oregon

UNIQUE SENSITIVITY TO SITE OPPORTUNITIES AWARD:

#9, **Patrick Barendt**, 3rd Year Student, Drexel University

JUDGES:

Stuart Barber, AIA, LEED AP, *Project Architect/Senior Living*,
McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture Design

Kaye Brown, Ph.D., *Adjunct Assoc. Prof.*, Anthropology, Boston University

Richard C. Duncan, MRP, *Executive Director*, The R.L. Mace Universal Design Institute

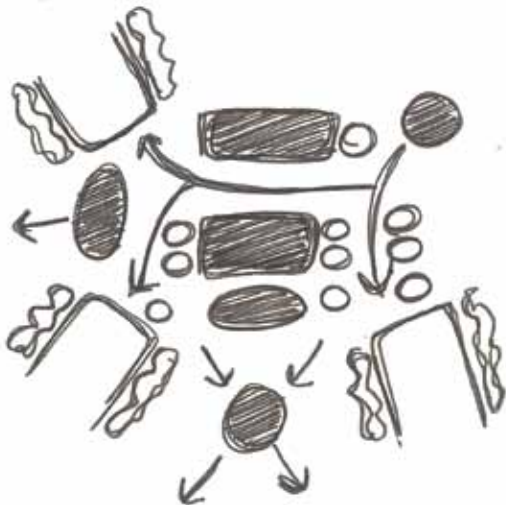
Alan L. Moore, AIA, *Principal*, CJMW Architecture

Kindall A. Stephens, *Winner*, 2012 AIAS Student Design Competition

Patrick Mooney, Ph.D, FCSLA, ASLA, CELA Associate Professor, University of British Columbia,
UBC Landscape Program President, Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture

FIRST PLACE
**ANA CRISTINA ESCOBAR
& DANIEL GARCIA**

2nd Year Students, Texas A&M University

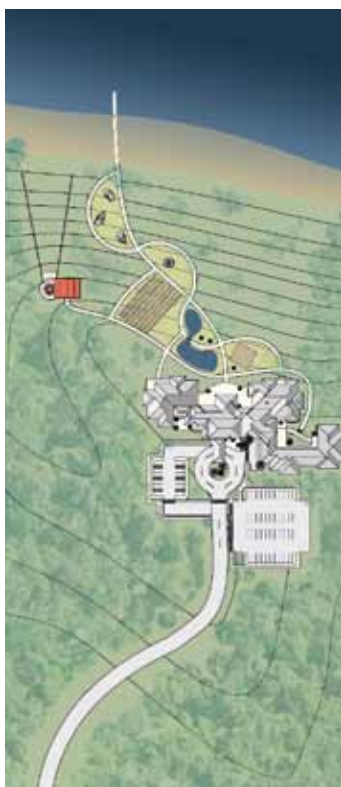




SECOND PLACE

ABBE EMERSON & AMIE AKERS

2nd Year Students, Texas A&M University



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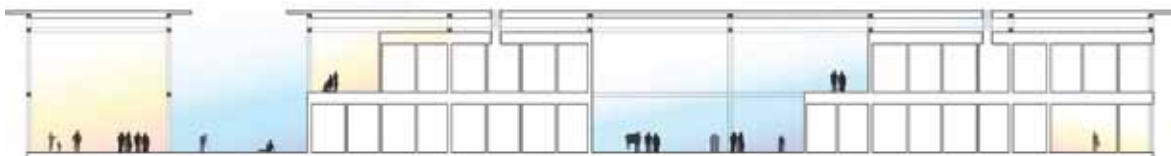
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INNOVATOR'S AWARD:
**JEFFREY BAK, CHLOE SCHULTZ
 & SEAN FLAHARTY**

4th Year Students, Auburn University

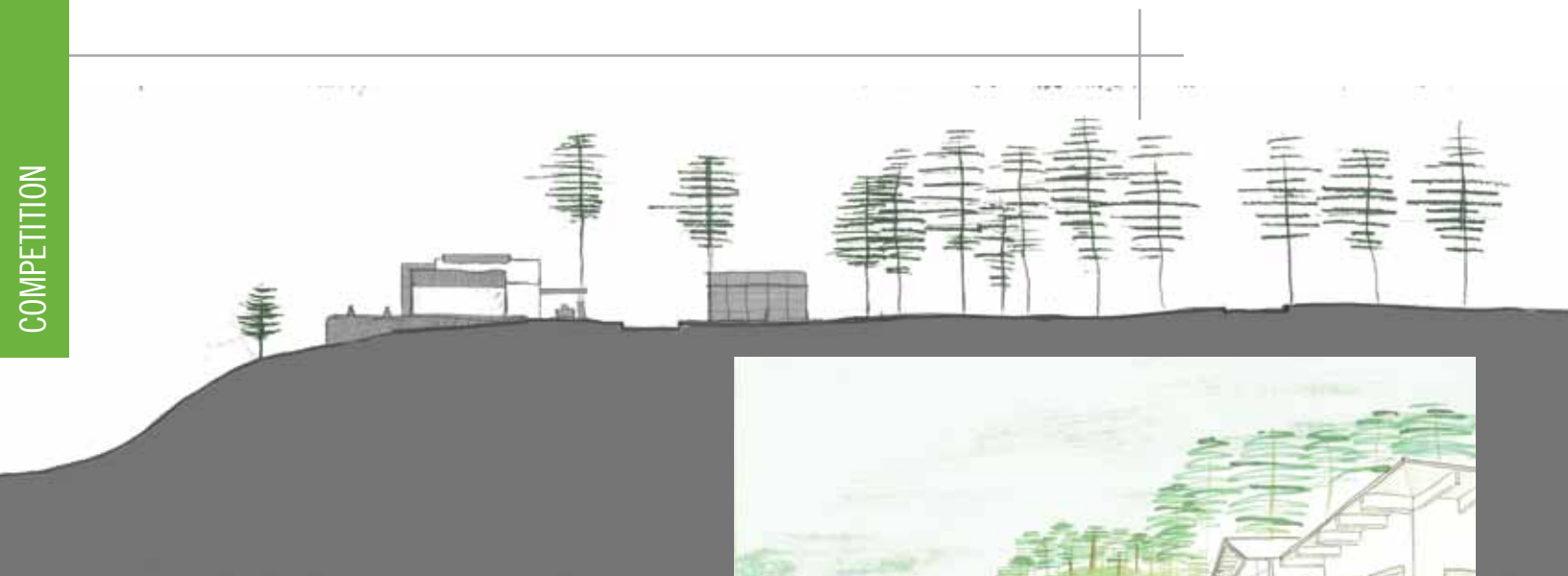




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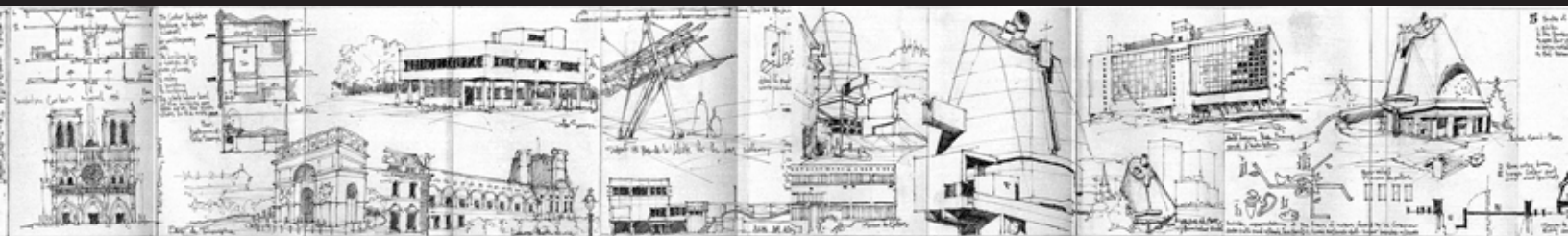
ERIN FOX

Graduate Student, University of Oregon





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PATRICK BARENDT

3rd Year Student, Drexel University





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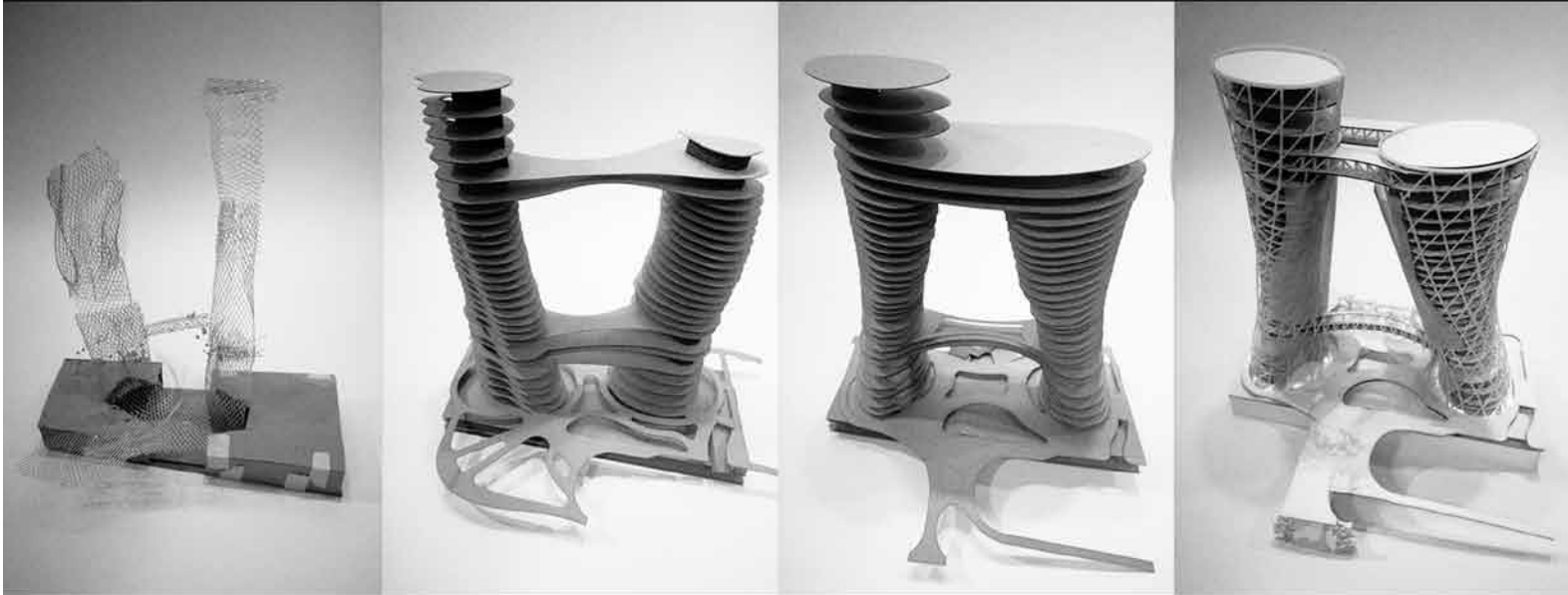


PHOTO: MATEUSZ NOSEK & WIKTOR CZECHURA, GRADUATE PRIZE, SKYPARK TOWERS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ASCENSION 2013 DESIGN COMPETITION

Every year United States veterans return home with injury. In fact, roughly twenty-six percent of our veterans live with some kind of disability as a result of their service. Many arrive at home with a loss of mobility that drastically changes the way they interact with the world and sometimes even the loss of the very freedoms they defended. This is not what our veterans deserve and this is why the AIAS and the American Galvanizers Association (AGA) have teamed to help them with design.

Ascension asked students from around the globe to explore ways of entering and exiting a home for those who must now fight to do so. The goal was to create an adaptable, lightweight wheelchair ramp utilizing galvanized steel that will return injured veterans the freedom that has been taken from them. The winning designs will be produced and implemented throughout the country for deserving veterans and make a difference in the lives and communities of those who served our country. Competition entries were designed to stretch common thinking to create a ramp with interchangeable parts that can be adapted and used in many different home configurations.

The AIAS and the AGA are proud to announce the winners of the Ascension Design Competition. The judges were extremely impressed with the thought and creativity put into the designs, creating functional and attractive entries. Participants' designs were evaluated on compliance with all competition objectives including: safety and conformation with code requirements, utilization of 100% galvanized steel, modularity of design, aesthetics, ease of construction, and cost of construction.

Due to the overwhelming quality of two entries, our judges declared two winners to split the \$8,000 prize.

WINNERS

Nicklos Tafel

*4th Year Student
Clemson University
Advisor: Annemarie Jacques,
Dustin Albright*

Jason So Armand Damari, Cat Fan, Josh Intorcio

*1st and 2nd Year Students
Syracuse University*

JUDGES:

*Joe Langemeier, National Director Sales and Marketing,
AZZ Galvanizing Services*

Larry Jolly, Vice President, Western Steel Company

Chris Morrison, AIA. President, Cunningham Architects

Ed Zeigler, AIA. President, Craig Gaulden Davis

Kevin Fitzgerald, AIA. Director, Emerging Professionals, AIA

Nick Mancusi, Associate AIA. President, Design Moves People

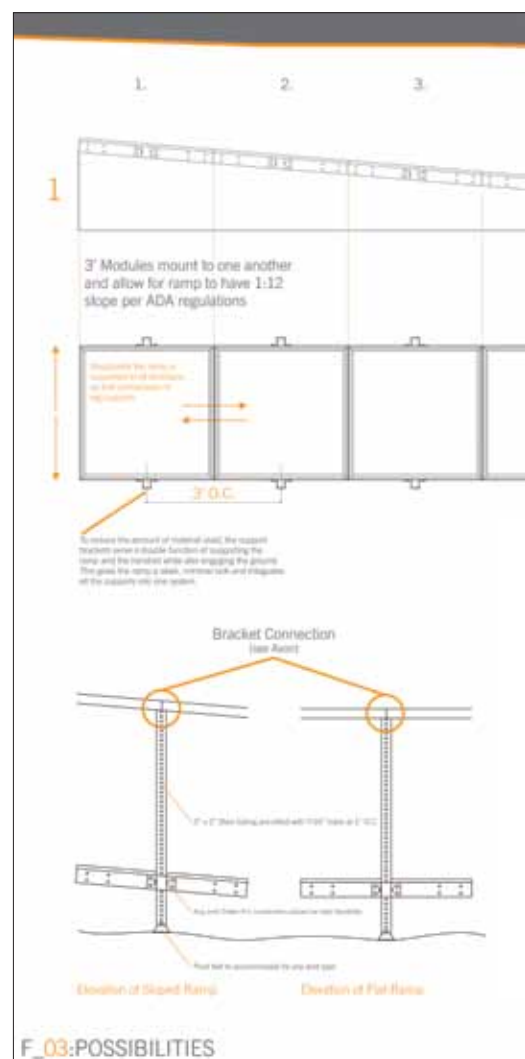


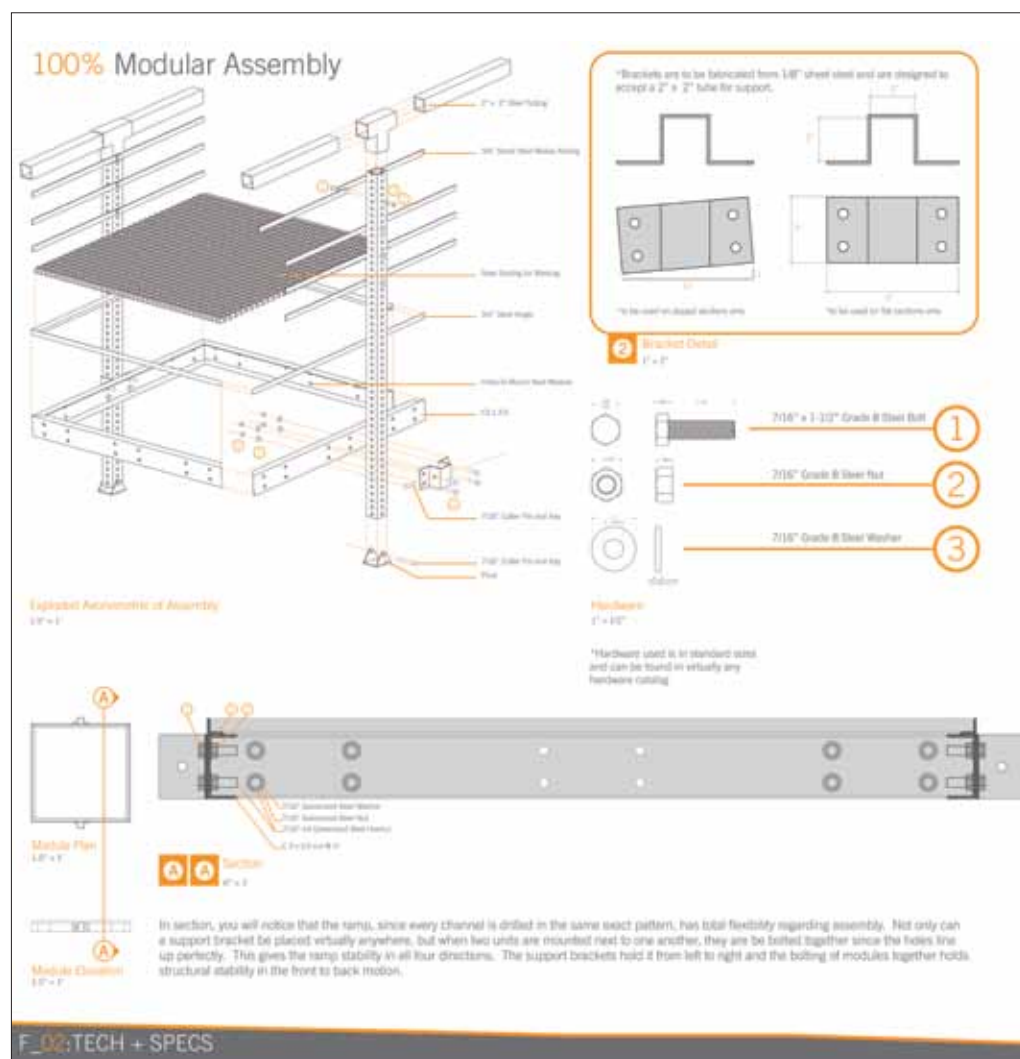
NICKLOS TAFEL

4th Year Student
Clemson University

Advisors: Annemarie Jacques, Dustin Albright

The fully ADA-compliant ramp is designed modularly to ensure easy implementation on any site, for any needs. This included making many of the parts flexible and adjustable, and able to serve multiple functions. Ease of galvanization was considered as well. Thus, brackets are simply bent sheet metal and the modules themselves are made from standard-size steel channels and angles. This helps reduce the cost of the design and maintain its ease of assembly and modification. Further, the design attempted to be as lightweight as possible. Big design problems were solved at the modular level so they would not translate to the project scale. This included the connection between parts, the double-function of formal parts as structural pieces, and the engagement of the ramp to different types of ground.





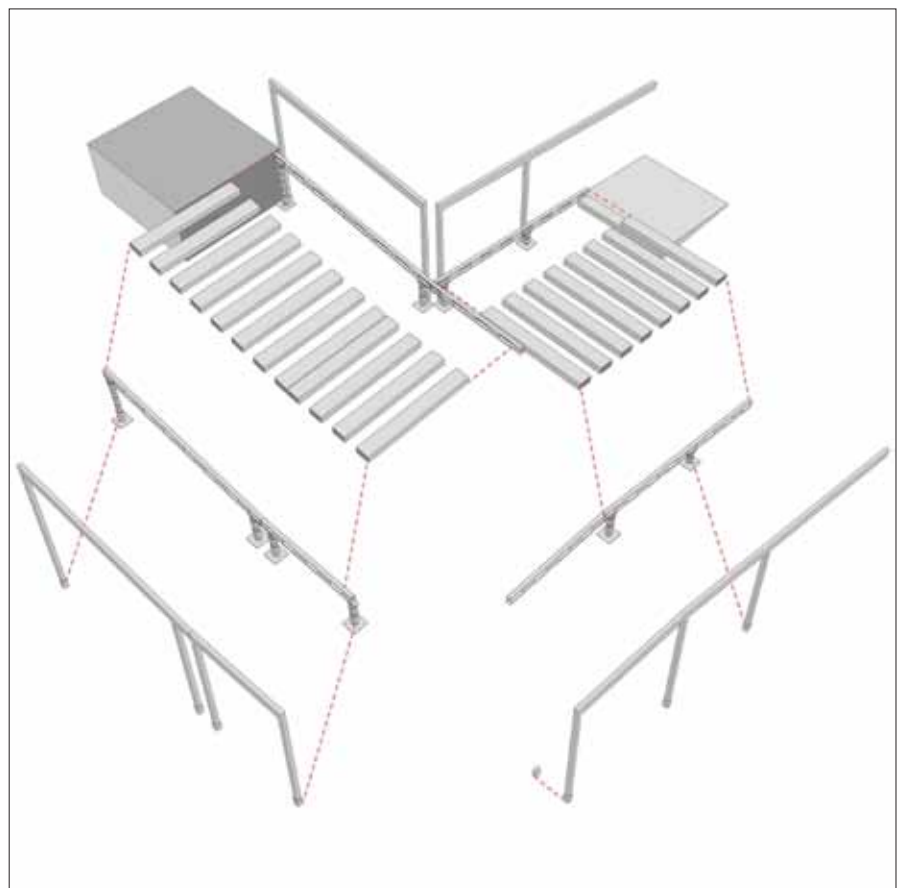
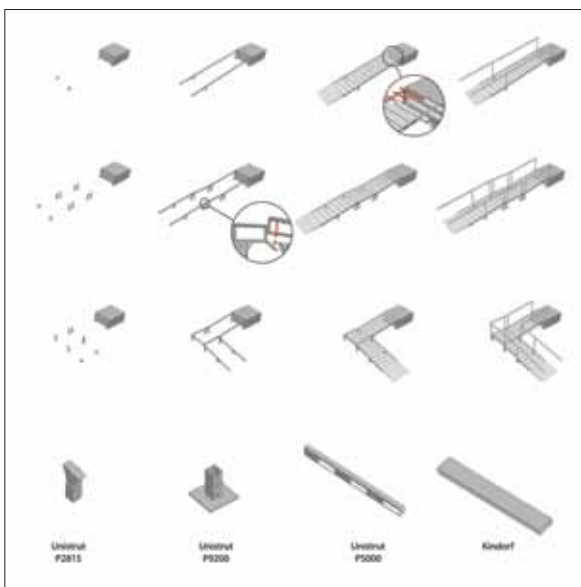
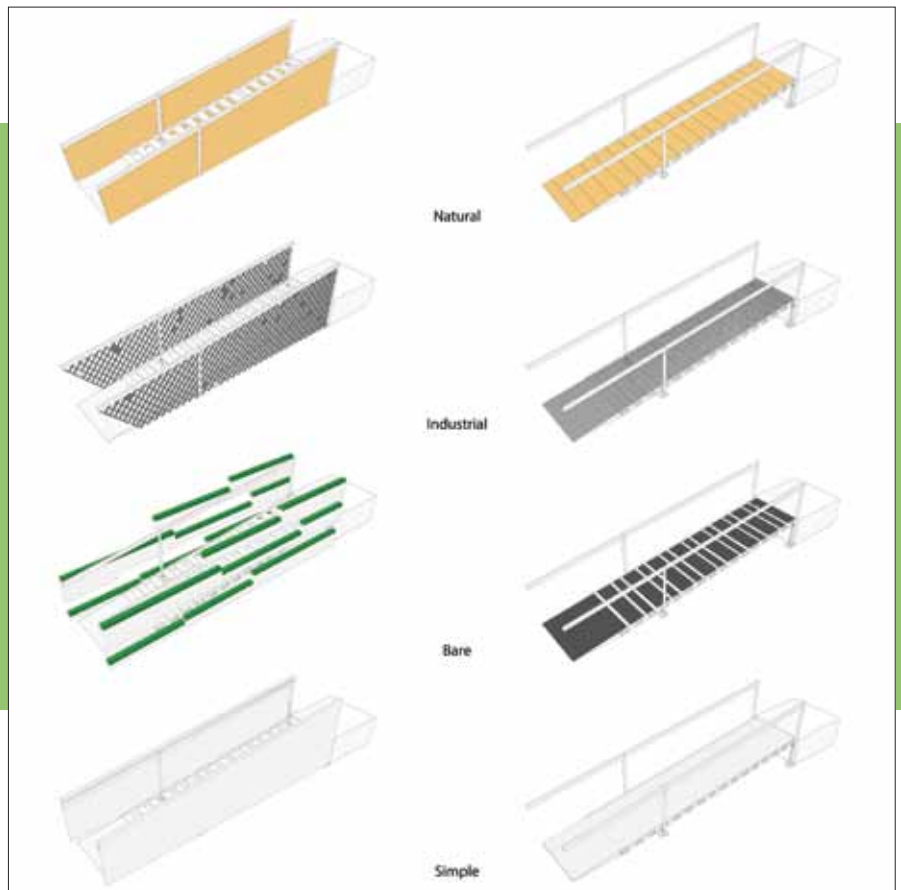


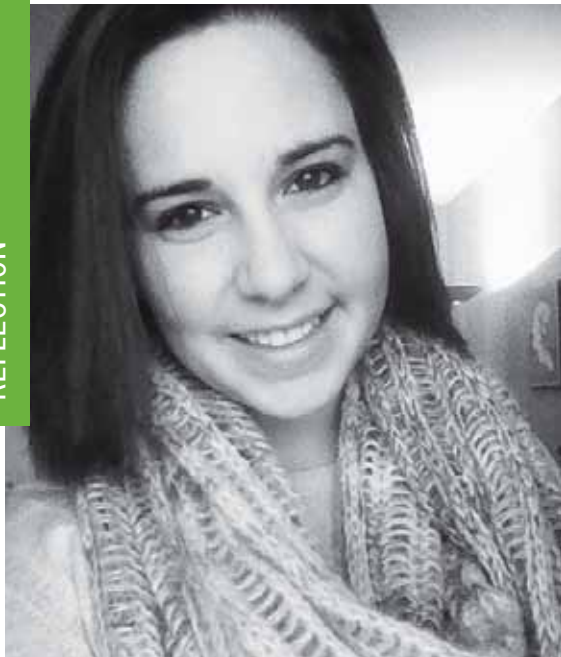
ARMAND DAMARI, CAT FAN, JOSH INTORCIO, JASON SO

*1st and 2nd Year Students
Syracuse University*



The ramp has a simple, easy-to-assemble hot-dipped galvanized steel frame, which is then covered with an external, customizable shell. Having a galvanized steel structure allows the ramp to last much longer than the same structure made of wood. The benefit of the external shell is that it can be readily adapted to the user's preferences, enabling the ramp to vary greatly in appearance, while maintaining roughly the same cost. The shell allows the user to cover up its industrial appearance with a user-friendly facade.





Jessica Gross
Chapter President of AIAS RWU

Jessica Gross currently studies at Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI as a third year architecture student with a graphic design minor. Jessica has been an active member in the architecture community since freshmen year but has more recently accepted two major roles as Chapter President of AIAS RWU and as Co-Founder of the Women's Leadership Network on campus. She hopes to carry on the successes of those before her and help lead both organizations to even bigger and better goals. After completing her MArch, Jessica plans to work for a firm that embraces her passion for architecture and challenges her exploration of contemporary design practices.

“An architect and a clown walk into a bar...”

...not exactly something you would expect to hear at your first national leadership conference. To our surprise, this joke was among the many unforeseen things the chapter leaders of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) took away from the 28th annual Grassroots Leadership Conference in Alexandria, VA. Every year, this event takes each person in attendance by immense surprise. Leaders within the architecture profession come together to, not only educate us on how to be better leaders, but to inspire us to be great leaders - to set goals, take initiative, and strive to make a positive impact within our chapters, within our communities, and around the world.

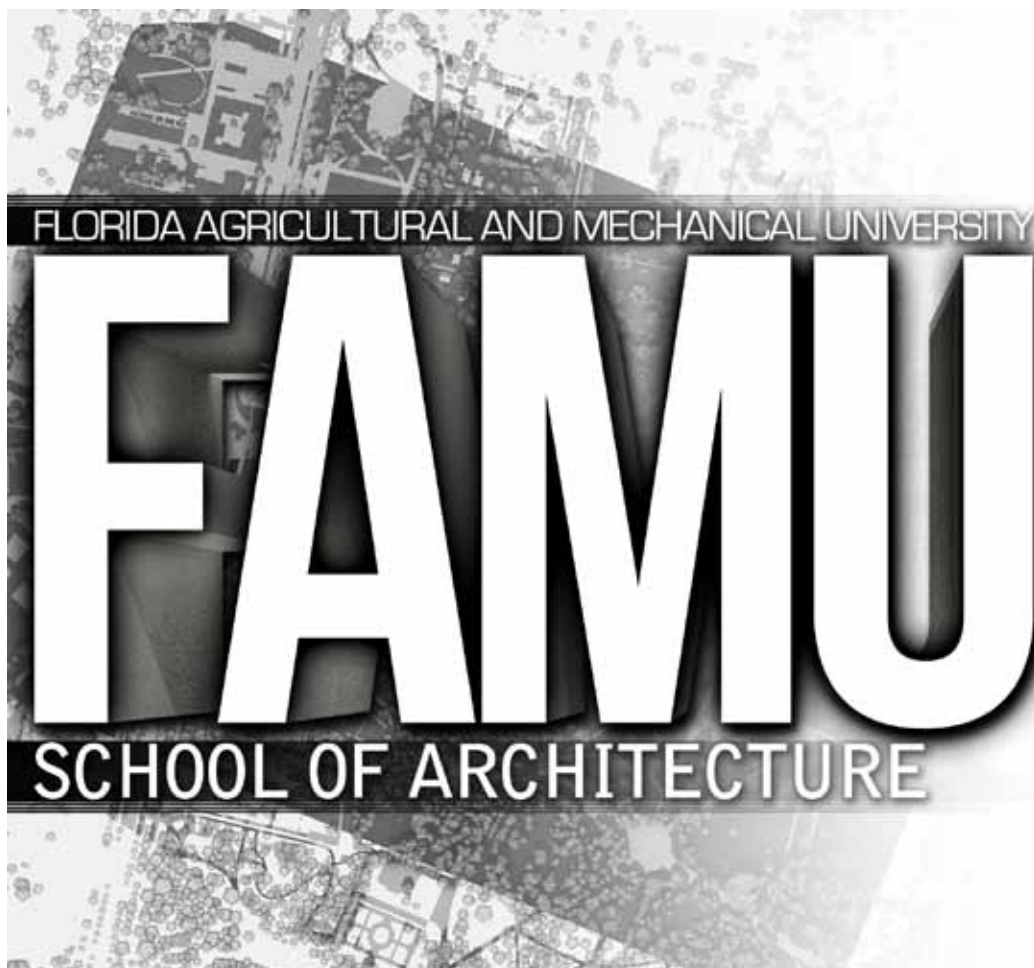
Our chapter arrived with six officers, traveling from all parts of the Northeast. Although eager to represent our chapter for the first time, we could not help but wonder what the next few days would entail for us as the members of an entirely restructured, essentially new, executive board. Despite these uncertainties, we began the weekend with confidence that the next few

The majestic Corinthian columns in the National Building Museum's Great Hall.

ASPIRE TO BE INSPIRED



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days would ultimately shape us into better student leaders, capable of serving as the official voices of all architecture students within our university.

The first event led us to the US Capitol Building where we were treated to our own private tour by the eleventh Architect of the Capitol, Stephen T. Ayers. He spoke of his journey to the Capitol: from the University of Maryland, through the Air Force, all the way to Washington. He explained what made him stand out as a candidate for the prestigious position and what lessons he learned along the way. His tour throughout the interlocking halls of the Capitol included insight on the history of the architecture around us, his schooling, as well as anecdotes that opened our eyes to alternative career paths within the profession. He focused on his choice to take another path, and assured us that despite our love for practicing architecture in a traditional sense, there is always the option to approach architecture from different perspectives. For some, it will be for the better.

The opening ceremony took place in the National Building Museum. Here, we took into account the remarkable columns that help span the vast atrium space and the various levels that overlooked it. The architecture of this building was captivating; it displayed an intriguing use of materiality, organization, space, structure, and form. It did so in such an elegant manner that it has been imprinted in my mind. As we pondered

the architecture, the crowd fell quiet as then-President and Vice President Matthew Barstow and Brent Castro entered the stage to kick off the ceremony. They each spoke passionately about the importance of using our time in office wisely and how, as student leaders, we have the ability to accomplish goals and make significant changes within our schools. Following this advice, the newly elected National Board stood on stage and took the Oath of Office. These nine men and women swore to give us an auspicious year and a dedicated support system to stand behind each initiative we set out to achieve. In that moment I realized my place at the conference and within the organization. I realized that, among those who were sitting around me, nine of them would one day be standing on that stage.

The first reception allowed us to embrace new relationships and take advantage of networking in a large group. As it goes, architecture is all about the connections we make, the people we know, and how we can use all of that to our collective advantage. With this in mind, it was our first chance as new officers to meet other chapters and discuss the goals and initiatives we hoped to achieve. We found that despite the distance, the age, or the experience, many other leaders could relate to our strengths and weaknesses as a growing organization.

Throughout the next day, we heard from speakers who

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enlightened us with personal stories and broadened our views on topics that would not only prepare us to lead in our chapters, but also in the profession as future architects and designers. In fact, I believe that these presentations are what ultimately transformed the six of us into an effective Executive Board. What motivated us most was the advice from CEO Joshua Caulfield that focused largely on local fundraising. Caulfield's advice was thorough, precise, and relatable. He spoke about the connections we must make and the possibilities that could present themselves by reaching out to practicing architects and local firms. Additional conversations with Caulfield included discussions about membership involvement, new events and fundraising, and most importantly how each action we take within the next year could extend into these communities and create stronger, more beneficial relationships for both parties.

Friday evening, following the AIA-hosted barbecue, we went on the tour of the monuments. We explored the architecture of Washington, D.C. at night while connecting with other schools. I think my favorite memory was sitting in D.C. with other students, dangling our feet over the edge of the Lincoln Memorial, looking out to the Washington Monument in the distance, knowing that the people beside me were all part of something special to us and important to the profession we love. In that moment, it was not about the architecture we had seen or the lessons we had learned. It was about the unforgettable relationships that we had formed over just days. The organization that brought us here had taught us to be better designers, leaders, citizens of the world - to connect with one another and learn from one another.

The final evening was set on the Cherry Blossom, a dinner cruise that served as our closing ceremony. Everyone was eager to show off their hidden talents on the dance floor before the night came to an end. The difference between this night and the others was the level on which we connected. I came to know the individual character of those around me, the collective passion and determination. That night hosted the best conversations of the conference.

Looking back, the essential lesson I learned at Grassroots was not for running an AIAS chapter, or being an architecture student, but for living life. Surely, we would learn about becoming a better leader. I never have thought I would discover a greater, underlying relationship between these conferences and living life. Generally, it is assumed that the AIAS as just an organization of architecture students. In contrast, what became clear to me is that those involved share a similar outlook on life and that this national organization capitalizes on those attitudes to change our lives and to improve our quality of life as architecture students.

I vividly remember a conversation I had with someone from The School of Art Institute of Chicago, in which he introduced me to a term he had coined as his own - *netweaving*. Someone had asked us, "Do you think it is better to meet as many people as you can or do you think it's better to meet a few people and form closer bonds with them?" He answered, "It's all about netweaving." What he went on to explain was that by netweaving you form the strongest bonds with only a few people. By honing in on the few that are most similar to you and your motives, you will be more eager, willing, and able to continue the growth of the relationship as it progresses over time. While networking allows you to "dabble in the waters" and see who you mesh with best, netweaving allows you to build upon the strongest bonds and strive to see something positive result. It is now a goal for my chapter to focus and greatly improve our netweaving at future conferences, with chapters, professionals and practicing architects.

Grassroots has affected me personally and, I am sure, every other person in attendance. I saw the determination and drive to achieve success in the leaders of my chapter, and I saw it in the leaders of other chapters, too. Ultimately, while it has driven us to seek change in our local chapters, it is those who experience the changes we make nationally and internationally that will benefit most from our success. **CRIT**

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Joshua has spent the last 15 years running different associations as he pursues his passion to help other people achieve their dreams. He believes wholeheartedly in the idea of people coming together around a common cause to achieve greater things as a whole than the sum of their parts. Caulfield has been the CEO of the AIAS for over 3 years and is constantly inspired by the membership. His academic background is in business and he has a BS in Business from Babson College and an MBA from The American University. Caulfield has had numerous articles published, and spoken professionally on many topics related to association management. Caulfield is a lifetime member of the AIAS, the IGDA and a regular member of the ASAE.

LIFE WILL CHALLENGE YOU

Recently, I have engaged with a greater and greater number of people who have noted to me that they feel their lives are becoming more and more difficult. They are running on tighter budgets, many have had severe illness or death in their families, their careers and education have become more stressful, and so on. The articles we see in the news corroborate these accounts.

If you are feeling occasionally overwhelmed; it is ok, and it is not just you. For most people, everything is hard right now. Keep in mind: life will challenge you.

If you read through historic literature, religious texts, business or economic works, and even family histories, you will find that life has always been difficult to some degree. It is this difficulty, this struggle, and the act of overcoming these obstacles that strengthens us and makes us better at everything we do. As Machiavelli put it, “that which does not kill you makes you stronger.” As Michael Porter said, “Swimming with sharks will cause you to be faster or get eaten.” Even our physical bodies behave this way; muscle mass grows only if we damage it slightly by straining it through exercise.

In times like this, there are a number of pieces of wisdom, passed down as parables that are useful:

The reed bends in the storm and survives it, whereas the oak stands stubbornly straight against the wind and is torn out of the earth. Yet, the reed is easily eaten by the animals, whereas the proud, tough oak is not.

As a human being, we must know when to be flexible as the reed and when to be tough as the oak, and to know that we can change from one to the other as circumstances dictate. Another piece of wisdom states:

You can quit climbing the hill as many times as you like, as long as your feet never stop moving.

This speaks to our need to be resilient and persistent. At times, everyone feels as though they must give up. However, as long as they continue moving through the motions of life, heading in the general direction of the summit, these motions sustain and carry us forward even when our heart and mind are temporarily disengaged from the climb to the top.

In architectural education, and the career of an architect, there are an overwhelming number of challenges: school, IDP, the ARE, getting a job, relocating, maintaining quality in your design work, contending with always-new technology, potentially immense debt, social pressure, and your personal lives. My message to you is simple: You can do this; you can accomplish your objective. Life will challenge you to make you the best person you can be. **CRIT**

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