

INSIGHT

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WINTER

AN INTERVIEW
WITH AGL
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE
AT NORTH
DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY

DREAM BIG
WITH DESIGN

RESILIENCY: FALL
CONFERENCE 2021
RECAP & AWARDS



WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO...

**Design
in the Hills**

AIA South Dakota

Celebrating 10 years

DESIGN IN THE HILLS RETURNED — LIVE, IN PERSON —
IN JULY 2021 TO FEATURE THE CITIES OF DEADWOOD,
SPEARFISH AND RAPID CITY.

THE NEBRASKA/DAKOTAS CHAPTER WAS PROUD TO BE A
SPONSOR AT THIS ANNUAL EVENT.

**THANK YOU TO OUR
ALL OUR 2021 PARTNERS FOR
HOSTING LUNCH & LEARNS,
THROWING SOCIAL EVENTS,
AND SPONSORING OUR FALL CONFERENCE!**



WINTER 2021

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SEPT. 30-OCT. 1
RAPID CITY, SD

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COSTS: \$10 million
COSTS: \$10 million

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ASLA hosted a two-day virtual event took place in September, focusing on introducing landscape architecture to students from Elementary School to High School.

FALL CONFERENCE RECAP

Tanya Olson provides a summary of this year's Fall Conference educational sessions and activities. Thank you to all of our Chapter Volunteers and Partners for making this a wonderful event!

FEATURE STORY

2021 NEBRASKA/DAKOTAS CHAPTER AWARDS

The chapter received many outstanding submissions. Congratulations to all of the award winners! It is an honor to showcase the exceptional work of our members.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BRYAN LEININGER



It's hard to believe that my tenure as Chapter President is coming to an end. At this year's annual Conference on Landscape Architecture, the leadership torch is being passed to Chapter rockstar Zack Fergus. We're all in good hands as Zack and our newly elected President-Elect Chris Brandriet take our Chapter through 2022-2023.

It's with deep *gratitude* to have served as President this past year. Without the leadership and dedication of our Executive Committee and the foundation that our past leaders had laid, our 2021 successes would not have been realized. These successes were many and quite significant; to have survived the hosting of the Central States Virtual Conference would have been enough, but for our small, but mighty group of passionate and dedicated Landscape Architects, we all completed so much more over the course of this past year.

As we all know, the continued global pandemic has brought significant impacts to how we all teach, learn and practice our profession. Early 2021 saw the return of many of the students back to their studios for in-person learning. The tools we all learned to love [and despise] allowed for schedules to be safely restructured while allowing the face-to-face interaction that makes the educating and learning process so much more impactful. We're looking forward to the days when we no longer must remind our friends and colleagues that "Oh, I don't think your mic is on." Am I right?

As I recounted in the Spring Newsletter, our Chapter hosted the much-anticipated Central States Conference virtually. We heard very few words of criticism, which

is a testament to the incredible behind-the-scenes team and logistics orchestration. I've said it before, and I'll say it again – Hats off to you all!

The annual Fall Conference was held in Rapid City, South Dakota. The Planning Committee put together an incredible lineup of speakers and walking tours – all set in the beautiful Black Hills in early autumn. Those able to attend were treated to inspiring, deep and thought-provoking presentations with Resiliency as the theme and thread that carried us through the conference. We all came away with a renewed view on our *duty* as designers and landscape architects molding our built and social environments. To say that this conference set a new standard for future conferences is a gross understatement!

To close, I'd like to thank our Partners and Sponsors who so generously stand behind our Chapter, year after year. We continue to see growth in our Partnership Program and Annual Conference support. The commitments you are making to our Chapter assists us in growing our membership, increases our ability to ward off legislative issues that could cause impacts to the profession across our three states, and fosters growth in our students and emerging professionals. We appreciate each one of you!

Sincerely,

Bryan Leininger, PLA, ASLA
Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter Past President
AGL Landscape Architects

“We all came away with a renewed view on our duty as designers and landscape architects molding our built and social environments.”

SILVER



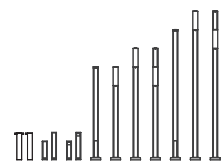
Dining Chair
& Bistro Table

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DESIGN. CULTURE. CRAFT.

UPCOMING EVENTS



ASLA
NEBRASKA
DAKOTAS

2021 - 2022



UPCOMING CEU OPPORTUNITIES

DECEMBER 9, 16, & 20TH, 2021 / IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

Chapter Partners, Victor Stanley, Crouch Recreation and Tree Diaper have upcoming events in December. Be sure to check out the chapter website for more information and registration.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

DECEMBER 16, 2021 / ZOOM

The Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter of ASLA's Executive Committee meets monthly to discuss ongoing business, upcoming events, and current chapter affairs. All members are welcome to join, listen in, or voice any ideas, concerns, or announcements in our open forum. Contact ndcasla.info@gmail.com or Zack Fergus at Zack.Fergus@LampRynearson.com for our Zoom Link Information.



ASLA CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE

MAY 4 - 6, 2022 / TULSA, OKLAHOMA

The FUSE 2021 Central States Conference focuses on how landscape architects are part of a collaborative industry fused together with multiple disciplines and trades. The conference will include education sessions worth nine CEUs, a virtual sketch crawl, virtual social events, a virtual expo hall with our wonderful sponsors, the 2021 Central States Awards, and much more!

STAY UP TO DATE!

VISIT OUR CHAPTER [WEBSITE](#)

RESILIENCY

NEBRASKA DAKOTAS CHAPTER ASLA
FALL CONFERENCE 2021
SEPT. 30-OCT. 1
RAPID CITY, SD

Conference Recap Contributed by Tanya Olson, PLA, ASLA; South Dakota Section Chair & Fall Conference Chair

Hotel Alex Johnson Ballroom
Rapid City, SD
Sam Howland



The 2021 NDC ASLA Conference was held in Rapid City, South Dakota, on September 30th and October 1st, 2021. Professionals, educators, and students from across our three-state region came together for a day and a half focused on topics of resiliency. Resiliency is the ability to adjust to adversity or change – an issue particularly relevant in our age. Bryan Leininger, NDC ASLA President, kicked off the conference saying: “As Landscape Architects, our work is inseparable from the land. The land and its people are intrinsic to our highly place-based work. We recognize today that we meet together, and many of us live and work here in the unceded lands belonging to the Oceti Sakowin;

the Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota people. The Black Hills was guaranteed as part of the Great Sioux Reservation by the Fort Laramie Treaty of April 29th, 1868. This treaty was broken without the Sioux Nation’s consent in the Indian Appropriations Bill of 1877. We ask that you remember with us that the Black Hills is sacred to the Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Kiowa, and many other indigenous people. The sacred nature of this place is inseparable from the land and is considered “the heart of everything that is.” Mike Stanley, ASLA, and Kyle Treloar, LEED AP, of Dream Design International, started the education sessions with “Liberty Plaza: Building a Downtown for the City

WEDNESDAY: SEPTEMBER 29

- 12:00-5:00 pm **Executive Committee Retreat**
Accent Innovation
18 E. Main St. , Rapid City, SD
- 5:00-7:00 pm **Pre-Conference Mixer - all invited!**
Perfect Hanging Gallery
621 Main St., Rapid City, SD

THURSDAY: SEPTEMBER 30 BREAKFAST SPONSORED BY: CROUCH RECREATION

- 7:30-8:30 am Registration and Breakfast
Hotel Alex Johnson Ballroom
523 6th Street, Rapid City, SD
- 8:30-8:45 am **Welcome to NDC ASLA Fall Conference 2021**
Bryan Leininger, NDC ASLA Chapter President
- 8:34-9:45 am **Session 1:**
Liberty Plaza: Building a Downtown for the City of Boxelder
Presenter: Mike Stanley, ASLA & Kyle Treloar, PE
- 10:00-11:00 am **Session 2:**
Small firm Landscape Architecture Round table
Presenters: Pat Wyss, FASLA, Erik Heikes, ASLA, Matt Fridell, ASLA, Sandy Doran, ASLA
- 11:15 am-12:30 pm **Session 3:**
“The Inconvenient Truth”
Rapid City Boarding School Children’s Memorial
Presenter: Dr. Eric Zimmer
- 12:30-1:30 pm Lunch with Sponsors at Hotel Alex Johnson
- 2:00-3:00 pm **Session 4: Downtown Walking Tour**
It worked! Now what? Planning for the next 10 years at Main Street Square
Presenter: Domico Rodriguez, President & CEO Main Street Square
- 3:05-4:00 pm **Session 5: Downtown Walking Tour**
Art Alley Walking Tour
Presenter: Tally Monteau, Dahl Arts Center Education Director & Art Alley Guild member
- 3:05-4:00 pm **Break**

AWARDS SOCIAL SPONSORED BY: CROUCH RECREATION

- 5:00-6:00 pm **Conference Mixer**
Mount Rushmore Society
830 Main Street, Rapid City, SD
- 6:00-6:45 pm **Keynote:**
“Adventures in Landscape Architecture”
Presenter: Pat Wyss, FASLA, Wyss Associates
- 6:45-7:45 pm **Honors & Awards**
Presenter: Bryan Leininger, ASLA



above: Small Firm Roundtable
From left: Eirik Heikes, Matt Fridell,
Pat Wyss, and Sandy Doran
right: Downtown Walking Tour
Sam Howland & Zack Fergus

of Box Elder.” The community of Box Elder grew up organically around Ellsworth Air Force Base, never developing a downtown. Dream Design has been working with the Air Force Base Development Authority to develop a heart to the community in preparation for the new B-21 bomber mission coming to the base in 2024. The new downtown will include mixed-use retail and housing, parks and open spaces, a community center, and several types of single-family housing.

The second presentation was the Small Firm Round Table, with Pat Wyss, FASLA, Eirik Heikes, ASLA, Matt Fridell, ASLA, and Sandy Doran, ASLA. The conversation centered around business management, staff development and retention, and client management and ranged from the learning curve that accompanies starting a small landscape architecture firm to the importance of passing the torch of mentorship from generation to generation of landscape architects.

“The Inconvenient Truth” Rapid City Boarding School Children’s Memorial was a powerful lesson in cultural healing and resilience. Historian Dr. Eric Zimmer, Dr. Valeria Big Eagle, and Amy Sazue presented the many years-long, exhaustively researched Rapid City Indian Boarding Schools Lands Project. The panel shared a well-documented history of injustice to Native Americans in our region, in particular at the Rapid City Boarding School and surrounding lands, and described the cultural significance of a determined group of uncles (grandmothers) who led the push to find the graves of dozens of indigenous children who died at the Boarding School. The project has wide-reaching impacts on community considerations and planning in Rapid City and is the basis for a memorial (in planning) for the children who still lie there. The Nebraska/Dakotas Chapter of ASLA has committed to providing a letter of support as well as donating funds

for a boulder in memorial of one of the children. More information about this project can be found at <https://www.rememberingthechildren.org/>.

Following lunch with the conference sponsors, conference attendees toured the nearby Main Street Square and Art Alley, two important contributors to the recent renaissance of downtown Rapid City. Main Street Square President and CEO, Domico Rodriguez, led a tour of the Square, speaking about some of the current challenges facing the eleven-year-old, heavily-used facility, including normal wear and tear as well as the reinvention necessary to keep visitation high. The Square is in the heart of downtown Rapid City and includes a splash fountain, event lawn, stage, winter ice skating rink, and unique hand-carved granite sculptures.

Art Alley is a graffiti-covered alley just half a block away from Main Street Square. What started as a dark alley popular for tagging has become a flourishing practice space for aspiring artists. The block-long art space is managed by the Rapid City Arts Council. Tally Monteau, the education director for RCAC gave us a quick history of the alley and described how it is currently managed. With her background in K-12 education and being a certified Lakota Language and Culture instructor, Tally is the perfect fit for young artists of all cultures to experiment with color and form in Art Alley.

Finally, to wrap up the day, an evening mixer, keynote, and awards presentation was held at the Mount Rushmore Society Event Room. Our keynote speaker was Pat Wyss, FASLA, whose firm, Wyss Associates, is celebrating 40 years in business. One of the first landscape architecture firms in western South Dakota, Pat gave a retrospective of the firm’s work and some advice from his 40 years in practice; follow your principles, good design matters, be a realist, treat all people with respect, don’t burn bridges, be an



FRIDAY: OCTOBER 1

BREAKFAST SPONSORED BY:
SYNLAWN

:00-8:30 am

Breakfast

Hotel Alex Johnson Ballroom
523 6th Street, Rapid City, SD

:30-11:00 am

Session 5:

Having Better Community and Organizational Conversations
Presenters: Dakota Resources: Kristi Wagner, Paula Jensen

1:30-11:45 am

Closing Remarks

Bryan Leininger, NDC ASLA Chapter President

A special THANKS to Mike Stanley, ASLA and Chance Whelchel for hosting the pre-conference mixer.

THANK YOU to our sponsors! This conference could not happen without your support!!



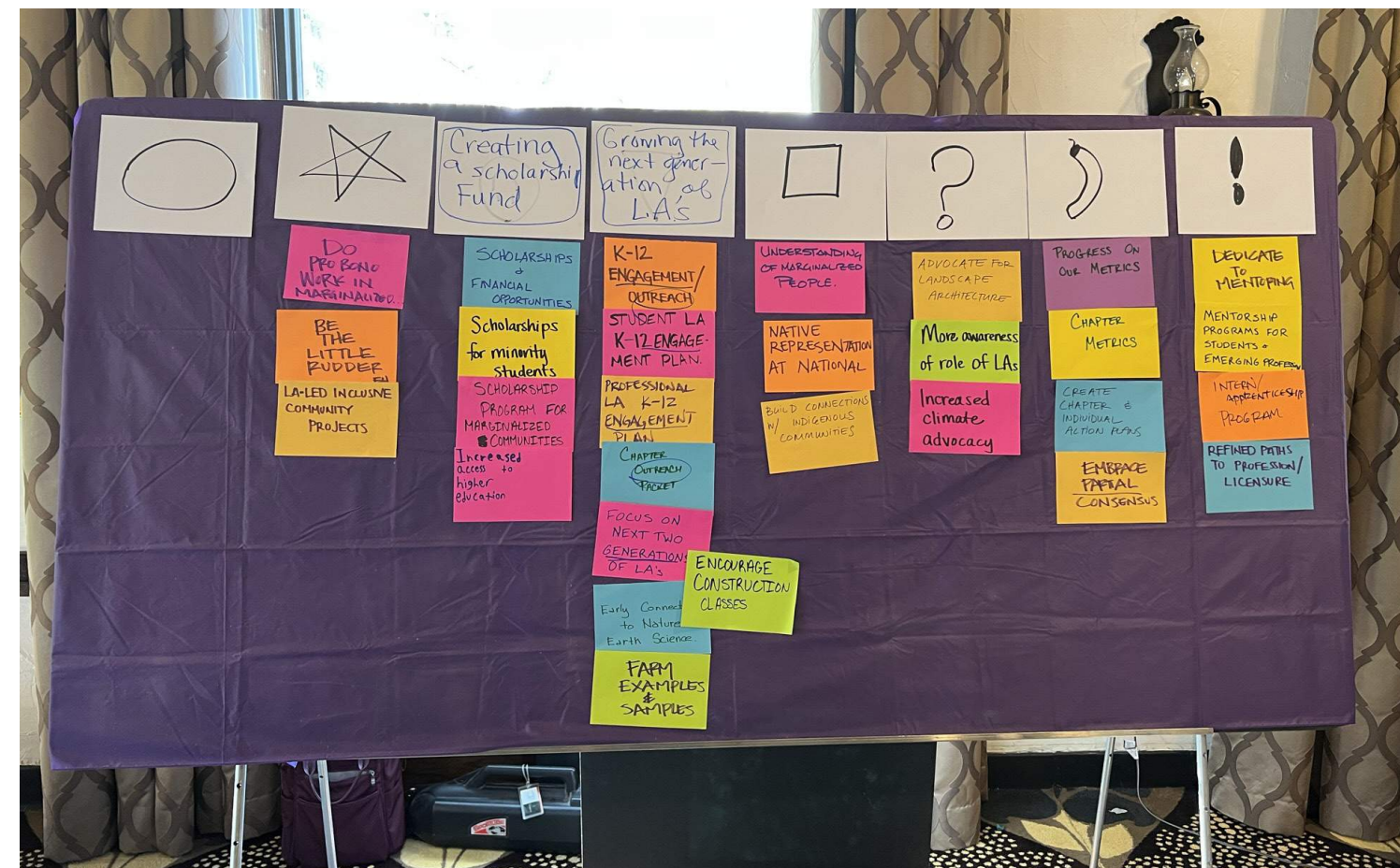
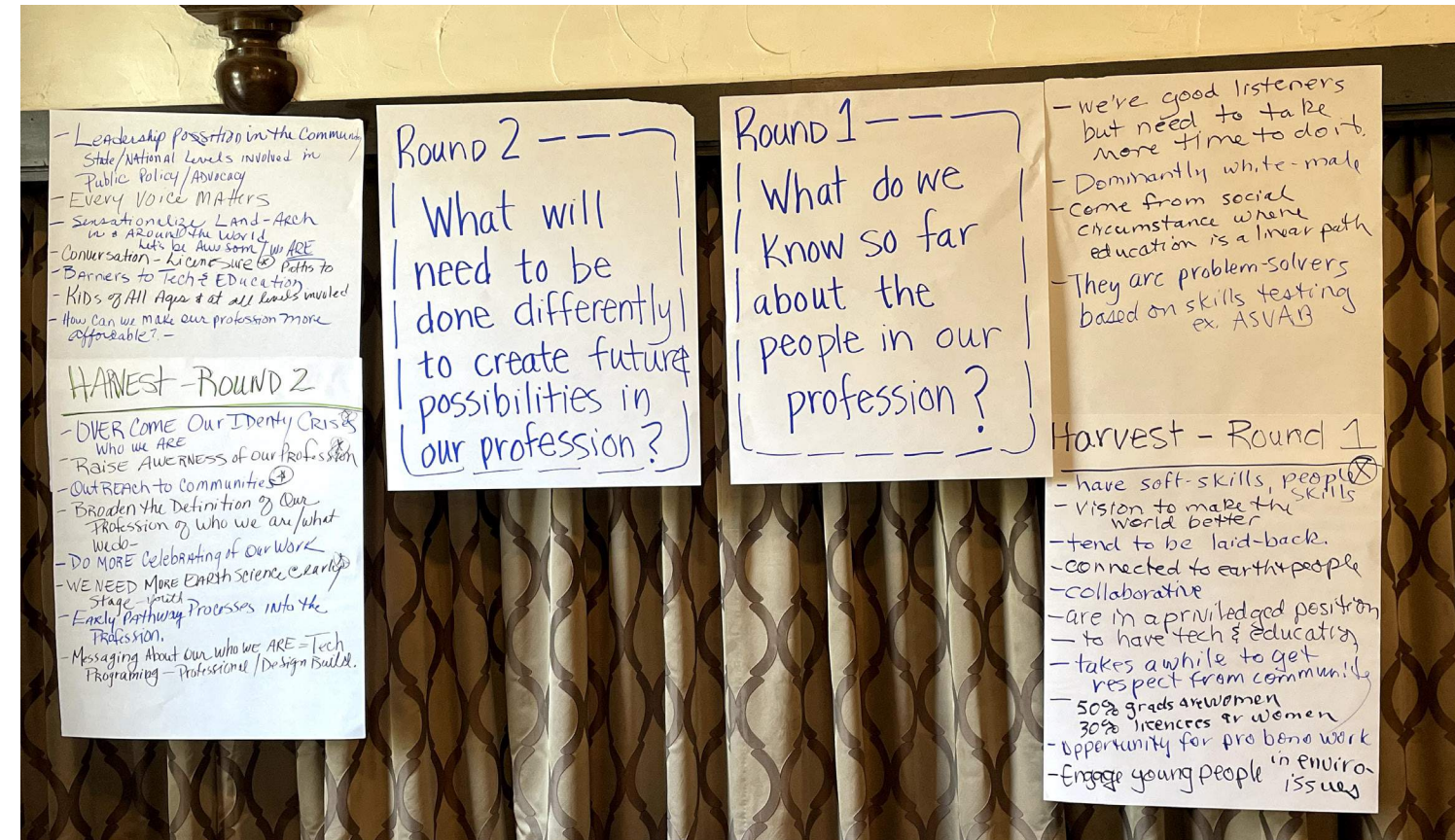
entrepreneur. And, as Frederick Law Olmstead said, "respect the genius of the place."

The inspirational keynote was followed by the NDC ASLA 2021 Awards presentation. It was a pleasure to see and celebrate the great work of the landscape architects in our region. The award winning projects can be seen at <https://www.ndcasla.org/news/2021ndcawards>.

The second day was a three-hour demonstration and practice of three different engagement techniques for better community and organizational conversations. This was an interactive session facilitated by Kristi Wagner and Paula Jensen, community coaches from Dakota Resources, an organization that builds financial and leadership capacity for rural communities. Our practice of the three techniques focused on a central "Big Focus Question": Imagine if landscape architects came together to ensure that historically marginalized and intentionally excluded people were represented in our profession. Although the demonstration was an abbreviated practice of the engagement techniques, the results were insightful. We learned about the engagement strategies while working together on a critical issue impacting the future of our profession and its continued relevance.

A special thanks goes out to our Gold Sponsors: Commercial Recreation Specialists, Crouch Recreation, Landscape Forms, Outdoor Recreation Products; Conference Sponsors: SYNLawn, Northwest Pipe, TerraSite Design, and Tallgrass Landscape Architecture; and Conference Organizing Committee Rachel Drietz, Caleb Tschetter, Eirik Heikes, Mike Bender, Sam Howland, and Tanya Olson for helping to make this conference a success!

Session 5 Activity
Sam Howland & Zack Fergus



2021 CHAPTER AWARDS

THE 2021 NEBRASKA/DAKOTAS CHAPTER AWARDS WERE JURIED BY THE IOWA CHAPTER OF ASLA. BRYAN LEININGER PRESENTED THE AWARD WINNERS WITH CERTIFICATES AT THE 2021 NEBRASKA/DAKOTAS FALL CONFERENCE: RESILIENCY, IN RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA.

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE LAKE KAMPESKA MASTER PLAN | CONFLUENCE

Lake Kampeska is a natural lake, with approximately 5,250 surface acres and 13.5 miles of lakefront, located in Watertown, South Dakota. The lake connects to the Big Sioux River via a man-made channel that leads to a single inlet/outlet weir structure on the northeast side of the lake. The weir was installed during the 1990s to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients transported by the river into the lake.

Lake Kampeska is a popular site for boating, swimming, fishing, camping, and picnicking, with several public access locations and parks scattered throughout the lakefront. It is primarily managed as a smallmouth bass and walleye fishery, although crappie, bluegill, channel catfish, northern pike and white bass are also important components of the fishery.

Sediment accumulation and declining water quality in the lake has dampened tourism numbers, reduced fishery populations, and curtailed water recreation opportunities. The primary source of Lake Kampeska's sediment and nutrient loading comes from the Big Sioux River. Several previous studies have explored the health of the lake over the years, and that information has been incorporated within this plan as appropriate.

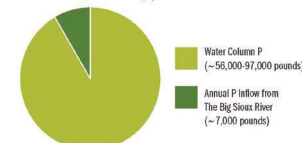
Additionally, in the spring of 2019, the Big Sioux River and Lake Kampeska experienced a flooding event that significantly raised water levels and transported sediment and nutrients into the lake. Water sampling that occurred during the event reinforced two important conclusions: 1) The quality of the water was consistent with previous studies that indicated inflow from the Big Sioux River was one of the main drivers of decreased water quality in the lake; and 2) Phosphorous, the main nutrient leading to poor water quality, was primarily in dissolved phase meaning that removing the phosphorous from the water column is not just tied to removing sediment.

The primary goal of this Master Plan is to increase the recreational use of the lake by improving water quality, enhancing fish habitat, increasing lake access and adding public amenities. With a clear, phased strategy this document will provide a pathway to Lake Kampeska's successful future..

Click [HERE](#) to view the plan in its entirety.

LAKE KAMPESKA WATER QUALITY

EXISTING PHOSPHORUS (P) LEVEL



TROPHIC STATUS LEVEL

Trophic Status	Phosphorus (mg/L)
Eutrophic (Good)	0.024 - 0.07
Hypereutrophic (Compromised)	> 0.07
Lake Kampeska (Current)	0.4-0.7 mg / L

KEYS TO IMPROVING LAKE KAMPESKA WATER QUALITY

* REDUCE PHOSPHORUS

» Convert lake from Hypereutrophic to Eutrophic



* IMPROVE FISHERY

» Decrease algae blooms
» Improve Habitat



* IMPROVE AESTHETICS / RECREATION

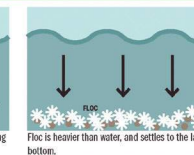
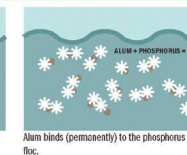
» Increase water clarity



PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL OPTIONS

ALUM TREATMENT: Phosphorus Inactivation; In-Lake Removal

HOW DOES IT WORK?



NOTES: Alum treatments can take a few weeks to a month to apply, and will last approximately 10 - 20 years before reapplication is necessary.

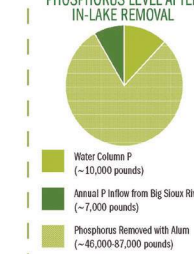
WATER COLUMN ALUM TREATMENT

» Removes 46,000 to 87,000 lbs per treatment
» Costs \$8 - \$10 million

SEDIMENT ALUM TREATMENT

» Treat top 2-4 inches of sediment per treatment
» Costs \$6 - \$8 million

PHOSPHORUS LEVEL AFTER IN-LAKE REMOVAL



Minimize Inflow From Big Sioux River and On-Going Maintenance (CLEARAS TREATMENT)

MINIMIZE PHOSPHOROUS + SEDIMENT LOAD FROM BIG SIOUX RIVER

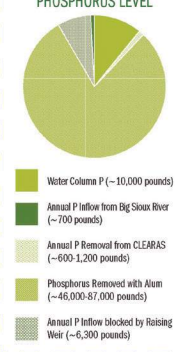
» Adjust weir elevation; a 2-foot increase in weir height will eliminate the 10-year flood stage inflow (and associated phosphorus load)
» Costs \$500,000 - \$1 million

CLEARAS TREATMENT

» Intended for on-going maintenance after initial treatments have lowered phosphorus loads
» Removes 600 - 1,200 lbs per year
» Annual operation costs \$30,000/year
» Costs \$2 - \$3 million

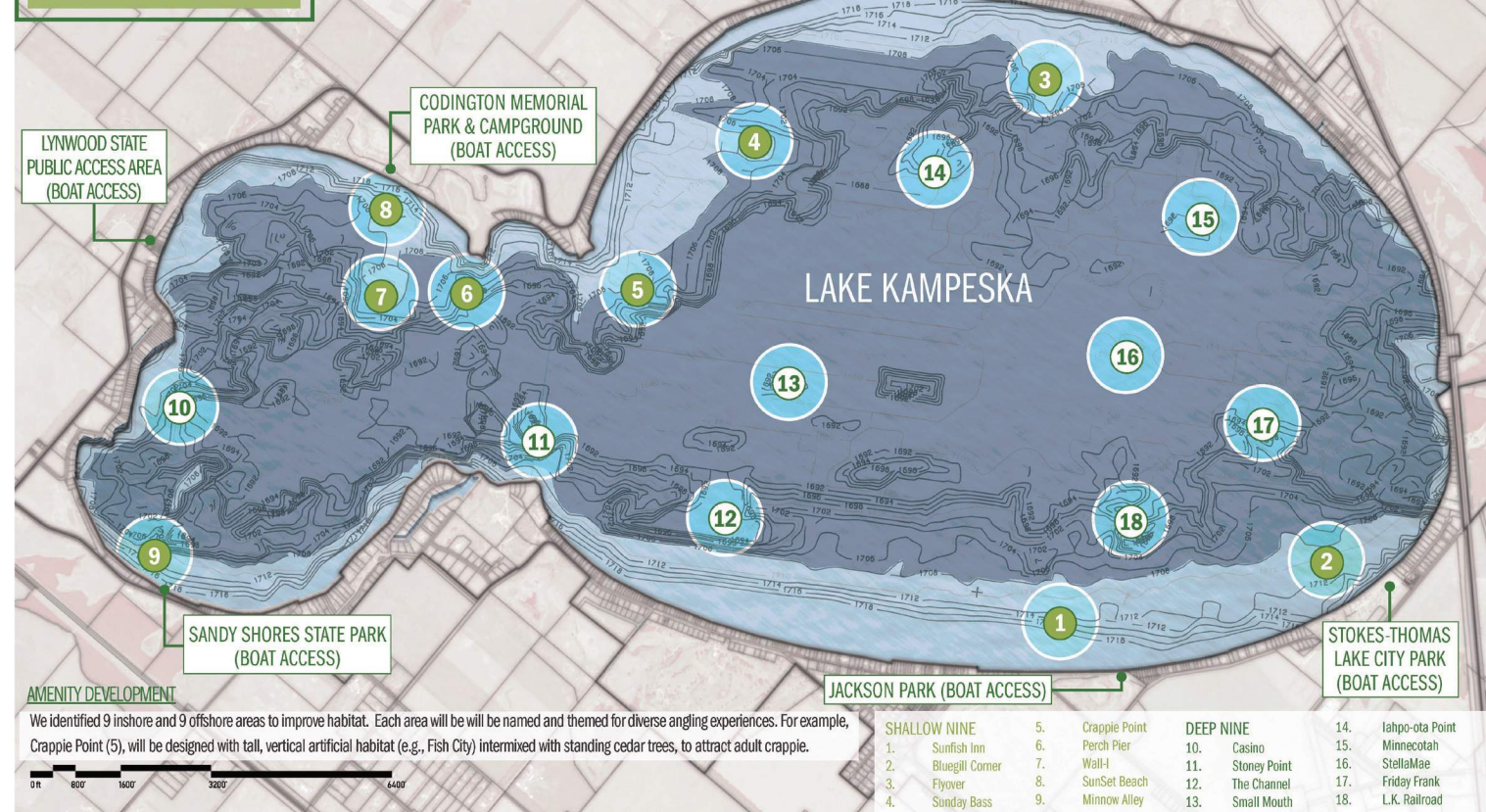


MAINTAINED PHOSPHORUS LEVEL



22 LAKE KAMPESKA MASTER PLAN | WATERTOWN, SOUTH DAKOTA

LAKE KAMPESKA AMENITY DEVELOPMENT



LAKE KAMPESKA MASTER PLAN | WATERTOWN, SOUTH DAKOTA

Amenity Development | Fishing Habitat 'Golf Course'

HONOR AWARDS

BIG SIOUX RIVER GREENWAY PHASE 3

CONFLUENCE

The Phase 3 Greenway project expands the riverfront trail from downtown to the city's namesake Falls Park. The focus on the river has shifted in recent decades from an industrial resource to a public amenity for events, recreation, historic preservation, and economic growth. Phase 3 design elements include a riverfront trail, park, and plaza, including renovations to the dilapidated low head dam.



NEW NORTH MAKERHOOD

RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

Designed to transform the historic site of the Omaha Hardwood Lumber Company into a thriving Artist and Maker Community, the New North Makerhood has the potential to become a nucleus for arts and culture within North Downtown Omaha while purposefully growing the urban fabric of the neighborhood.



MERIT AWARDS

CASPER AREA WAYFINDING MASTER PLAN

RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

The master plan design serves the residents and tourists of the Casper Metropolitan Area. The goal of this system and specifically the graphic standards was to create a unified theme for the county, cities, and towns within the metro, which simultaneously speaks to the unique character of each jurisdiction.



MERIT AWARDS CONT.

CIVIC SPACE DESIGN: "THE INTERFACE"

RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

“Urbs in Horto,” a city in the garden, aptly describes this unique fusion of La Vista’s Central Park and City Centre. The angular iconography of a spotlight, emanating from the core, creates three intersectional spaces: City Centre Commons, La Vista Landing, and Water’s Edge Terrace—a place for all ages.



MARY JO WAGNER ARBORETUM MASTER PLAN

CONFLUENCE

The Mary Jo Wegner Arboretum and East Sioux Falls Historic Site aims to become an integral component of the horticultural and educational communities of the region, and the updated master plan shapes the pathway to this goal. The plan unifies past master planning and site improvement efforts.



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

STOCKWELL ENGINEERS

The South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery serves as a final resting place for veterans and their spouses. This 60-acre property is the first federally funded, state-owned and operated veterans cemetery in South Dakota and provides a service that was not previously offered to veterans in this part of the country.



TRINITY ECO PRAYER PARK

TERRA SITE DESIGN

Trinity Eco Prayer Park is a pocket park in downtown Rapid City, SD. The half-acre site was accomplished by the Trinity Foundation through a public-private collaboration as part of their mission of altruism. The space is open to public for daily use and is the setting for events such as concerts, weddings, picnics, etc. There is a park shelter near the center of the park with undulating walkways for circulation and a great lawn for gathering. Surrounding the park are various biomes of native and adaptive plants as well as stormwater features such as green-swales, basins, wetlands, and creek beds.



MERIT AWARDS CONT.

WALNUT STREET STREETScape STOCKWELL ENGINEERS

The Walnut Street Streetscape project completely revitalizes a large portion of downtown Yankton. The highly designed project brings a sense of pride and identity to the area, emphasizes the importance of aesthetics in civic projects, and acts as a precedent to future downtown Yankton projects.



WHITNEY COMMONS DESIGNWORKS

Whitney Commons was the dream of a Sheridan, WY resident who wanted to see his city flourish and increase community involvement by redeveloping blighted areas around the city. The client envisioned a park that would attract visitors of all ages and abilities with a number of different areas that all presented unique experiences, including a half-mile pathway system connecting to the surrounding neighborhood, an Outdoor Stage and Amphitheater, Splash Grounds, and a reflective garden and labyrinth.



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GOLD

FIRM FOCUS



right: University of Mary
Winter Garden
AGL Landscape Architects

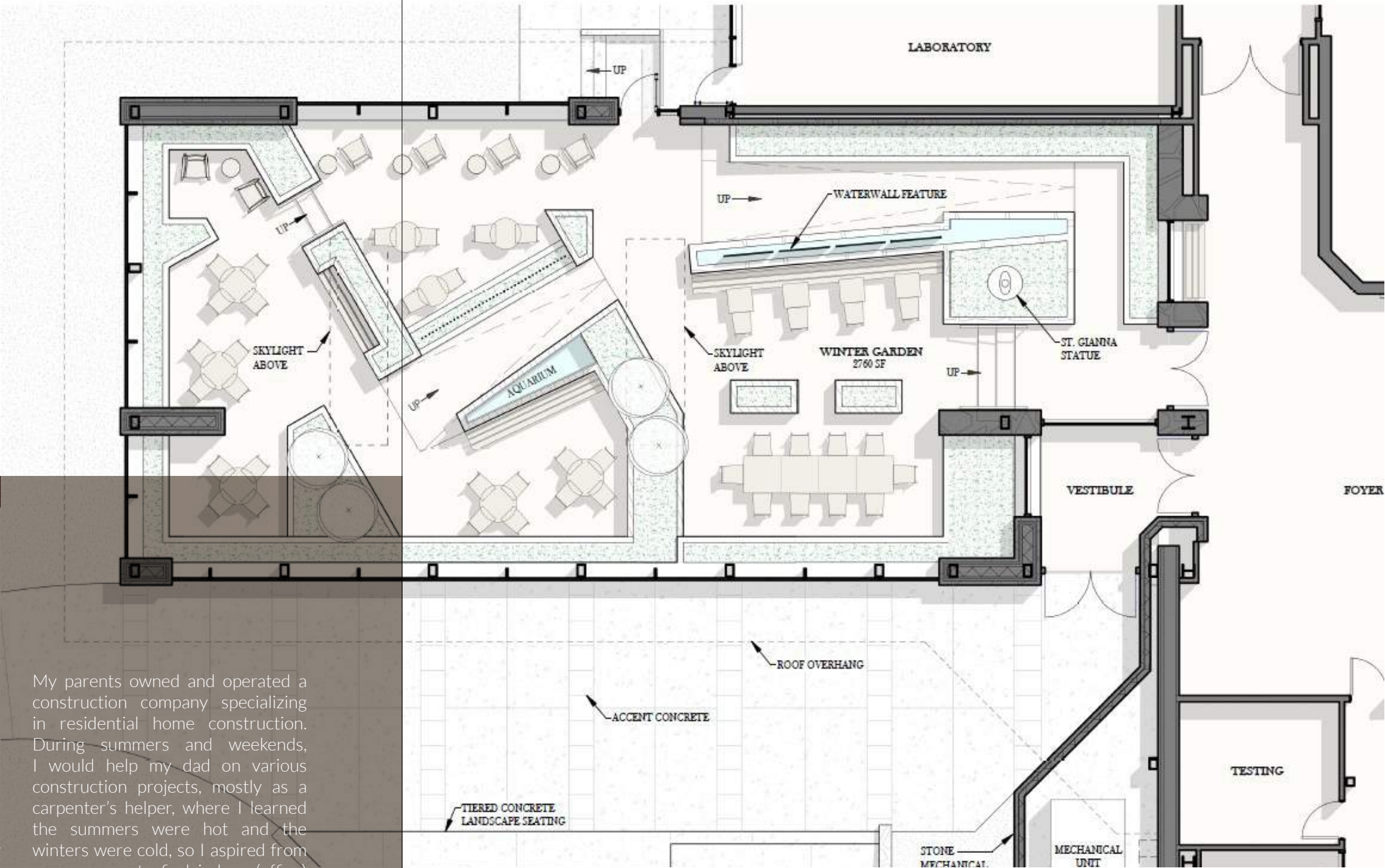
We sat down with AGL Landscape Architects to learn more about the three of them and their new venture together.

Tell us a little about yourselves. Who are you? Where do you come from?

Jake Axtman [JA]: I was born and raised in Bismarck, North Dakota. I was always interested in design and was initially drawn to the architecture program at NDSU. After a campus visit, I discovered Landscape Architecture and knew that was the occupation I wanted to pursue. After graduation in 2004, I returned home and began working for an engineering and planning firm. I gained a great deal of technical experience during that time and decided to work as a sole practitioner for about eight years before starting AGL.

Brett Gurholt [BG]: I was born in Cambridge, Minnesota, although my family moved to Bismarck, North Dakota when I was still an infant.

My parents owned and operated a construction company specializing in residential home construction. During summers and weekends, I would help my dad on various construction projects, mostly as a carpenter's helper, where I learned the summers were hot and the winters were cold, so I aspired from a young age to find indoor (office) work! In college, I became interested in the design profession and was introduced to Dennis Colliton, who encouraged me to major in landscape architecture. After the first-year studio, I was hooked. I love seeing projects go from an initial concept sketch to construction and most everything in between. I've been married to my wife Heather for 24 years, and we have three amazing kids and two dogs. For the record, I only wanted one dog.



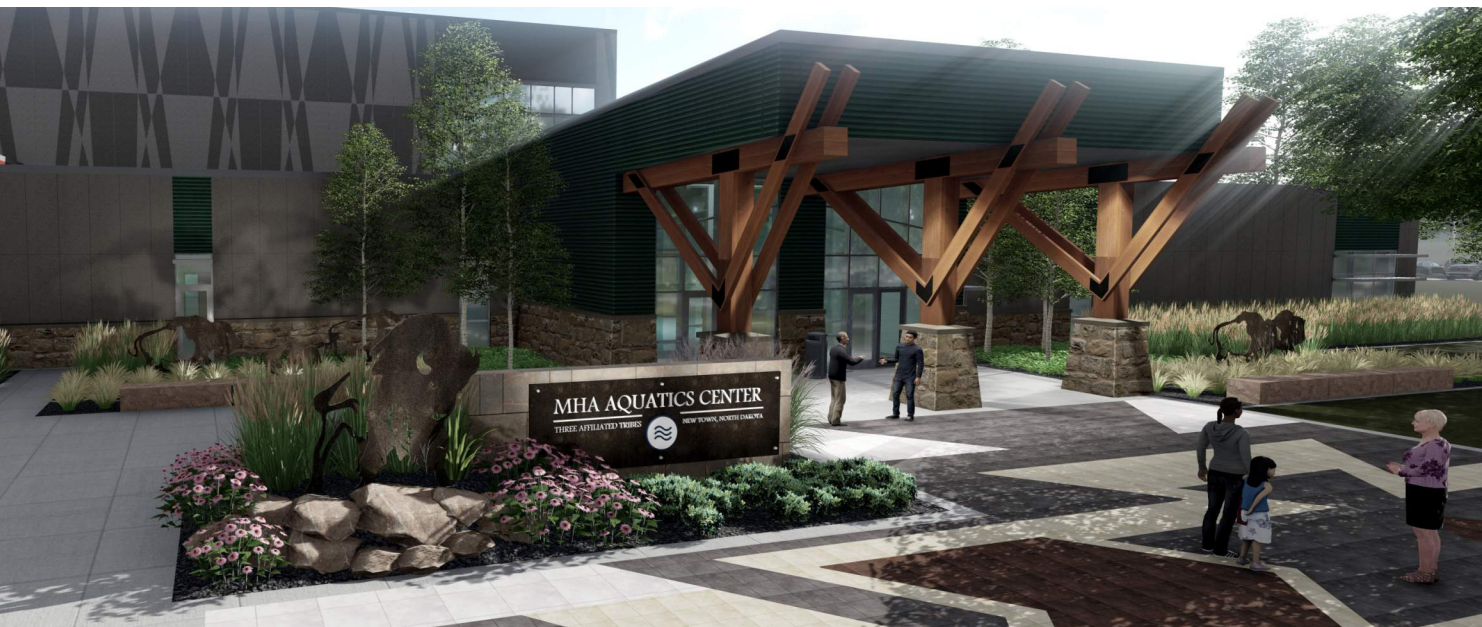
JAKE AXTMAN



BRETT GURHOLT



BRYAN LEININGER



above: MHA Aquatics Center
New Town, North Dakota
AGL Landscape Architects

right: Hospice of the Red River Valley
Process Sketch
Fargo, ND
AGL Landscape Architects

Bryan Leininger [BL]: I'm from Kasson, Minnesota, a small town about 10 miles west of Rochester, Minnesota. I moved to Fargo in 2005 and graduated from the Landscape Architecture program at North Dakota State University in 2011. For a little over seven years, I worked for another local firm and then started and operated my own company for 3 ½ years before launching AGL with Brett and Jake. I'm married to Stephanie, my ever-supportive wife; we have two kids and have a hyperactive German Shorthair/Labrador named Henry.

How did AGL Landscape Architects originate? When did you begin discussing your partnership? And how long afterward was your official launch?

JA: Honestly, I was getting burned out working as a sole practitioner. I had always admired the work of Brett and Bryan, and it occurred to me that maybe it was time for a new venture with new partners. We had a few coffee meetings, and things seemed to click almost immediately. The formation of our new practice was a bit of a whirlwind and very exciting. You never know where a coffee meeting might lead you!

BG: I had spent 15 years as a landscape architect at a large/regional engineering firm. I decided to leave that position for an entirely different career in State Government. It was a good job with good people, but I felt this constant pull toward design and landscape architecture or that a piece of me and my skills was missing. It was about this time that Jake asked me to have coffee to discuss the future of our careers in North Dakota and beyond. We shared ideas and visions of what opportunities might lie ahead. Before too long, Bryan's name was brought into the mix as a fellow landscape architect who was doing great work with a very bright future in Fargo and we saw this as an opportunity to offer our services on eastern side of North Dakota and western Minnesota lakes country.

BL: During the late fall of 2020, Jake and I had just finished up some planning work on a project where my firm subcontracted his firm. Throughout that process, it was obvious he and I worked and collaborated well together. After a month had passed, Jake had texted me out of the blue saying something along the lines of: "Hey, I'd like for you to meet someone - we've got

some ideas we'd like to pitch you." In short order, I was introduced to Brett. A few short months later, AGL had legally formed, and our business opened on February 1, 2021.

Were there any hurdles in forming your company? How did you find your way through?

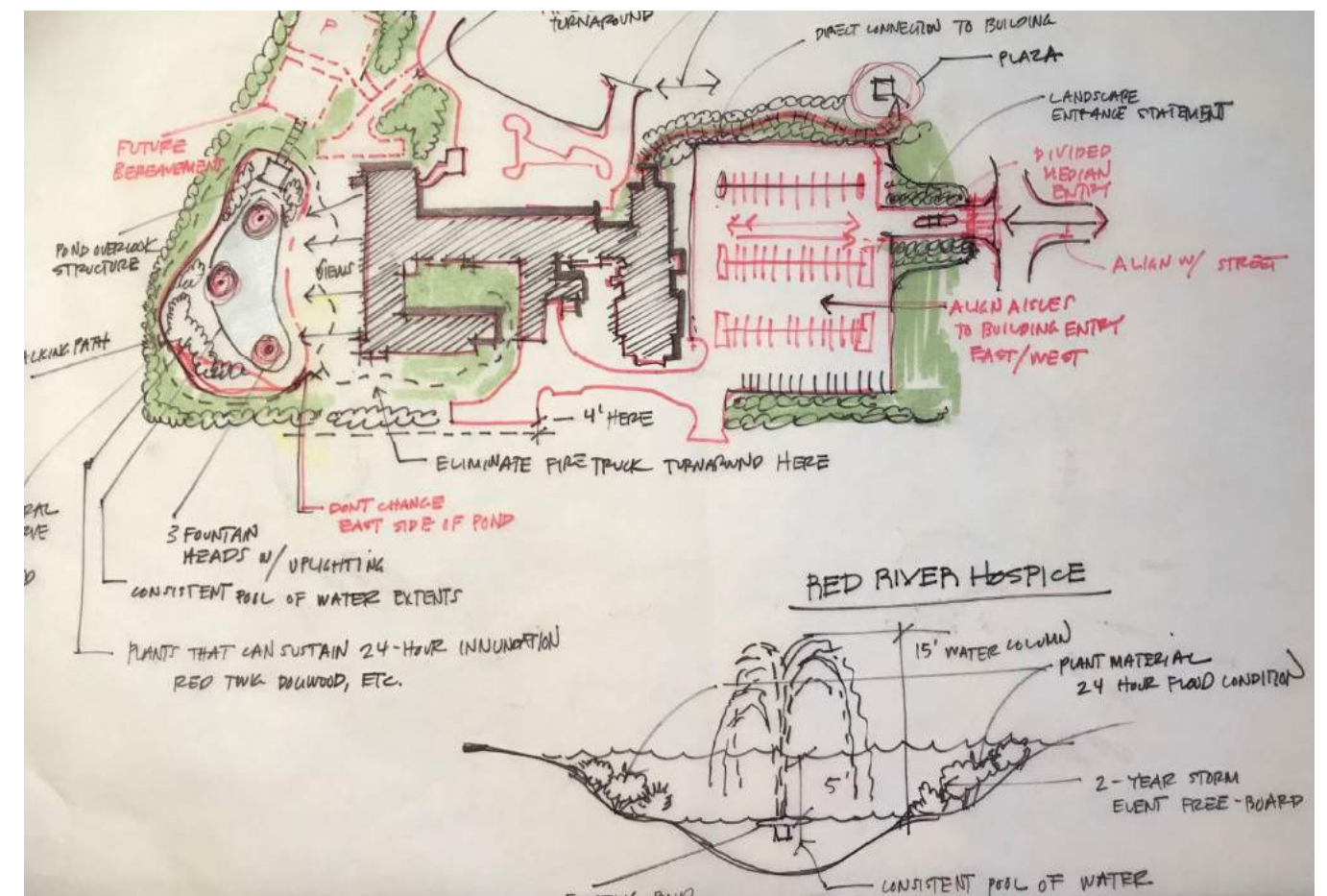
JA: The seemingly simple things can be the most arduous to overcome when starting with new partners. Fortunately, we all seem to have the same value system and passion for improving the built environment. Working through the details of our business can be a challenge, but ultimately we all really respect one another and that goes a long way.

BG: We'll never be done hurdling! I would say that I've underestimated how much time it takes on the operations side of the firm, whether it be contract negotiations, managing finances, or planning for staff growth.

As designers, we tend to want to focus on the production side of things, drawing, preparing plans, developing ideas, but there is equally important business operations things that always need tending to. My dad had an old joke that he was down to working half days (12 hours), and even though I don't think I'm logging those kinds of hours, it feels like there is always more that can be done.

BL: The three of us were from three separate places coming into this partnership with all of the typical workflow "baggage." We each had our way of getting things done - schematic design package deliverables all looked and felt different. Our AutoCAD standards were all different. We each primarily worked in a specific market sector. In many ways, we're still working through these details. It's really been a sort of trial-and-error process. On each of our projects, one of us is assigned as the Project Manager, and

"The formation of our new practice was a bit of a whirlwind and very exciting. You never know where a coffee meeting might lead you!"



“What was supposed to be a quick debrief, pack up and go exercise, turned into a nearly three-hour conversation about future work and our responsibility as Landscape Architects and thought leaders in our communities.”

leads the team through the process and through that, we work the kinks out along the way.

You are coming up on one year of AGL. What is one thing you'll each remember from your first year together?

JA: Within the first few weeks of starting our firm, we landed an interview for a major project. It's the type of project you dream of working on as a Landscape Architect. We had to scramble to prepare for the interview. Our website was a work in progress, our portfolio was in shambles, we didn't even have business cards yet. During the interview, we were asked questions like “what is the mission statement of your firm” and “tell us how your firm works collaboratively with other firms.” We weren't ready to answer these types of questions about AGL because we were so new. I'm sure our responses were a bit of a humorous calamity. But the experience seemed to galvanize us, making us hone our focus on building our brand.

BG: It's a funny story. When we signed our partnership agreements and corporate by-laws, we hired a photographer to capture what we thought might be fun to look back on in 20 years as we near retirement and the transitioning of the company to the next generation of leaders. When we got the photos back, they were laughable. It is apparent that the looks on our faces were staged, the room was austere, we wore clothes that we might wear to a funeral, etc. It looked like we had gone back in time to the 1970's. I remember asking Bryan if we should use one of the photos for a proposal we were working on. His answer was a terse “no.” At some point, we may have the courage to share them on social media for others to laugh at.

BL: The team recently met in Fargo to conduct a site visit and review a project that we were awarded. After walking the site, we grabbed a quick cup of coffee. We then went back to the Fargo office so that Brett and Jake could begin packing up to head back to Bismarck. What was supposed to be a quick debrief, pack up and go exercise, turned into a nearly three-hour conversation about future work and our responsibility as Landscape Architects and thought leaders in our communities. It was one of those inspiring and invigorating types of conversations that made it difficult to sleep that night. It made me feel proud to have had the opportunity to team up with these two guys.

How will you celebrate AGL's first birthday?

JA: Great question. I don't think we've had a moment of downtime to ponder that. I hope we can find time for a celebratory beer, even if it is over a Zoom call.

BG: I think something simple like an evening for dinner, drinks, and maybe some music with our spouses so that we can continue to build a company that feels and operates like a family.

BL: It's hard to say if we'll be together for it. Whether or not – I'll cheers them in person or from afar with a nice porter or stout.

Beverages? Do each of you have a beverage of choice?

JA: Whole Milk. A nice tall glass of warm Whole Milk at the end of a long work week. Just kidding. I enjoy a good IPA now and again. Elysian Space Dust is my go-to. It's best enjoyed in moderation!

BG: I've been slowly collecting what I understand to be rare or hard-to-find bourbons. I'm not a connoisseur by any means, and I've got a lot to learn, but it's fun to sample different bottles in moderation, of course. Also, I drink too much coffee. I can't imagine living in a world without coffee.

BL: What season is it? Are we talking the 21+ type of beverage? My beer tastes tend to change with the season. My typical go-to, though, is Summit Brewing's Extra Pale Ale. It's one that works with any of the seasons.

Now that we have the important questions out of the way, tell us a little bit about the work you have on the boards? Is there a project that you're particularly excited about?

JA: We are working on a Riverfront Revitalization Plan here in Bismarck. This is a project that I'm particularly excited about because I had been advocating for this project for almost two years. After partnering with a local non-profit and seeking support from local leadership, the plan was awarded a significant grant from the State Tourism Department, allowing us to begin work. I believe the plan could be transformative for our community for generations to come.

BG: Honestly, I'm excited about every single project we have. We don't have any bad projects or ones we wish we didn't have. Some **are** more

challenging in terms of schedule or production, but we are grateful to be doing the work that we love to do. There is an opportunity to learn and enhance every project we are part of. We are super excited about the prospect of interacting with clients and getting involved in multi-disciplinary projects earlier in the overall design process, where we feel we can add the most value in looking at things from a larger context and then moving to the micro scale of the site.

BL: This first year has been so eye-opening. We've got several great projects and great clients. My favorite is a master plan project that came into AGL from my previous firm. It's called the Watershed Education and Recreation Center, and the clients are River Keepers and the International Water Institute. It's a pre-design and visioning project that we're not sure will ever become a reality, but it's been one of those passion projects that is so easily worked on. You might also read that as: lots and lots of pro-bono hours sunk into it. I simply love what each of the organizations is doing, and the project perfectly aligns with my personal value system.

It might be too soon to know, but where do you see AGL going in 2022?

JA: We already have a full slate of amazing projects lined up for 2022. It is going to be an incredible year for the three of us. I'm looking forward to adding staff and continuing to build our brand.

BG: In 2022, we will seek to grow the firm organically and intentionally by adding team members that align with our values. We are excited at the prospect of inviting more creativity, thought, and skill to AGL by adding the best people we can find to the company. As a professional services firm, our product lies in our people and their ability to work on projects that seek to make the world around them a better place.



top: River's Bend Residence
middle: South Shore Residence
bottom: Twin Buttes Round Homes
 AGL Landscape Architects

BL: Hard to say! We've got a bunch of great projects about to kick off, and we hope to add a couple of entry-level staff and intend on honing our craft around a great team of people. We're excited to see what comes next.

Congratulations on all your first-year successes, and I wish you all the best in the years to come! Are there any other AGL tidbits you'd like to fill us all in on?

JA: It is important for everyone to know that Brett is the oldest of the three of us.

BG: We haven't proven that Jake does not eat gas station hot dogs and whole milk for lunch. Bryan was once told he looks like Abraham Lincoln by a "squirrely fella" in Western ND – true story.

BL: Jake likes gas station roller hot dogs, and Brett overuses the word squirrely. You do you, fellas!



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NDSU Students hiking in
Theodore Roosevelt National Park
North Dakota State University



University Focus contributed by
Dominic Fischer, Department Chair,
and Abigayle Brown (MLA '22')

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AT NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

right: Kona Gray, FASLA, visits
North Dakota State University
left: Coffee Station in the
Landscape Architecture Studio
North Dakota State University



The first 100 days in the newly formed Department of Landscape Architecture within the NDSU School of Design Architecture + Art (SoDAA) have been fulfilling. The pent-up desire for in-person experiences and learning is overwhelming, but the momentum is exciting. Our students and faculty have been quick to join new projects on short notice. For example, the Performance-Based Design Studio is being co-instructed by the new Department Chair, Associate Professor Dominic L. Fischer, renowned landscape architect Charles Anderson, FASLA, and soon-to-be PhD candidate Morgan Davis Kollman, MLA '20'.

September started with a new studio set-up in our Klai Hall building in downtown Fargo, blocks away from the Broadway Square Friends. Our alumni sponsored a coffee station in the center of the studio that doubles as an ASLA Student Chapter fundraising effort.

Kona Gray, FASLA principal at ESDA in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, made a special surprise visit to our Urban Design and 2nd-year studio





left: Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation event at the Plains Art Museum
upper right: Medora Musical
lower right: Joe Wiegand (Teddy Roosevelt scholar and performer) speaks with NDSU Students
North Dakota State University

“Students and Professor Fischer attended the Medora Musical, the Pitchfork Fondue, camped under the stars, and hiked in and near the Theodore Roosevelt National Park.”

for a quick discussion on drawing, designing, and what it means to be a landscape architect. He was a gracious and engaging reviewer and accompanied us on a short walking tour and alfresco lunch.

The Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation hosted an event at the Plains Art Museum attended by many library benefactors, Snøhetta’s lead design members of the local design teams from Confluence and JLG, and members of the Architecture + Design committee, including Department Chair, Dominic Fischer, ASLA. The Medora and Theodore Roosevelt theme was continued with a field adventure to Medora, where we were warmly welcomed by Randy Hatzenbuehler, the Medora Foundation President. Students and Professor Fischer attended the Medora Musical, the Pitchfork Fondue, camped under the stars, and hiked in and near the Theodore Roosevelt National Park with Teddy, aka Joe Wiegand (TR scholar and performer).



Several service-learning projects are underway with faculty and student support. The most recent completed project is a conceptual rendering for Phase 2 of the Garden of Healing in Fargo, ND. The Urban Design Studio and the Privately Owned Public Space seminar students left on November 3rd to complete field studies and tour historic, newly designed and projects under construction in New York City and Baltimore. Highlights are pending, but construction tours were scheduled for 550 Madison and Times Square in New York City with the Snøhetta project managers and the historic Lexington Market in Baltimore, a restoration project led by NDSU alumni Joan Floura of Floura Teeter, and associate Matt Ellingson BLA '18'.

In related news, several new scholarship opportunities are on the horizon, including the Joan Floura Future Landscape Architect Scholarship for 5-years of support and is awarded to a high school senior admitted to NDSU. The Department has received tremendous support from our peer departments of Architecture and Visual Arts and hope to bolster our collaborative accomplishments in the coming years. For more up-to-date information, please follow our new socials!

<https://www.ndsu.edu/landscapearchitecture/>

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GARDEN OF HEALING - PHASE 2 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

STUDENT CHAPTER UPDATE

BY ABIGAYLE BROWN, MLA '22'

The North Dakota State University Student Chapter of ASLA has been busy this year in an attempt at reuniting students post-pandemic. Last year, most of the events, if not all, were held virtually but still provided opportunities for students to connect and work on professional skills. This year, we are making a push to have more guest speakers come in and talk about some of their real-world experiences and insights on what they've taken away from being in the business that we haven't had yet.

In the past, our students have been able to mingle with our esteemed alumni during the annual Pizza Summit. This event gives students a chance to network with professionals and get the inside scoop of what the real-world experiences are as professionals in our respective fields along with getting to hear stories of the Alumni experiences and getting connected as regular people as well.

Last year, amongst all the troubles of COVID, we were able to put together an outdoor event and grill out to celebrate PARKing day. We hosted some live music provided by our own ASLA students and were able to enjoy each other's company in a safe environment. Not only did we acknowledge the whole concept of turning the parking spaces into our own miniature park for the afternoon, but we also turned it into a community service project by sanding down the tables and tightening any loose parts of the picnic tables we had borrowed from a local small business.

This year, our ASLA Officers had the opportunity to go out to Rapid City, South Dakota, and attend the Chapter ASLA Conference. Here we had the chance to meet the Nebraska/Dakota Chapter leaders along with a handful of professionals from the area and even some ASLA members from South Dakota State

University's Student Chapter of ASLA. We had some time to socialize and network with the professionals in a more casual environment on the first night. Then we got into the actual conference, and we got to learn about a variety of projects going on in the area and projects that have been done for a while. From one project in Boxelder that is working to support single-family housing near their Army Base and another that is working to address the missing children from the historic boarding schools and redlining of the Dakota people. We also got to hear some advice from a panel of professional landscape architects about the necessity of being resilient in the Landscape architecture business. ASLA Fellow, Pat Wyss, gave a presentation on the projects he has worked on, what he has learned as a professional landscape architect of forty years, and advice he had for young professionals on the importance of the ASLA and all it has to offer.

Events this year are focused on inviting alumni to give presentations about their professional experience. First, we had Robert from Southview Design in the Twin Cities come in and talk about how they are starting to use the BIM-powered software Vectorworks. He talked through the capabilities that it has for design-build companies and showed us the work process that they go through on each project, and we looked through a collection of their finished products. Last week, we had a fellow student in the Horticulture club who owns his own landscaping business come talk to us about starting up a small business being a student, and what it takes to communicate with customers to make sure things get done right in their eyes along with some of the life lessons he has learned early as an independent contractor.



top: Charles Anderson speaks NDSU Students
bottom: Second Year Fall Projects
North Dakota State University

FIRST YEAR

Charles Anderson, a well-known landscape architect from North Dakota, spoke to the first-year pre-architecture and pre-landscape architecture students. Charles talked about the various disciplines within the profession and inspired students to pursue the career.

SECOND YEAR / JULIA RIOLA

What brought you to the NDSU LA Program? Dominic Fischer, the Department Chair of Landscape Architecture.

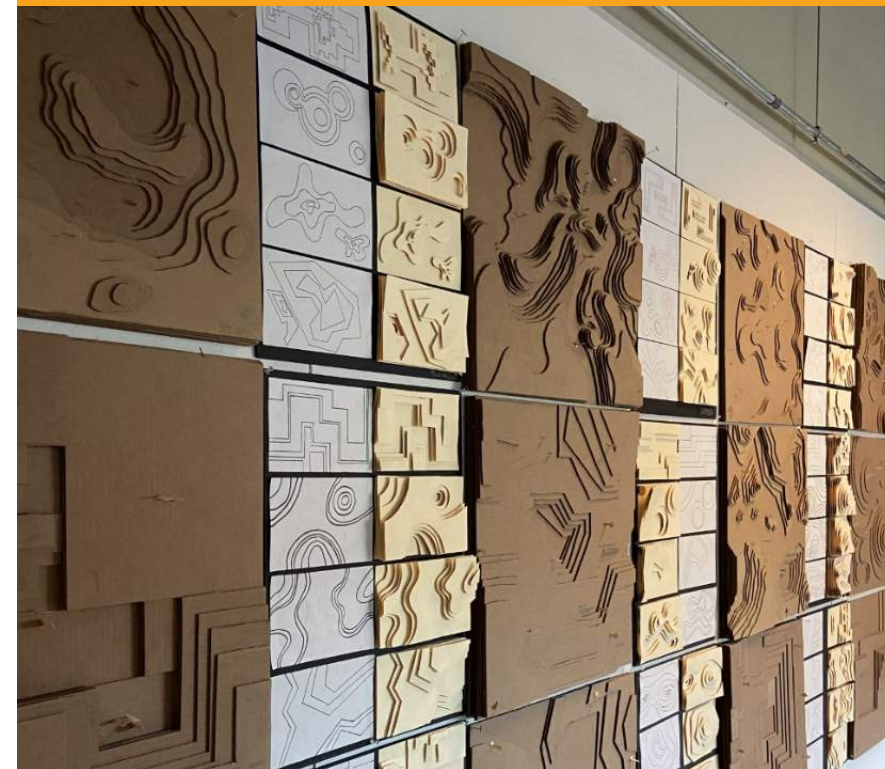
How has this program impacted your view of environmentalism? It helped me understand the importance of landscape architecture because we need to balance reality with preservation.

What is a place in Fargo that inspires you?

By the Hjemkomst Center where the 1st St. Bridge crosses the Red River.

What is your favorite thing about the NDSU LA Program?

The studio and access to all the amazing resources.



THIRD YEAR / BRIAN VALEZQUEZ

What brought you to the NDSU LA Program?

The reputation of the university and its program.

How has this program impacted your view of environmentalism?

I have learned that placement is important in how the environment will be affected, especially how stormwater will be affected.

What is a place in Fargo that inspires you?

MB Johnson Park, there is a peninsula into the river that allows for bonfires, fishing, and connection to the Red River.

What is your favorite thing about the NDSU LA Program?

How the teachers can be very 1-on-1 with each student as a benefit of our small department.

FOURTH YEAR / KATLYN RYDBERG

How has this program impacted your view of environmentalism?

I have always been environmentally friendly, but learning all the factors that go into all infrastructure made me appreciate and want to design more towards an improved environmental impact.

What is a place in Fargo that inspires you?

I don't have a specific place, but driving around Fargo and the surrounding areas helps to inspire me. I have noticed many more aspects of the outdoors in a city and the rural regions from working towards this field.

What is your favorite thing about the NDSU LA Program?

People are always my favorite part of anything. But designing and learning all the things I can about not only about landscape architecture but other relative fields as well.

FIFTH YEAR / HALEY LIND

What brought you to the NDSU LA Program?

I am from Fargo, and I wanted to stay close to home and learn to create an impact in my own community. I am currently a Landscape Design Associate at S&S Landscaping in Fargo and am living out that dream!

How has this program impacted your view of environmentalism?

I became a 'tree-hugger.' It is hard not to become one after four years of an environmental design degree.

What is a place in Fargo that inspires you?

Lindenwood Park and Island Park always seem to be used and are inspiration for places designed to be loved by the community.

What is your favorite thing about the NDSU LA Program?

The studio culture community encourages relationships with everyone in the department regardless of year, which has been very valuable as a young student and now as an upperclassman to hand down some of my knowledge to new students.

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ADVOCACY FOCUS

Contributed by Kene Okigbo, PLA, ASLA

As professionals, landscape architects have engaged in numerous advocacy efforts over the years. For example, on Advocacy Day, a group of landscape architects head to the Longworth Senate and Russel House buildings on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. to speak truth to power. Beyond this one-day event, advocacy and education by our profession must be multifaceted to reach multiple constituents: those we hope to serve through our work and those we hope to recruit to

our ranks. When we advocate and educate, landscape architects must speak not only to the 60-year-old U.S. representatives but also to the 21-year-old college student who is 80 percent likely to change their major at least once before graduating.

When we consider the future of our profession, it is critical that we reach students who are interested in the art and science of designing the public realm. Rather than waiting to find these students in college, a more sensible strategy might involve

introducing landscape architecture at a much younger age. Enter, ASLA'S first conference for kids, teens, and in-betweens: "Dream Big with Design." The conference reached 217 teachers, 21 classes, and at least 638 students from Chicago, Connecticut, Dallas, District of Columbia, For Worth, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, Nevada, and Peru.

This two-day virtual event took place in September 2021 and offered attendees the opportunity to participate in ASLA-designed

educational sessions geared toward familiarizing future landscape architects with the profession. Both days began with a welcome from ASLA's CEO, Torey Carter-Conneen, who set the tone for a day of excitement and learning, and were then led by designated emcees. Day One was led by Jade E. Davis, a third-grader from Sela Public Charter School Washington D.C., while Day Two was led by Kene Okigbo, PLA, ASLA, a landscape architect based in Omaha, Nebraska. Both

emcees worked to keep energy high between sessions and helped provide transitions between topics.

During the event, audiences were divided into different groups: on Day One, the group consisted of students from preschool through fifth grade; on Day Two, the group consisted of middle and high school students. Younger students were read storybooks that explore what landscape architects do and how they do it, learned how community gardens work and how to create one

"When we consider the future of our profession, it is critical that we reach students who are interested in the art and science of designing the public realm."



PreK – 5th Grade Day
September 23

and how landscape architecture can be a dream job for someone who loves nature, design, or play. Older students heard from landscape architect Kona Grey, who provided insight into the day-to-day professional life of a landscape architect. Some of the most interesting segments from both days involved deep dives into design for Legoland and the Disney Adventure Academy. Landscape architects from both projects shared their perspective and experience on creating “magic moments” every day through design interventions. They also spoke to the level of detail required to design these environments and the amount of fun they have each day working on projects.

At the end of the conference, students were able to walk away with a strong understanding of what landscape architects do and how they use their talents and skills to create meaningful places. In short, a seed was planted in the minds of each of those students. Even if they don't become landscape architects, they will become better engineers for understanding the role of landscape architects; they will become better clients by understanding how landscape architects work on their behalf; they will become better citizens by appreciating the contributions of landscape architects.

It has been said that having a legacy means planting seeds in a garden you never get to see. The legacy of ASLA's advocacy efforts may not be sown today or tomorrow, but in the years to come, the garden will surely grow.

And who knows – maybe one of these students will be



“The legacy of ASLA's advocacy efforts may not be sown today or tomorrow, but in the years to come, the garden will surely grow.”

part of the 20% that declares “landscape architecture” as their major and never switches.

If you are interested in viewing these sessions, click [here](#). Each session was recorded and free registration and viewing is still available.



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