

SoA Insider



PROGRAM FEATURE: BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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Director, Landscape Architecture

Founded in 1987, Clemson's Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (B.L.A.) program is now 35 years old. The B.L.A. has balanced art with science, handcraft with high tech and creativity with competency. Increasingly, program emphasis areas parallel those of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), including urban and community design, parks and recreation, water and stormwater, regional design and recreation, transportation for all, green infrastructure, climate action, and racial equity. We also highlight problem-based learning, model making, off-campus experiences, extracurricular activities and a supportive social core. More than 500 students have graduated with a B.L.A. degree from Clemson. These individuals have given our program an outstanding foundation that our current 90 students (and growing) build upon every day.

One of the great pleasures of teaching is seeing each student improve from semester to semester. Even more impressive is how our students push the overall limits of program quality to new levels each year. Our students constantly redefine the boundaries of what the B.L.A. is and what it can become. And why shouldn't they? After all, we have national merit scholars; state, regional and national award winners; leaders of student organizations and interdisciplinary teams; University athletes and musicians and all-around intelligent, hardworking, service-oriented individuals. One B.L.A. program that exemplifies the character of our students is the Design Coaching and Student Assistance program. Started during the pandemic in 2020, this program is based upon the power of peer learning. Fourth-year B.L.A. students — known as design coaches — provide advice, demonstrations, reinforcement and encouragement to first- and second-year students. The Design Coaching and Student Assistance program is a help desk, study group, support system and learning community all in one. It's also a paid work-study for our seniors. So far, we've had almost 20 students serve as design coaches. Like all our B.L.A. students, the coaches routinely demonstrate a willingness to help others achieve their best. It is this attitude and collaborative spirit that are helping to make our B.L.A. great.

Our CULA faculty is second to none. We have one of the most engaged, talented and productive faculties in the United States. For example, Professor Tom Schurch, FASLA, was elevated to Fellow of the ASLA in November 2021. Becoming a Fellow of the ASLA is one of the highest honors in our profession. Similarly, Professor Hala Nassar was named Fellow of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) in 2020. Altogether, our 2021-22 B.L.A. faculty members, including Tom, Hala, Lynn Abdouni, Lara Browning, Hyejung Chang, Matt Nicolette, Mary Padua and Paul Russell, are all highly accomplished educators on a mission to teach the next generation of landscape architects and discover the knowledge needed to progress the profession upward.

Our B.L.A. program is growing. This fall, we will have a record number of new students, up almost 65-percent from our previous high in 2020. Applications are also up, leading the University to accept twice as many students into our program than in past years. This growth brings energy and opportunities to the B.L.A. For example, we are adding outdoor laboratory spaces on campus and in the experimental forest for additional hands-on learning. Likewise, we are increasing our student laptop requirements and technology lab space to accommodate new software and technologies. We are hiring more teachers and making better use of our studio space. Overall, our B.L.A. program is in a solid position, and through the shared efforts of our alumni, students and faculty, we anticipate our next 35 years to be our best yet.

To celebrate our 35th anniversary, we invite our alumni to campus for a visit (to see what we've done with the place). Bring your family and friends. Our doors are always open for old and new friends. Beginning in September, we will host a series of events ranging from lectures to open houses to advisory meetings to tailgates (of course). So, lookout for more information about our Fall 2022 anniversary celebrations and events. You won't want to miss it! Finally, thank you to everyone who has helped make Clemson B.L.A. one of the premier landscape architecture programs in the United States. We appreciate you!



MADELYN STAFFORD Cameron Chase Huntley '11 Award

Since arriving at Clemson from her hometown of Grayson, Georgia, landscape architecture major Madelyn Stafford has made efforts to help underserved populations with her activities both inside and outside the classroom.

"One of the biggest reasons I'm so interested in landscape architecture is because there are a handful of key issues in our built world and society that landscape architecture can help combat and work to solve through design," she explained.

In 2021-2022, Stafford helped research and produce a commemorative book celebrating the School of Architecture's BIPOC alumni, which was released at a first-of-its-kind conference organized by the Clemson chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (cNOMAS).

"The goal of this publication was to highlight these names and stories to give current and future students of color role models that look like them, shed light on those who paved the path for them and emphasize the need for a more diverse college," she said.

Her commitment to diversity and inclusion extended to her Greek life as well. As a Delta Sigma Theta Sorority member, she serves as a Fraternity and Sorority Life Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Ambassador and as secretary for Clemson Student Government's Greek Affairs. She was also a member of the Call My Name student advisory board, helping implement the project's first historical tour showing the contributions of people of color who built Clemson's campus.

News



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For the sixth year in a row, Master in Architecture students have been recognized by the American Institute of Architects' Committee on the Environment.

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Landscape students design hope for a South Carolina town impacted by natural disaster

Landscape Architecture Professor Hala Nassar's second-year design studio analyzes the needs of the local community and shares design solutions that capitalize on the community assets while addressing problems and needs.

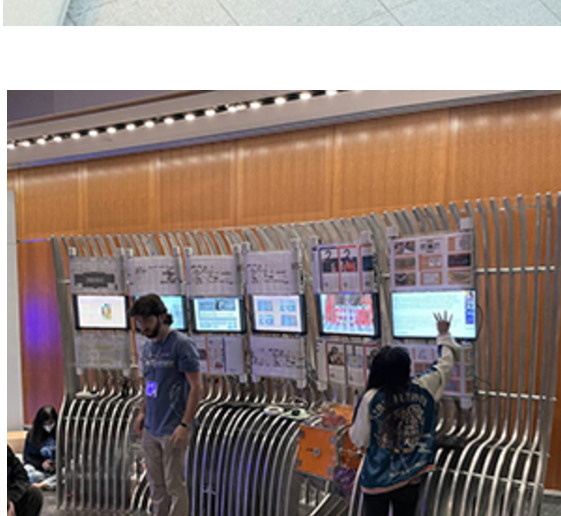
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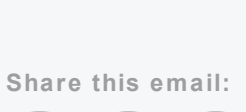
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