

ReView

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Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design

2025



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

Fay Jones School
of Architecture + Design

2025

Autumn greetings from the Fay Jones School!

I hope this 2025 edition of *ReView* finds you well, no matter where you are. Our alumni and friends are truly “out in the world,” across the nation and abroad, and we are pleased to correspond in this way, as comprehensively as possible.

This fall semester marks the beginning of my 12th year as dean, and I am grateful for the continuing privilege of this service role. The school is larger, deeper, more resourced, more dynamic, more productive and more recognized than at any previous point in its nearly 80 years of programs, and the pages of this issue overflow with evidence of those qualities.

Read on, to hear more of the completion and the August 29 dedication of the long-awaited Anthony Timberlands Center for Design and Materials Innovation, a transformative expansion of the school’s facilities and opportunities. Read on, to hear more of the school’s leadership role in the exhibition of American architecture at the U.S. Pavilion during the 19th International Architecture Exhibition at La Biennale di Venezia, under the theme of “PORCH: An Architecture of Generosity.”

With gratitude and respect, we feature an interview with our colleague Marlon Blackwell, FAIA, as he retires from the school’s faculty after 33 years, to devote himself more fully to his professional practice, Marlon Blackwell Architects. We also highlight the appointment of our colleague Rebecca (Becca) Ohman (B.L.A. ’00) to the position of Executive Director of Garvan Woodland Gardens, our outreach center in Hot Springs.

Along with celebratory events — our Alumni Design Awards, for instance — we note for your knowledge the first Arkansas Mass Timber Conference held last spring, the “Trail Mix” Symposium on Sustainable Mountain Bike Trail Design hosted this fall, and the launch of a new website for the Fay and Gus Jones House — and the Fay Jones legacy more generally — as the house joins the global Iconic Houses network.



"PORCH: An Architecture of Generosity" at the U.S. Pavilion, in Venice, Italy, May 2025

Our alumni, donors and benefactors continue to provide essential and enriching support to the good of the school, and in this we celebrate the admirable generosity of Bruce and Rebecca Woody, of Charles Hill, and of Cami Jones. Thank you all for your kindness and devotion to the cause of our students and programs.

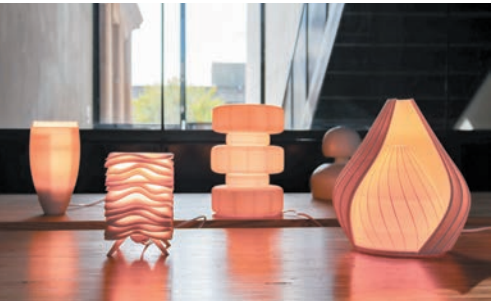
Lastly, we look ahead by looking to our past, not only through the previously mentioned 80th anniversary of the overall school next year, but to our celebration of the Department of Interior Architecture and Design’s 50th anniversary last spring, and the Department of Landscape Architecture’s own 50th anniversary next fall as well.

In sum, the school is suffused with both generosity and celebration, and we prosper by these virtues ... and by your continued support. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Peter MacKeith, dean and professor

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On the cover, a view of the school’s newly opened Anthony Timberlands Center for Design and Materials Innovation. Photo by Tim Hursley.

GENSLER BRINKMANN SCHOLARSHIP

Annie Carter has always loved art and design. When she made her way to college, she chose a major that could blend her creative abilities with her passion for helping people: interior architecture and design. She shapes spaces with purpose and care.

“I always want it to be a space that creates a positive feeling and provides a sense of belonging,” Carter said, who graduated with distinction in May with a Bachelor of Interior Architecture and Design. “I feel like, as designers, there are so many things we can do to make a space welcoming.”

In 2024, Carter was named as a winner of the Gensler Brinkmann Scholarship, established in 1999 as a memorial to Don Brinkmann, an interior designer who incorporated design, vision and leadership. She was one of three outstanding students nationwide who each received \$5,000 in scholarship money.

“This is the second year in a row one of our students has won this prestigious scholarship from the largest design firm in the world,” said Carl Matthews, professor and head of the Department of Interior Architecture and Design. “It is a testament to the talents and intelligence of our students and commitment and support of excellent educators.”

Faculty members nominated Carter at the end of the fall 2023 semester. After that, Carter submitted her resume, a design sketch and a video about herself, which she created with a local videographer.

Throughout her childhood, growing up in Little Rock, Carter was always trying something new. She credits her many hobbies, including calligraphy and embroidery, as factors in her success.

“Picking something up and trying it is kind of how I got to where I am today,” she said. “If I never tried art in the first place, I never would have developed these skills.”

For the project featured in her submission, Carter designed a space for an up-and-coming architecture and design firm in Dallas, Texas, putting an emphasis on the idea of community over convenience. With a focus on the horizon as a design concept, she used pinks, yellows and oranges, along with circular elements, to create a balance between work and rest.

“I took all of the visual elements from the horizon,” she said. “Symbolically, the balance between the city life and this kind of suburban, slower pace lifestyle is what I wanted to balance in my design.”

Carter made custom built circular elements similar to the shape of the sun on the horizon. By integrating



The reception area features a wall formed from layered wooden semi-circles, each manipulated to mimic shapes the sun makes at different points on the horizon.

the repeated semicircular ceiling, circular booth seating in the cafe and patterned wall coverings, she created a space that connects the office and the horizon.

The color scheme and materials Carter used mimic a sunset and tie the office space to the natural environment. The main level of the building represents the sun with warm pinks, oranges and yellows. In the mezzanine, the colors transition to cool colors representing the blue sky. Her overall design aimed to allow natural light into the office space.

The goal of Carter’s space planning was to promote the idea of balance that comes with the horizon. She wanted to slow down the fast-paced city life outside the office and create a space that provides balance of work and life, ultimately designing a space that fosters community and meaningful relationships.

“It was my priority,” Carter said. “I arranged the workstations in a way that grouped people together instead of being so isolated.”

Carter’s focus on community derives from the benefits of returning to an office after prolonged remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Carter felt that people isolated at home during the pandemic lost the sense of community created by an office environment.

The studio professor, Madeline Ferm, played a big role in Carter’s growth, giving her the freedom and confidence to make design decisions. If not for the encouragement of her professors, she said she would never have tried for the Gensler Brinkmann scholarship.

“I feel like it has given me a lot of confidence and validation in my work. I work really hard, and I love design, but I never would have imagined that something like this would happen to me,” she said.

In summer 2024, Carter interned for Hastings Architecture in Nashville, Tennessee, which immersed her into a real-world design experience with architecture and interiors. She now has a dream job as an intern at AvroKO, a hospitality design firm in New York.

AIA COTE TOP 10 FOR STUDENTS

Projects by two Fay Jones School architecture students captured two of the 10 awards handed out in the national 2024 AIA COTE Top Ten for Students Competition. The competition is sponsored by the American Institute of Architects, Committee on the Environment (AIA COTE), in partnership with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture.

The program challenges students to design projects that use a creative and innovative, thoroughly integrated approach to architecture, natural systems and technology to provide design solutions that protect and enhance the environment. The projects by Israel Zamorano and Matthew Schroeder emphasize achieving net-zero emissions, adapting to resilient climate impacts and addressing social and environmental inequities.

“These recognitions reflect the commitment the Department of Architecture has made in applied design that addresses climate change,” said John Folan, department head and professor of architecture. “Israel and Matthew’s work on two very different projects developed in different educational contexts demonstrates the potency of teaching by advising faculty and the departmental faculty as a whole. The sensibilities represented in the work of these two very talented and dedicated students represent a culture and way of thinking that is shared by their colleagues. Their success tangibly promotes the value of design in creating a better future.”

Pedro Veloso, assistant professor of architecture, served as a faculty sponsor for both students. Veloso worked with Zamorano in an Integrated Design Studio that Veloso coordinated. Schroeder was part of a studio coordinated by David Kennedy, assistant professor of architecture, in which all students took on the competition as their studio project.

Located along the Arkansas River, adjacent to the Argenta Arts District in North Little Rock, Zamorano’s Arko Park is a 41,300-square-foot recreation/athletic center designed to serve as a comprehensive facility for various athletic and recreational activities. The building will experience hot, humid summers and mild to cool winters, necessitating considerations for climate control and energy efficiency.

The architecture focuses on communicating with site and ground conditions, as well as the relationships between climate, urban, social and ecological contexts. The landscape highlights and complements the natural surroundings, providing opportunities for introspection



This is a rendering of the front of Arko Park, by Israel Zamorano.

and observation. The sports leisure area focuses on the interaction between land, vegetation and ecosystems within a single habitat.

North Little Rock’s riverfront climate poses constant challenges year-round, including air quality, moisture control, high humidity and HVAC systems. Arko Park aims to become an asset to the surrounding neighbors of Argenta — emerging as a hub for energy production as it seeks to be below net zero.

The jury said that Arko Park “has a well-designed roof that is the centerpiece of this beautifully rendered project. The exterior shading has a simple and elegant design that can be built.”

Schroeder’s project, Collaborative Avenue, is an advanced learning hub located in Hell’s Kitchen in New York City that aims to foster collaboration and innovation. By using materials and design motifs familiar to Hell’s Kitchen, the structure maintains a visual harmony with its surroundings and enhances its ties to the community.

The design prioritizes flexibility, with spacious, open areas equipped with modular, movable elements that can be reconfigured as educational needs evolve. Water reuse systems significantly reduce the dependency on municipal water supplies, and the integration of a solar panel canopy minimizes the building’s reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

The jury said that Collaborative Avenue “brings a unique approach to an eco-conscious design and combines modern architectural elements with functional sustainability. The visually compelling graphics show a clear understanding of the occupants’ experience in the breathtaking drawings.”

This academic facility is designed to be a place where education transcends the classroom, where the community finds a voice in academic conversations and where sustainable urban living is both taught and practiced. By incorporating public spaces within its design, the project actively fosters interaction and enriches the social and cultural life of Hell’s Kitchen.

New Garvan Executive Director

Becca Ohman was recently named executive director of Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs. She had served as interim director since January 2024, after the retirement of Bob Bledsoe, who'd served the garden for 22 years.

Garvan Woodland Gardens, an outreach center of the Fay Jones School, opened to the public in 2002. It had been years in the making since Verna Cook Garvan donated the 210-acre property in 1985 to the then-School of Architecture at the U of A. The land once was part of Garvan's father's lumber business. The garden now operates with a staff of 60 with seasonal employees for Holiday Lights and welcomes more than 200,000 visitors annually.

Ohman's journey to Garvan Gardens began when she was a landscape architecture student at the U of A in the late 1990s. "I still remember the excitement in studio when the original Garvan Master Plan was being developed by faculty," she said. "It was an inspiring time, full of great energy for what was to come."

After completing her Bachelor of Landscape Architecture in 2000, Ohman pursued a career that combined her love for nature, design and people. She spent several years working in both public and private practice in Colorado and Northwest Arkansas — with a focus on landscape design and urban planning. She then returned to her hometown of Hot Springs, where she initially joined Garvan Gardens to support design and construction administration projects. She then served as garden director for more than 12 years before becoming interim and now executive director.

"This feels like the right time for me to step into the role of executive director," Ohman said. "My experience and deep connection to this garden have prepared me to help guide it into its next chapter. I'm passionate about honoring the remarkable work that has come before us while discovering fresh and inspiring ways to grow. More than anything, I'm committed to connecting people with art and nature in ways that feel meaningful and uplifting. I'm excited to work alongside such a talented team and to find new ways for the garden to serve and enrich our community."

As garden director, Ohman focused her work on the development of new garden spaces and architecture for Garvan Gardens while connecting people to the benefits and beauty provided in the unique woodland setting.

"My experience has provided a deep understanding of the stewardship required to maintain our exceptional



Becca Ohman

gardens and facilities, and how these spaces serve as a foundation for our educational programs, community outreach, seasonal displays and other mission-driven initiatives," she said.

The mission of Garvan Gardens is multifaceted and a constant guide to Ohman and the staff — with the ultimate goal of connecting people with art and nature. The leadership and staff work to preserve and enhance a unique part of the Ouachita environment; provide people with a place of learning, research, cultural enrichment and serenity; develop and sustain gardens, landscapes and structures of exceptional aesthetics, design and construction; and partner with and serve communities of which Garvan Gardens is a part.

Ohman said she's enthusiastic about several current projects and initiatives at Garvan Gardens, including the future Ross and Mary Whipple Family Forest Education Center, which was developed through several design studios with Fay Jones School students.

"The Whipple Family Forest Education Center is the cornerstone of our efforts to restore native forests, educate our guests about Arkansas forests and timber, expand nature-based learning and deepen our collaborations with the University of Arkansas and the Fay Jones School," she said.

Another major design project at Garvan Gardens is the Woodland Parkway Entry Sequence, designed by Terrain Work. This redesign of the current entry, vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems will allow guests to arrive in a garden setting the moment they step out of their vehicles.

As for significant successes during her tenure thus far, Ohman also points to the completion of nearly 75% of the garden's 2008 Averill Master Plan, as well as more than \$11 million in grants received from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council to support various initiatives and projects.

DONGHIA FOUNDATION Senior Scholarships

Two recent graduates of the Fay Jones School each were awarded \$30,000 from the Angelo Donghia Foundation, the most prestigious scholarship in interior design education. Founded by late international interior designer Angelo Donghia, the foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes design education. Over the past 10 years, the Department of Interior Architecture and Design has received more than \$310,000 in faculty research grants and student scholarships from the Donghia Foundation.

"The continued support from the Donghia Foundation is a testament to the excellence of our students and their faculty," said Carl Matthews, professor and head of the Department of Interior Architecture and Design.

In their fourth and final year of study, Cassie Roberts and Olivia Everett were recognized with the foundation's 2024 Senior Student Scholarship Awards. They were among 12 students selected from accredited universities in the 2024 awards program and follow four previous Fay Jones School students to receive this honor.

Students were asked to design a "library of things," meant to enhance the Fayetteville Public Library's core services and contributions to the community. They were given an existing building site near Dickson Street in Fayetteville and assigned a category. Everett created her Ark Outdoors project for the Outdoor Recreation category, and Roberts created her Fay Tool Hub project for the Tools category.

Everett began by considering the recreational activities within Arkansas to bring together resources, access to gear and equipment, and community involvement to ultimately improve outdoor engagement and well-being.

"The concept for this project is 'Bridging Interconnection,' which is based on interconnecting the site and outdoor destinations, learning and the community," Everett said.

Everett used a series of collages, concept models and design charrettes to bring her design to life. Her concept model became a metaphorical representation of the connection between the site and outdoor destinations.

"I enjoy a balance of digital and physical work and believe schematic, often messy work is a powerful tool in presenting the evolution of a project," Everett said.



Olivia Everett, left, and Cassie Roberts.

Everett was this year's Senior Scholar, as the graduating senior in the Fay Jones School with the highest grade-point average. She also was selected as one of three winners of the American Society of Interior Designers 2025 Student Portfolio Competition. Following graduation in May, she returned to the DLR Group in Overland Park, Kansas, to work as an interior designer in their K-12 Education sector.

Roberts' Fay Tool Hub was designed with sustainability, collaboration and creation in mind. Through encouraging the sharing of resources, the project promotes environmental responsibility by reducing waste and material consumption.

"What stood out to me," Roberts said, "was the potential for tool libraries to create equal opportunities for education and hands-on experiences by providing access to tools and equipment that might be financially or logistically out of reach for many community members."

Roberts has always been both creative and analytical, which made choosing a career path difficult. Her affinity for fine arts and community service, combined with a passion for math and science, made interior design and architecture feel like the perfect intersection.

"This field blends creativity with problem solving, art with logic, and design with human experience, having the power to shape how people feel, connect and live," Roberts said. "That's what pulled me in. I wanted to create spaces that aren't just functional or beautiful, but spaces that truly support and uplift the people who use them."

For Roberts, the Donghia scholarship allowed her to spend the fall 2024 semester studying at Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland. Everett had the opportunity to study abroad in London during the summer of 2023, and this scholarship award allowed her to begin paying off study abroad and student loans.

ELEVATION TO AIA FELLOW

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has elevated John Folan, professor and head of the Department of Architecture in the Fay Jones School, to its College of Fellows for 2025. The FAIA distinction, the highest honor the AIA bestows upon its members, recognizes architects who have made exceptional contributions to the field of architecture and society.

Since its founding in 1952, only 3% of AIA members have achieved this honor. The AIA College of Fellows works to promote excellence in the profession, mentor emerging architects and serve the public through meaningful design and scholarship.

Folan, an AIA Arkansas chapter member, was elected under Object 6, which aims to advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education and training. “Fellowship in this object is granted to architects who have made notable contributions through their work in education, research or literature,” the AIA website notes.

Folan’s elevation to Fellow recognizes his career-long dedication to design excellence, community engagement, implementation of public interest work and applied architectural education experiences. The work done through the university-affiliated non-profit organizations Folan has developed and led advances expectations of the profession, benefits the communities where projects are realized, and empowers future generations to contribute meaningfully through shared effort.

“I’ve been extremely fortunate. This honor is not mine alone, but a reflection of the many collaborative relationships I’ve been privileged to cultivate throughout my career — among community residents, project stakeholders, municipalities and nongovernmental organizations. Most importantly, it speaks to the enduring optimism of students who engage in addressing pressing social challenges, and to the essential support of academic institutions that have made, and make, the work possible,” Folan said. “Architecture is never a solitary act; it is always a collective endeavor. The body of work and efforts this honor acknowledges is the product of shared commitments to catalyze meaningful change that benefits a broader public.”

Folan was nominated for the AIA College of Fellows by 10 AIA Fellows, supported by a sponsorship letter from William Bates, FAIA, former national president of the AIA, and seven letters of support from



John Folan

internationally recognized architects and professionals.

“Folan’s career-long focus on sustainable housing and socio-economic equity have been indefatigable, representing the very best of our profession through many channels,” Bates said in his sponsor letter. “His impressive work continues to reframe the educational values and priorities of our profession. It deeply examines the empowerment that compassionate design offers to society and elevates the importance of diverse professional designers serving underprivileged communities.”

Folan’s elevation to Fellow provides the opportunity to highlight several key projects and programs from his career. Folan said his most significant contributions are the organizations he has founded and directs.

Among these is the Urban Design Build Studio (UDBS), an award-winning program that gives students the opportunity to address pressing social challenges through hands-on public interest design work. The studio was created in 2008 when Folan taught at Carnegie Mellon University School of Architecture in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and is now associated with the Fay Jones School.

Another is PROJECT RE_, an autonomous nonprofit organization that Folan describes as the most significant professional contribution he has made in service to society. PROJECT RE_ expands the capacity of university-affiliated UDBS design-build work through job skill training programming and a triple track entrepreneurship model that affords reinvestment of project-based revenues in the community through cooperative ownership.

Other Arkansas architects and design educators to receive FAIA designation include faculty and alumni such as Marlon Blackwell, Michael Buono, Fay Jones and John G. Williams, as well as Reese Rowland, John Mott, Ralph Mott and Mark Weaver.

Metropolis Magazine FUTURE100

Each year, *Metropolis* magazine spotlights the most promising talent in architecture and interior design through its prestigious Future100 list. This year, Fay Jones School students Daria Hall, Emilie Luce and Sydney Slaughter were selected for their exceptional academic performance, creative vision and compelling portfolios.

The *Metropolis* team chose 50 interior design students for the 2025 list. Each nominee submitted a portfolio showcasing their work, which reflected a range of projects developed during their time at the University of Arkansas.

Originally from Yekaterinburg, Russia, Daria Hall came to design later in life after relocating to the United States and returning to school. Hall said that through time, exploration and the encouragement of faculty, she gained skills and confidence and now sees design as a language she speaks fluently.

“To me, design is a riddle — a puzzle to solve,” Hall said. “It fully occupies the mind, but once the solution reveals itself, everything falls into a quiet, beautiful order.”

After graduating in December 2024, Hall relocated to Chicago, Illinois. There, she joined IA Interior Architects as a Junior Designer, where she works in commercial design. Hall said that she has only gratitude for her time at the Fay Jones School.

“Returning to school as a non-traditional, married, international student wasn’t easy — but it was transformative,” Hall said. “I discovered my artistic voice and, along the way, formed lasting friendships and connections.”

Hall says that professors such as Torrey Tracy, assistant professor of architecture and design, who nominated Hall for the award, have challenged and encouraged her throughout her career.

“Daria Hall exemplifies hard work, exceptional talent, curiosity, craftsmanship and a determination to creatively solve problems in the field of interior architecture and design,” Tracy said.

Emilie Luce, from Flower Mound, Texas, approaches each design with a clear focal point, using a central idea or concept to guide her process and ensure a cohesive final product.

“Once the clients’ visions, needs and standards are understood, a design concept can be developed,” Luce said. “This concept then dictates every other design



From left, Daria Hall, Emilie Luce and Sydney Slaughter.

decision and helps me circle back to the main goal of meeting the clients’ needs.”

Luce, who graduated in May, says that the unique perspectives of her peers and the faculty around her encouraged her to learn and grow.

“I would not be where I am today if it were not for the professors that invested in me,” Luce said.

Luce is particularly grateful for Jennifer Webb, associate professor of interior architecture and design, who nominated her for this honor. She says that Webb’s vast knowledge of design and focus on sustainability helped push her outside of her box as a designer.

“[Emilie] consistently seeks out feedback to make her work stronger during the design process and also seeks feedback following completion to understand how she can improve future works,” Webb said.

Growing up near Austin, Texas, Sydney Slaughter was introduced to interior design at a young age. Slaughter’s commitment to creating spaces where people can thrive has remained a steady guide throughout her life.

“My passion for creating unique and artistic pieces stems from my childhood, from drawing on walls to experimenting with different mediums on my mother’s vintage wood samples,” Slaughter said. “The introduction to my mother’s interior design business sparked my love for materials, textiles and transforming beautiful space.”

Slaughter has found meaningful mentorship in professors like Jinoh Park, assistant professor of interior architecture and design, who have consistently challenged her to see design through a new lens. Park nominated Slaughter for the award, and said that “her dedication to growth and willingness to refine her skills beyond her natural talent set her apart.”

“My education has taught me that design is so much more conceptual than I ever thought it was,” said Slaughter, who graduated in May. “I apply this to my life and designs by being in constant search of new ways to further my creative ideas and imagination.”

AIA ARKANSAS DESIGN AWARDS

Two collaborative projects by Fay Jones School students, faculty and staff were recognized in the 2024 AIA Arkansas Design Awards program. Both projects were done through the school's Urban Design Build Studio (UDBS), led by John Folan FAIA, LEED AP, professor and head of the Department of Architecture.

Sensing the Forest received an Honor Award, while Negotiation Room received a Merit Award. These two projects were among a total of 11 projects to be honored in the annual awards program. All other projects were accomplished by professional design firms. These are the first AIA Arkansas awards won by the Fay Jones School's design build program since Courtyard House, located in downtown Little Rock, received a Merit Award in 2014.

"The realization of any project involves a vast network of people possessing complementary skill, talent and expertise," Folan said. "Students and faculty involved with these projects benefitted from that expanded network of partners. More importantly, the teams benefitted from strong institutional support and the vision of clients/benefactors necessary in the production of meaningful work. Industry partnerships cultivated through broader initiatives at the university and school were invaluable in honoring the opportunities provided to students and faculty."

"Beyond recognition of the evident and constructed architectural quality of the projects, what is most rewarding is the recognition of the public relevance and value the projects possess in their locales and for their audience," said Peter MacKeith, dean of the school. "This directed effort towards public service in architecture reflects the school's commitment to the university's land-grant mission and to the greater good."

Sensing the Forest is a pilot project employing mass timber and structural strategies that will be incorporated into the Ross and Mary Whipple Family Forest Education Center. The installation is constructed from a series of nail-laminated timber columns, beams and baffles.

Elements on the exterior are protected with a mirror finish stainless steel rain screen, reflecting its surroundings to dematerialize the formal qualities of the installation. Interior elements are finished with regionally sourced cypress, which has been treated



Sensing the Forest received an Honor Award in the 2024 AIA Arkansas Design Awards program.

using the traditional Japanese method of *shou sugi ban* (*yakisugi*), a natural process that protects the material from insects, rot and elements.

"When you look at projects and they kind of talk about what their connection with nature is, I think this project really went above and beyond to kind of prove that fact first," jury member Andrew Thompson said, "with just looking at elements of trees in the forest and also looking back upon the trees with the mirror, and also taking another nod treating the mirror effect so that birds in the forest wouldn't be affected by the mirrored object and the tower that's in the project."

The Negotiation Room project was initially installed at the European Cultural Centre's biennial architecture exhibition, "Time Space Existence," which was concurrent with Biennale Architettura 2023 in Venice. It was then deconstructed and moved to Einaudi High School in Rome, Italy, for permanent installation in their community garden.

The Negotiation Room provides a space for two individuals to take a risk and begin a dialogue. The mass timber structure demonstrably points to a sustainable future while shaping space for discourse of mutual benefit — socially, environmentally and personally.

"I think part of the thing we all loved about it together was this idea that you have individuals coming together to kind of let down their mask, let down their guard, come in and have a conversation in a world where we're constantly dealing with conflict," said Carisima Koenig, a jury member. "I think we also really enjoyed the life cycle ... and the diagramming and the consideration that went into that. So, from an architectural moment of making space, this was one of our favorites."

Chaumont International GARDEN FESTIVAL

Imagine a world where pollinators design the cities. Imagine a place where birds and butterflies don't just inhabit the air, they control it. Imagine humanity's experience if homo sapiens weren't the dominant species.

These imaginings acted as guiding principles for a recent garden installation by a team in the Fay Jones School. Scott Biehle, teaching associate professor of landscape architecture, along with landscape architecture students, created the garden "Ville des Pollinisateurs." Their installation won entry to the 2024 Chaumont International Garden Festival in France and ran for over six months at the Domain of Chaumont-sur-Loire.

In October 2023, Biehle, Kara Simmons and Fiorella Sibaja, then both third-year landscape architecture students, entered their design into the juried competition. With hundreds of design proposals, Biehle said he felt a sense of accomplishment in having their design selected for the international garden festival.

"Ville des Pollinisateurs" — city of pollinators — challenges garden visitors to imagine a world in which birds, bees, insects and bats — among the world's pollinators — have evolved to become the urbanizers of the world, leaving humanity at the periphery.

The garden's design drew inspiration from New York City. Bee towers represent skyscrapers with other structure types scattered throughout. The middle of the garden features a nod to Central Park. A small trail winding throughout provides space for people to walk amongst the pollinators and view the garden, but the pollinators' habitats take precedence. The team designed the experience to encourage people to ask, "What would it have been like if the roles were reversed?"

By designing with pollinators top of mind, the team's garden encourages viewers to shift their understanding of the beings' significance. Sibaja said that, while pollinators often go unnoticed, they are impossible to miss in their garden.

"By flipping the usual narrative, we made the pollinators the main characters of the garden, allowing humans to be mere observers of this bustling city of life, color and nature," Sibaja said. "The juxtaposition of the urban environment with the natural, vibrant world of pollinators created a unique and immersive experience, highlighting the



The "Ville des Pollinisateurs" installation at the 2024 Chaumont International Garden Festival in France.

Eric Sander

vital, yet often invisible, role these creatures play in our ecosystems."

After they learned that the jury selected their design to be one of 26 gardens at the 2024 festival, Oliver Right, Ava McMoran and Elijah Willis, then third-year landscape architecture students, joined the team. Biehle said the students played a vital role in tackling design issues.

"I was happily surprised and grateful for the students' willingness to get dirty and figure out things," he said. "They really just seemed to enjoy it."

While the overall inspiration for the garden came from New York City, Right said the team also paid homage to France.

"The bird and insect houses were designed to echo the architectural styles of France, representing upper-, middle- and lower-class aesthetics," Right said. "We strategically placed bird and insect houses (serving as their homes) and pollinator-friendly plants (serving as their workplaces) in dense, urban-like neighborhoods."

In June 2024, three months after the installation, Biehle visited the garden and observed visitors' reactions.

"It was great to see the pollinators were actually living in these things, but equally important was watching people's reactions to it," Biehle said. "I just sat in a corner and watched people. They were having fun, and they were taken with the garden itself. That was fun to see the work being successful."

Biehle said having the work of a small department from Arkansas on this international stage is a beacon of the exceptional work they are doing.

"It's a really great thing for the department to demonstrate the quality of the education and the great opportunities that come with being a student in our landscape architecture program," he said. "Hopefully, it also attracts really great, talented landscape architecture students."



Future of Cities in Wood

"Tall Timber: The Future of Cities in Wood," a multimedia exhibition highlighting the use of mass timber in the design and construction of multi-story buildings, was displayed in spring 2025 on the first floor of Vol Walker Hall.

This exhibition featured models, videos and informational graphics. Its installation and opening also coincided with the 2025 Arkansas Mass Timber Conference, held in Vol Walker Hall and co-presented by the Fay Jones School and the architecture and planning firm ISG. Some work in the exhibition was by professional practices and designers who presented at the conference.

The work explored how wood, one of humanity's oldest construction materials, offers a path to a more

sustainable built environment. An emerging system of building materials called mass timber is being used in ways that avoid the "carbon cost" of traditional high-rise construction in concrete and steel. And wood is a renewable resource when forests are responsibly managed.

The technology of mass timber relies on manufacturing wood products that are much bigger, stronger, fire resistive, and more durable than common lumber or plywood. Architects and builders use computers to design and precisely construct or cut giant puzzle pieces of structure that are transported to and assembled on site.

To date, mass timber building systems have been used in only around 100 high-rises worldwide since the

first nine-story project in 2009. But its popularity is spreading, and buildings are growing taller, with structures up to 18 stories now covered by the International Building Code.

Works that made up the exhibition included architectural models of Framework (courtesy of LEVER Architecture); Flora (courtesy of MGA | Michael Green Architecture); River Beech Tower (by Perkins & Will with Thornton Tomasetti, University of Cambridge, Pepper Construction, and Autodesk); Terrace House (by Shigeru Ban Architects); and Proto-Model X (by Gensler), and an architectural detail model of 475 West 18th Street (by SHoP Architects).

The exhibition also featured graphic panels from CAC (Chicago Architecture Center) that illustrate "From Forest to Fabrication," as well as samples of cross-laminated timber (CLT) and glue-laminated timber (GLT). In addition, display monitors showed videos of CLT factory production, courtesy of Kallesoe Machinery; WIDC (Wood Innovation and Design Center), courtesy of Michael Green Architecture; Albina Yard construction, courtesy of LEVER Architecture; and Ascent construction and fire testing from the CAC, with permission from the U.S. Forest Service and Thornton Tomasetti.

— Michelle Parks



An Architecture of Generosity

"PORCH: An Architecture of Generosity," the official U.S. Pavilion exhibition for the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, focuses on the representation of the United States of America at its best, in architectural means and in national character, through the contemporary manifestation of "the porch." This quintessentially American constructed place is at once social, environmental, tectonic, performative, hospitable, generous and democratic.

The new front porch of the U.S. Pavilion is built and finished from common and reusable resources —

prefabricated mass timber and rammed earth of Venetian provenance. The cantilevered, blue porch canopy floats above a wooden platform that creates a courtyard with pathways and seating, and the deck itself continues uninterrupted inside the existing Neo-Classical building. The design team is comprised of Marlon Blackwell Architects, Stephen Burks Man Made, D.I.R.T. studio and TEN x TEN.

Inside the Pavilion, the PORCH exhibition directs attention to the vitality of contemporary American architecture and design by highlighting 54 distinctive practices and individuals from across the United



Photos by Tim Hursley

States and its territories, with each contributing an immersive "PORCH window." These participants offer a multifaceted portrait of American architecture that spans geographies, scales, disciplines and identities.

A researched display, created by the U of A Community Design Center, traces the history of the American porch and its evolving role in American culture. With this, a library curated by *Places Journal* brings a collection of texts that explore the porch as a threshold

of learning, memory and imagination. Another display features art and contemporary expressions of vernacular home furnishings, such as brooms, swings, quilts and a rocking chair. "American Canopy," a site-specific piece located in the rotunda designed by the Urban Design Build Studio (UDBS), abstracts the American forest.

Visit the PORCH website for more details.
porchusavenice2025.org/

— Michelle Parks

Faculty Q&A: Marlon Blackwell

This summer, Marlon Blackwell retired from teaching in the Fay Jones School, where he was Distinguished Professor of architecture and the E. Fay Jones Chair in Architecture. He joined the school in 1992 and has served as a faculty member, lecture series coordinator and head of the Department of Architecture during his tenure. Blackwell is the recipient of the 2020 AIA Gold Medal and leads Marlon Blackwell Architects, his Fayetteville-based professional practice.

What brought you to the U of A and the School of Architecture, and what were some early impressions?

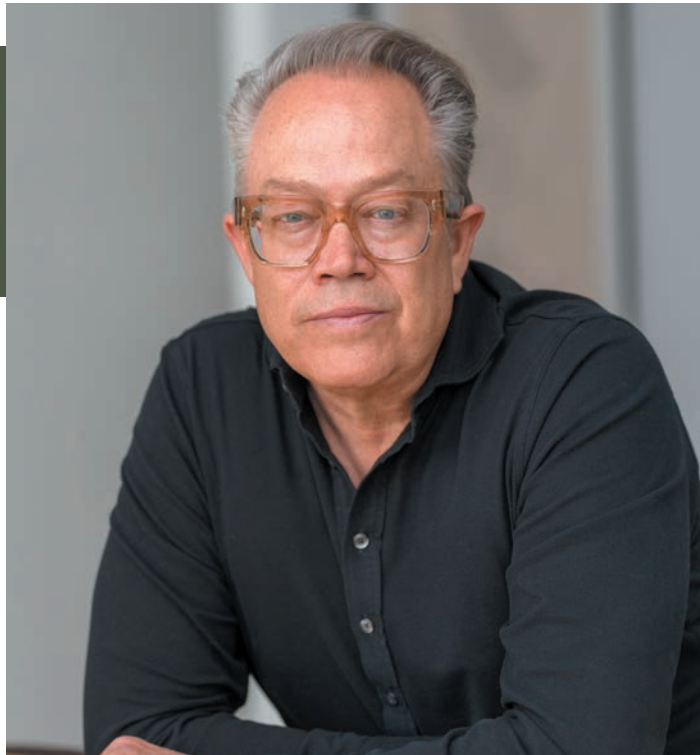
I'm from the South, and I'd been practicing in Boston for five years. After finishing my graduate program in Florence, Italy, with Syracuse, I was teaching at Syracuse University in upstate New York. After a particularly hard winter, I realized I want to go back South. I was looking for a place to where I could teach and practice, and I had heard about the University of Arkansas via Fay Jones but didn't know much about it. It seemed like a place that had a strong foundation. I wanted to be a liaison between the academy and the profession. And Dan Bennett, the dean at that time, enticed me by guaranteeing commissions to open a practice if I would come. The school was in transition at the time, with a new dean and department head, and new faculty members coming in. A focus was the attitude that anything can become architecture — not just the typical academic honorific programs, but also infrastructure, retail, housing — and that architecture should be available to anyone, and anyone can experience it.

Why was teaching an important thing for you to blend with your practice?

As a student, the professors I was drawn to most were those that practiced and taught. There was this wonderful feedback loop. Through having actually built things, they could talk about it in very concrete ways. I was at the point where I thought I might have something to say and certainly a lot to learn by creating this feedback loop between teaching and practicing. One would inform the other. Teaching forces you to be very clear and concise with your own positions and beliefs, and at the same time to understand that there are myriad ways to solve problems, and you learn that from the students, as well.

What are some of your favorite moments or memories of teaching here?

Getting students to slow down and to begin to look at nature through exquisitely slow drawings, to begin to find the patterns



between the world and the things that they're making. Another great moment was the opportunity to teach with Peter Eisenman, the noted theorist and architect, who was my complete opposite in many ways. Working these collaborative studios with esteemed teachers, colleagues, practitioners just opened up a world to me. The opportunity to head up the lecture series for many years for the school, and inviting in some of the best architects of our time to Arkansas to experience what we were up to — in effect, to bring the world to us. At the same time, we built a lot of advocacy across the country for our school through these interactions. One thing I really enjoyed was helping students who were interested in going out into the world with how to present their portfolios and themselves, and to help them get into some of these firms that they had dreamed about. And then just to see how they've evolved as practitioners and academics over the last 30 years has been rewarding, too, and having an opportunity to be a catalyst in their development and helping ground them so a desire for lifelong learning is something that's important to them. Having the opportunity to be department head was something that provided a platform for how the school could evolve, working through different kinds of pedagogical strategies. I think we were able to reinforce what Arkansas is about, in particular, an authentic focus on the making of buildings and places. It was somewhat radical in a time where many schools were moving away from things like drawing by hand, making, really looking at how buildings come together, and talking about beauty again.

How have you seen the school itself evolve during your career?

I think the core values have been fairly stable for the school. It has, at times, gotten wild at the edges, which I think it should — to test and experiment. And digital technologies have really had an influence on the school. I think this idea of making and the

design build aspect has become more ingrained in the lifeblood of school. The program has always had a fairly good sense of who it is and how you develop an undergraduate education that is strong in its core values, and that really sets the students up for engaging in practice or engaging in other fields, or going on to graduate work and post-graduate work and teaching. Benchmarks were the rise of our Community Design Center as a real force within the school and its outreach beyond. And the idea of travel as a core principal in the school, that studio travel and study abroad programs are very important to the identity of the school and to the education of the students. I think the other highlight from teaching has been having really great colleagues, both within the school and those that have come to visit the school to lecture and to teach. It's that kind of stimulation that has kept not only me but the faculty in love with the beauty of questions and inquiry, and not ever becoming complacent.

What would you say has been your approach toward design education?

To work with students from where they are, understanding their own life experiences and how that can inform their work, so they learn how to draw from those experiences as well as the disciplinary knowledge they're getting. I think it's important to be able to intermingle those things to develop one's own personal voice as a designer. I like to put students in a variety of places that are not too familiar, projects that are not necessarily typical, with ways of thinking about those projects that ask one to interpret, to translate, and hopefully even to transform, and always with a sense that architecture is made of something. It has weight. The material aspect of architecture is important. And not to be afraid of form either, but to be intelligent with how you use that. Part of my philosophy is to be comprehensive in one's approach, to think of architecture as a set of inter-scalar relationships that must be resonant and resolute with each other. So these relationships happen at the scale of the site, the scale of the city, the scale of a building, scale of a room, and the scale of the hand, the detail. All of these aspects have to be addressed in the act of designing. I want students to explore all of these different dimensions of scale and technique, forms of representation, everything from the analog, with hand drawing and model making, to the digital. The intention is to build agency of the students, a sense of fearlessness, confidence and a willingness to excel with uncertainty and difficulty.

Talk about holding the E. Fay Jones Chair in Architecture and its significance for you.

One of the reasons I came here was because I was impressed with the work of Fay Jones, but also was impressed with the fact that he could have a renowned practice in a small place, yet still have a large impact at the regional and national levels. While I never worked for him, he did become a friend and mentor, a person of great humility, but also very deep knowledge and a generosity. Some lessons I took away from him are to be available, to be accessible, to be generous, even when it may

not be a clear benefit or anything, just to genuinely share what you know. And he was a profound architect in the truest sense of the word. He would tell me, "I have principles that I live by and those that I build by, and they're not that different." He taught me a way to think about how to teach, but also how to practice, so he was a true mentor in that regard. The opportunity to carry on his name and his legacy in the form of a chaired professorship was an honor and a privilege. And the challenge of trying to live up to that legacy a little bit, too.

What are you looking forward to in your practice and future endeavors now that you've stepped away from teaching at the Fay Jones School?

I want to expand my focus on the practice. The practice has evolved to the point where we are doing larger and more complex projects, and yet at the same time working very diligently to maintain our roots, with the idea that architecture can happen anywhere, at any scale, at any budget and for anyone. We're still adhering to that here in the state and the region, but also with the desire to do more national work, too. So, maintaining the level of excellence I think we've been able to achieve in the work, but to open up new venues, new possibilities, new types of buildings that we could begin to have the opportunity to do. Especially with a great team around me, and with Ati as a full-fledged partner in all our endeavors. I will try to teach once a year at other schools, like what I'm doing this fall at Yale University, as the Louis I. Kahn Visiting Professor. I'm at the point now where I want to work in a more measured, deliberate way. And I think, in order to keep my teaching sharp and my practicing sharp, I need to find a more holistic balance. Also, the opportunity to travel more, to continue to learn. I think teaching once a year will be a way to keep stimulated and maintain that dialogue I've tried to achieve between teaching and practice. I'm going to miss my colleagues, though I'll still see them. I'll miss the earnestness and the tenacity of so many of our students and their desire to learn. But, I'm not that far away. I still feel connected to the school in many ways, and to students, like with our NOMAS internship and our Delta scholarship that we support. All of those things we still maintain and keep alive.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I'm just eternally grateful for the opportunity I've had to teach here. The University of Arkansas has been unique in supporting me with time and opportunity to teach within the Fay Jones School and in other places, to practice and to develop a practice at the level we've developed it to so far. It fundamentally would not have been possible to achieve what we have without the support of the institution as a whole and of the school and its leadership. One of the best decisions I made in my life was to come here. And to be able to teach, be able to have a career with a practice, be able to raise a family, be able to do all the things you'd hoped and dream to do, and then have an institution that fundamentally supported that.

DESIGN, ILLUMINATED

Michelle Parks

Students investigate product design possibilities through grant-funded research

The glowing, misshapen sphere looks like an object from a science fiction movie. Ruth Prenzler's otherworldly design for her table lamp challenged and sharpened her 3D modeling and printing skills as she found ways to mimic the texture of extraterrestrial rock.

In a course focused on custom lighting fixtures, Prenzler 3D printed "The Meteor" lamp with white resin, embodying the intriguing light qualities of saffordite rock and the textural qualities of meteorites. Saffordite is a dark rock that becomes translucent when illuminated. Her lamp consists of a textured "shell" that diffuses the light and an inner cylinder that holds the shell and the light bulb.

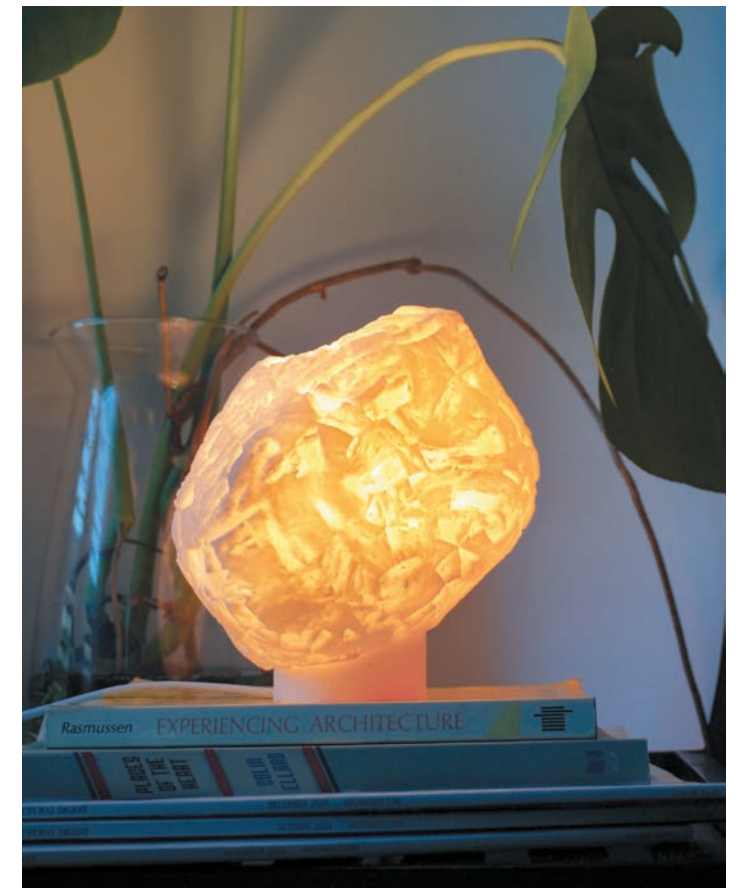
Continuing the theme, Prenzler was inspired by the impact of a meteor striking Earth's surface for her wall-mounted luminaire "The Strike." She fashioned it from two 3D-printed resin pieces with contrasting textures that she press-fit together. An LED light strip in the bottom piece bounces light off the ribbed and rocky textures.

Prenzler, a rising fifth-year architecture student, said the lighting course allowed her to apply architecture design skills of concept, identity and realization to a finished product.

"It expanded my notion of marketability in design and the monetary value that comes with the hours put into it," she said.

Prenzler was among the 13 architecture, two interior architecture and design, and one Master of Design Studies students who designed and produced custom lighting fixtures in an innovative new course led by Jake Tucci and Jinoh Park.

Tucci and Park, both assistant professors of interior architecture and design, received a \$30,000 grant from the Nuckolls Fund for Lighting Education to develop this upper-level professional elective. It was the second time in three years that the Department of Interior Architecture and Design faculty received a Nuckolls Fund grant.



Opposite page, table luminaires designed by students in the bespoke lighting design course. Above, "The Meteor" table luminaire designed by Ruth Prenzler.

The department was one of two programs nationally to be awarded this Nuckolls Fund grant for 2024. The Nuckolls Fund supports college-level lighting programs that enable students to learn, appreciate and apply the fundamentals of lighting design, and to recognize the achievements of James L. Nuckolls, the late lighting designer and pioneer lighting educator.

The grant funding allowed Tucci and Park to develop and implement the course, "Premiumization, Sustainability and Making of Bespoke Lighting," for the fall 2024 semester. The grant also supported the exhibition of student work created in the course.



At left, “The Meteor” table luminaire designed by Ruth Prenzler takes shape on the 3D printer. At right, “The Strike” wall-mounted luminaire designed by Prenzler.

Bespoke lighting consists of custom-made lighting fixtures designed to meet the specific needs of a client or space. While glass is typically used in bespoke lighting fixtures, using 3D printers allowed students to undertake the entire planning, design and production process.

This experience encouraged students to investigate and pay attention to how lighting is implemented in space design. It also promoted the use of eco-friendly manufacturing methods that help reduce carbon emissions, unlike traditional glass manufacturing methods. For the course, students employed a soy-based resin that can be hardened using ultraviolet light, as well as a filament made from corn.

“Lighting is a critical component of the built environment,” Tucci said. “You can have a very simple or even bad space completely enhanced with just light. It has the power to transform space, outside of other components.”

While lighting education is important for future interior designers, architects and landscape architects, Tucci and Park said such training at the undergraduate level is not too common. Due to the

cost of equipment and materials needed for this type of course, they said the external funding was essential to offer this elective.

The Fay Jones School currently offers Lighting Systems, a required course for interior architecture students. In addition, an Advanced Lighting Professional Elective, for students wanting to investigate lighting design, was developed in 2022 with support from a previous Nuckolls Fund grant. The final run of that funded course was in the spring 2025 semester.

While those two courses focus on exploration, students in the new bespoke lighting course made two functional products using 3D printing technology. The design of a sculptural table luminaire helped students learn new digital modeling techniques, test materials and experiment with light sources. For the second project, a wall-mounted luminaire, students created a larger bespoke piece using 3D printed materials, aiming to capture the essence of a glass fixture.

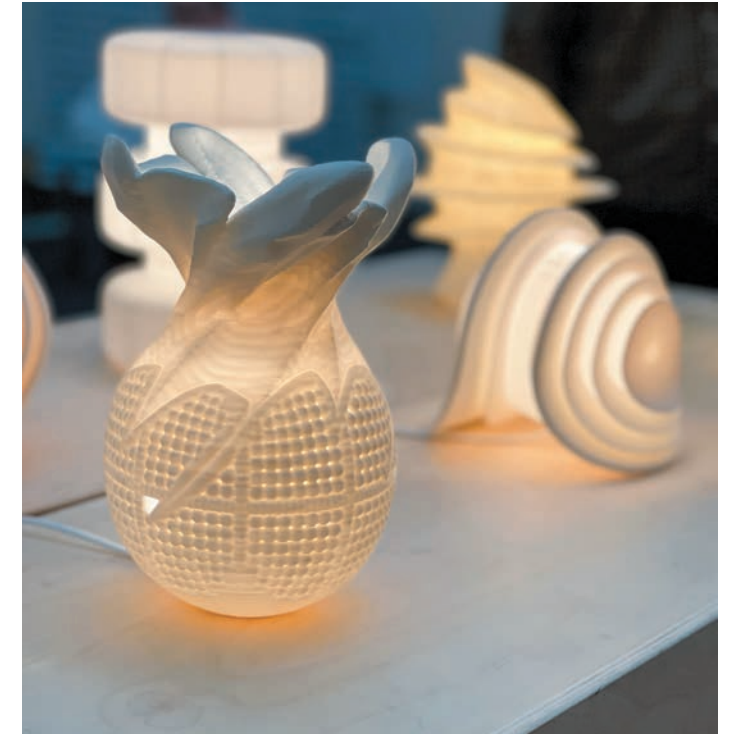
This new course also placed a strong emphasis on students’ hands-on experience, another aspect that Park and Tucci said is sometimes missing in design



education. By helping students develop adaptation and design values, the course explored opportunities to make customized items.

“They are learning the amount of thought, development process and components in the lighting products. They are seeing first-hand how to make these products that they will eventually specify in their designs,” Tucci said. “It helps them understand those products as well as build up a nomenclature and way of communicating about those things.”

The Nuckolls Fund grant paid for the purchase of six new 3D printers exclusively available to students in this course. Three of the printers are resin printers capable of printing a wide range of materials, including soft and flexible thermoplastic urethanes (TPU) filaments and ceramics. The other three are high-speed filament-based fused deposition modeling (FDM) printers.



At top left, a wall-mounted lighting fixture, called “Portal,” designed by Adam Engelke. Above, a sculptural table luminaire, called “Illuminova Bloom,” designed by Engelke. At bottom left, a display of luminaires designed by students.

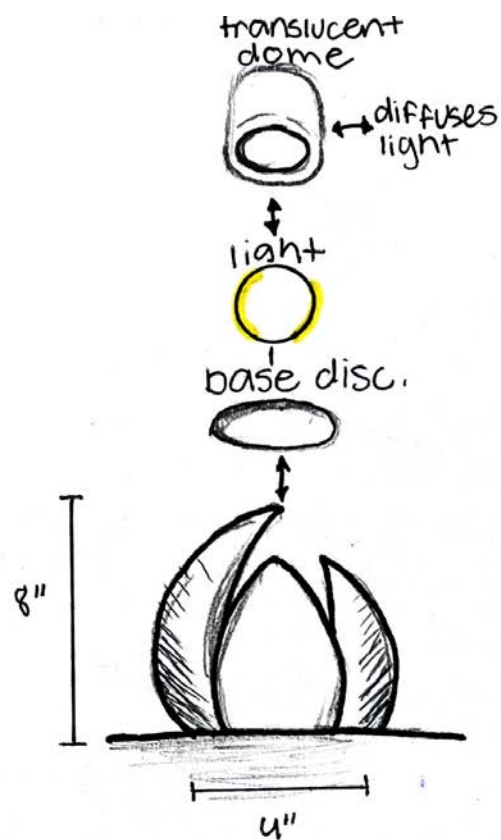
Exploring Product Design Through 3D Printing

Students in this course said they expanded their skills and came to understand the difference in designing something at a more intimate human scale than a building. And they noted that creating a product was a new design experience for many students in the class.

“The process is 100 times more iterative, and you have to go from thinking conceptually to considering the price to make it, the price to market it — and then work your way back to maintaining the concept,” said Adam Englke, a rising fifth-year architecture student.

Through this process, he also “exponentially” improved his Rhino modeling skills. He spent time working in SubD modeling software within Rhino and learned to model in a malleable way.

For his sculptural table luminaire, called “Illuminova Bloom,” Englke designed a biophilic vase luminaire with a grid woven around a sphere to make a speckled bulbous shape. He then paired it with a “spinning, splash-like motion” to create a dynamic lamp. His wall-mounted lighting, called “Portal,” took on an “otherworldly vibe” with a ring-shaped piece with a concave back that projects light dimly on the wall. A wavy pattern on the front gives the illusion that the piece is spinning.



Sydney Bommarito, a rising fourth-year interior architecture and design student, enjoyed exploring the intersection of design, technology and storytelling through the creation of her custom lighting pieces. Drawn to forms of aquatic architecture, she began her conceptual research by studying grottos, nymphaeums and various aquatic shells. She also was deeply inspired by the Dutch fashion designer Iris van Herpen, particularly her runway show, *Sensory Seas*.

“[Van Herpen’s] designs influenced the visual language of my collection, which aimed to express the duality of seashells: their unique beauty and their role as a natural dwelling,” Bommarito said. “I incorporated sequential contour lines to enhance visual rhythm and create a sense of cohesion across the collection.”

Before this course, Bommarito didn’t have much hands-on experience in the 3D printing lab. She fabricated both of her final pieces with the Bambu Labs X1 Carbon 3D filament printer. She learned how 3D printing with materials made from sustainable, biodegradable and renewable resources can significantly reduce material waste and carbon emissions. These qualities make the process a compelling option for environmentally conscious design.



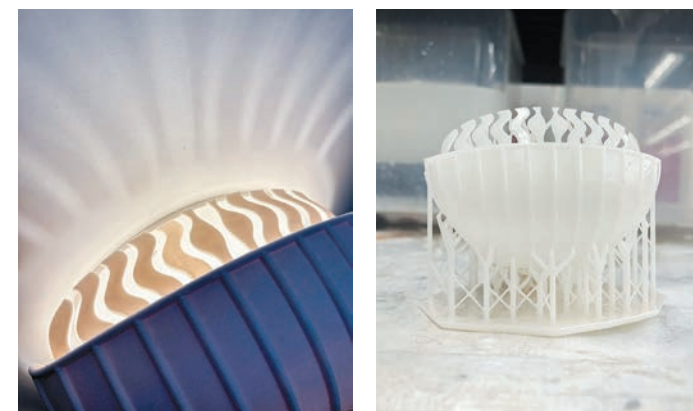
At left, a sketch showing the components and dimensions of “Haven,” a table luminaire designed by Sydney Bommarito. Above, an up-close view of “Haven.”

“I gained a stronger understanding of how digital modeling and fabrication can result in unique and organic designs — reshaping the way I think about materiality, form-making and sustainable innovation in architecture and design,” Bommarito said.

Her sculptural table luminaire, “Haven,” was inspired by the organic form and layered structure of a conch shell. The design features a substantial, protective outer shell that opens to reveal a more delicate inner shell housing the light source. The outer shell is designed to rotate on its base, allowing users to adjust the lighting from a focused task light to a soft, ambient glowing piece that uses an E26 base bulb with an output of 760 lumens.

“When illuminated, the inner shell creates the impression of a life form nestled within a safe, enclosed sanctuary — inviting a sense of warmth and intimacy. This layered construction is intended to spark curiosity and encourage physical interaction with the piece,” she said.

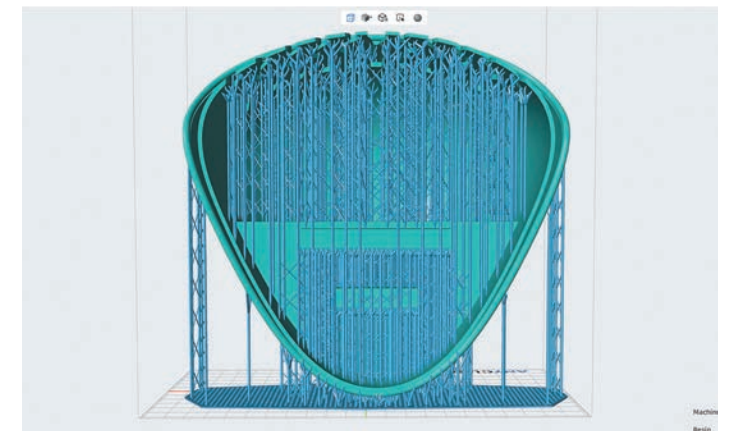
Bommarito’s wall-mounted sconce, “Nautilus,” was inspired by the structural elegance of a flat scallop shell. Her design, which features both an



At top, a view from above of “Haven,” designed by Sydney Bommarito. Above left, the “Nautilus” wall-mounted luminaire designed by Bommarito. Above right, the “Nautilus” luminaire immediately after being 3D printed.

interior and exterior shell, is intended to evoke the relationship between a living organism and its protective casing. The fixture is illuminated by a G4 LED bulb emitting 400 lumens, which provides a warm and efficient glow that enhances the design’s ethereal quality.

“The inner shell incorporates gently curved perforations, allowing light to project patterns onto the surrounding wall surface,” she said. “These patterns are designed to resemble the way sunlight refracts through water, creating a soft, immersive visual experience.”



At top, the final “Nautilus” luminaire mounted on the wall. Above, the rendering for “Nautilus” made using 3D modeling software.

Making Through Iteration and at Full Scale

Though students may have had some experience creating work with 3D printers from other courses, they are not typically the ones operating the machines. The grant funding provided the six printers that students ran themselves and supplied the materials, meaning students could test their designs without concerns about cost.

These freedoms of time and cost allowed students to experiment more effectively. And since students were printing an actual product, Park said that this process of trial and error was essential for mastering the product’s functionality.

“If they need to exchange the lightbulb, they need to think about practical ways while keeping the design sense,” Park said. “They need to learn how to handle it, how to use it and how to maintain it.”



Student lighting designs displayed at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) in New York City in May 2025 (above and top right) and at the Stockholm Furniture Fair in February 2025 (at bottom right).

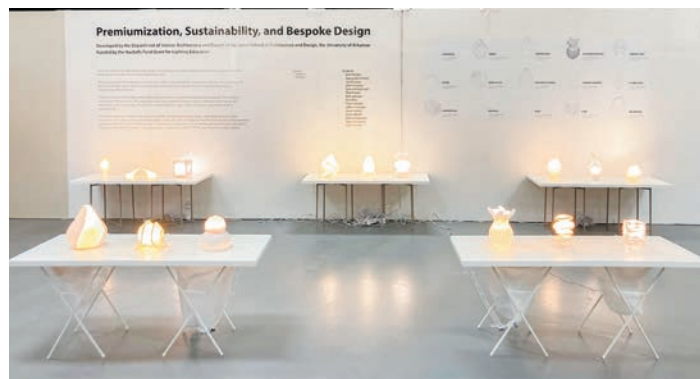
While students may have been more familiar with 3D printing small-scale models, where aspects do not have to function, Tucci said, for this course, students needed to design around built parts or built connections. Additionally, students designed a real product with the various components represented at full scale.

“We’re concerned with multiple parts coming together. We are interacting with tolerances, meaning that you can’t have a perfect tolerance or things won’t fit,” Tucci said. “We are also dealing with trial and error.”

Additionally, the course introduced students to how business and design intersect. Throughout the semester, students developed a brand kit for their lighting fixtures that determined their design language and established their distinctive brand identity. Tucci and Park said that successful students have been able to tell stories about their products. Park said this helps students learn the technical aspects of lighting and brand development from a business perspective.

“This is an opportunity to interact or be the in-between for the designer and the marketer,” Park said.

Following the completion of the course, Tucci and Park presented the students’ work at the



NDBDS40 (National Conference on the Beginning Design Student) in March 2025 at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina. The table luminaires also were shown in the Greenhouse exhibition at the Stockholm Furniture Fair in February 2025, while both table and wall luminaires were displayed in the Wanted exhibition at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF) in New York City in May 2025. ICFF is North America’s leading platform for contemporary design, featuring furniture, lighting, textiles and more. The fair takes place annually in New York City and attracts a significant audience of designers, architects, retailers, and other industry professionals.

Embracing and Learning From the Process

For Skyler Perryman, a rising fifth-year architecture student, these lighting projects taught valuable lessons about when things don’t go as planned. It took several concepts and iterations to arrive at his table luminaire, “Fino.” A few weeks into the semester, thinking about the layers found in stacked pancakes and folded blankets inspired a final piece that appears thin and delicate, yet is solid and heavy.



Above, the “Fino” table luminaire designed by Skyler Perryman.

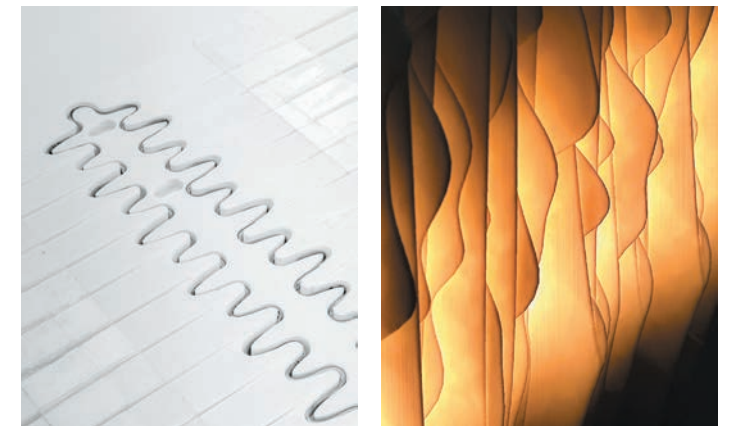
Its three parts — a shell, the legs and a ring to hold the lightbulb — were made from 3D-printed resin. The ring was “press fit” — placed in the stand before the resin fully cured.

“One of the more interesting things is how the light behaves. It doesn’t spread evenly across the surface,” he said. “Each layer curves and undulates in its own way, so the light kind of flows through it differently, depending on where you’re looking from. Some parts glow more than others, and that’s what makes it feel alive. The texture of the light shifts as you move around it.”

Perryman’s wall luminaire also was inspired by layers, and he strove for a soft, billowing effect that was bigger and more architectural. He used Rhino with Grasshopper to recreate the table lamp’s sensibilities, but his script didn’t work as anticipated.

“It has this pulled and warped quality that felt natural. That became the foundation,” he said. So, he considered how the piece would look in elevation from every angle. “And lighting was part of the thought process from the very beginning. It wasn’t just about how it looked but how it worked.”

He tested light temperature, lumens and wiring, considered whether to use puck lights or strips and whether to light the face or the edge, and evaluated how the light source would physically fit inside the



At top, the wall-mounted luminaire designed by Perryman. Above left, a 3D printed piece for Perryman’s wall luminaire. Above right, a detail view of Perryman’s wall luminaire.

final product. The piece had to be split into nine parts to print on an FDM printer, and he angled the seams to match the contour of the form and hide the connections. However, the FDM printers make walls with a set thickness. When fitted together, the thin walls between each piece made a double wall, so that certain areas were too thick for light to pass through.

In the final product, only the middle third lights up properly, while the ends remain darker. While things didn’t go as planned, he’s pleased with the result. He’s also glad he didn’t float the piece off the wall as initially planned because it would have felt disconnected.

“Now it feels like it belongs to the wall. It feels more like part of the architecture than something stuck on top of it,” he said. “This whole project was a real lesson in how digital design meets physical reality. Light, material and process all affect each other way more than you’d think.”



Built From the Land

Todd A. Price

Preserving and documenting the legacy of Devil's Den State Park in its natural state

When landscape architect Kimball Erdman joined the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design in 2009, he had never spent time in Arkansas. Erdman studies cultural landscapes, documenting historical sites so they can be preserved for future generations. He was not sure what he would find in the state.

Colleagues told him to visit Devil's Den State Park, where in the 1930s and '40s the Civilian Conservation Corps used stones and logs from the surrounding landscape to build cabins, roads, trails and overlooks. And they advised him to read the work of Frank Burggraf and Karen Rollet-Crocker, two former Fay Jones School landscape architecture professors who in the 1980s brought attention to the CCC's work at Devil's Den.

The 2,500-acre park in southern Washington County was one of the first places Erdman visited after he arrived in Fayetteville. One spot in particular captured his attention.

"I fell in love with the overlook pavilion," Erdman said. "The structure, the terrace, the wall – everything works with the site and grows out of it. I was always hoping to someday be able to work on it."

That opportunity came last year, when Erdman completed a detailed Historic American Landscapes Survey of Devil's Den. The survey is part of a larger effort led by the U of A's Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies to document CCC architecture in Arkansas State Parks. The CCC in Arkansas project is supported by a grant from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council, which is funded by the Arkansas Real Estate Transfer Tax.

At Devil's Den, Erdman and his students worked with CAST to document the overlook pavilion, which



Opposite page, the overlook pavilion at Devil's Den State Park. Above, Kimball Erdman talks with landscape architecture students at the park in spring 2025. Photos by Russell Cothren.

a 1935 National Park Service publication deemed worthy of a Pulitzer Prize in architecture "if and when created," along with the cabins, culverts and trails that have survived, CCC workers' encampments long gone, and acres and acres of rolling, heavily wooded landscape crossed by trails.



Above, Kimball Erdman and landscape architecture students visit Devil's Den State Park. Below, a historic bridge at the park. Photos by Russell Cothren.



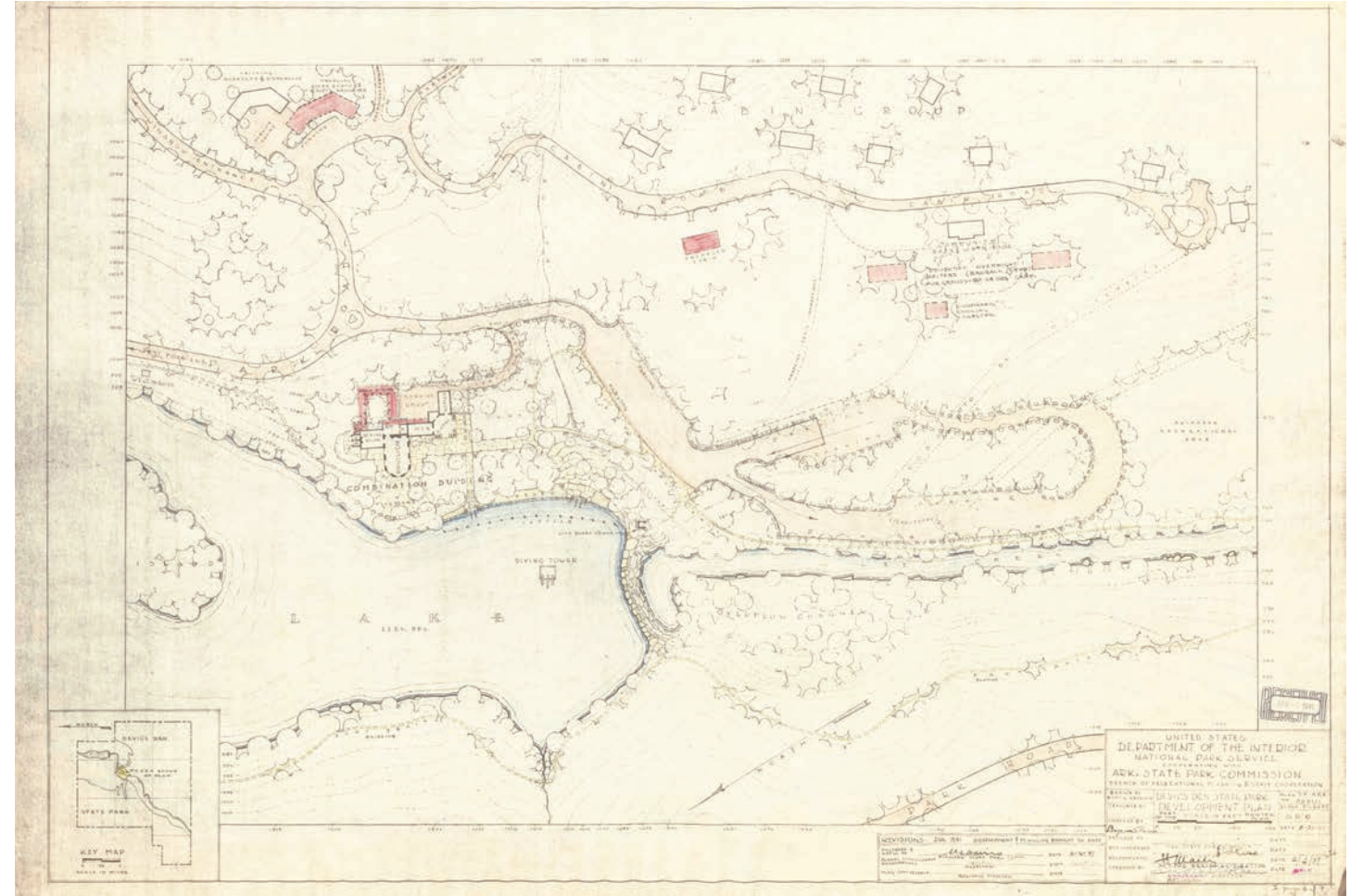
The project team captured aerial photos with a drone and used the process of photogrammetry, which overlaps the photos, to create high-resolution 3D digital models of select CCC-built structures in the park. They also mapped massive culverts, retaining walls, rock-lined drainage ditches, and other features that have never been mapped before. Their work is collected online with illustrated histories, hundreds of historic photos, interactive maps and 3D models. The website, ccc.cast.uark.edu, launched last year and has been recognized with numerous awards.

“Every project we undertake is a service-learning opportunity.”
— Kimball Erdman

“Kimball is probably now the single most authority on Devil’s Den,” said the park’s assistant superintendent, Tim Scott, who has worked there since 1984.

Burggraf and Rollet-Crocker in 1989 published their work on the CCC at Devil’s Den in a spiral-bound book produced with a dot-matrix printer, entitled “Manmade Elements in Natural Settings: The CCC in Arkansas.” That self-published book had a profound impact on the park.

“I have a feeling it is partially responsible for the state of the park today. If they had not done their work, we would be dealing with a different landscape,” Erdman said.



Above, a 1941 version of the Devil's Den State Park Development Plan, part of the historic master plan, designed and drawn by Robert L. Kreilick. Below, an interpretive display highlights the lake and waterfall created with the dam in 1937 at the park. Photo by Russell Cothren.



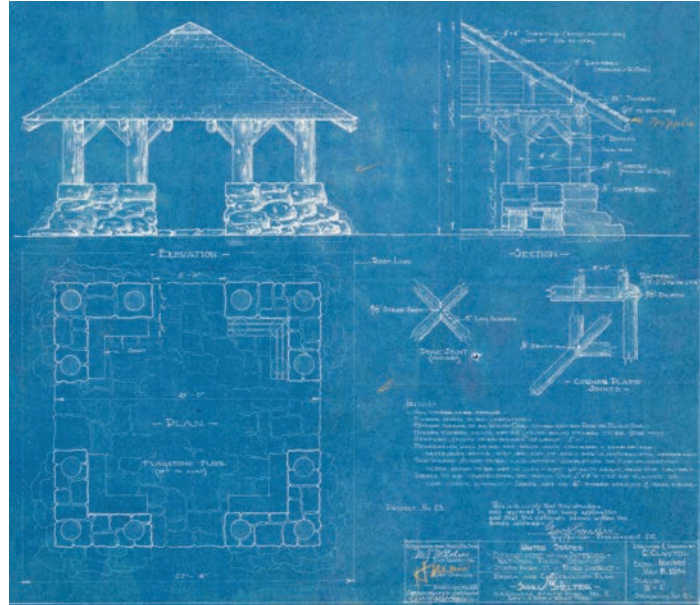
The work of Burggraf and Rollet-Crocker was also essential for Erdman’s high-tech survey of Devil’s Den. It led his team to the primary sources that were critical for their work. And it is an example of how current U of A researchers build on the work of their predecessors to preserve and support the history and natural resources of Arkansas.

A Story Lost and Found

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt founded the CCC in 1933 to create jobs during the Great Depression. The impoverished men who signed up were often unskilled and uneducated. They were paid \$30 a month to build parks and recreation areas across America. In Arkansas, along with Devil’s Den, the CCC also built Petit Jean State Park in Conway County and Lake Catherine State Park in Hot Springs and Garland counties.

At Devil’s Den, the men lived in camps of 200. The CCC’s budget prioritized people over heavy equipment and materials, so the men looked to the land around them for logs and stone to build the infrastructure of the park. A handful of trained architects and landscape architects oversaw the work, teaching the men skills they could use when they left the CCC.

What the men built was designed to look natural and not distract visitors from the landscape. They embraced a rustic style that was already established at national parks like Yosemite in California and



At top, the overlook pavilion at the park. Above, Kimball Erdman and students discuss the overlook pavilion. Photos by Russell Cothren.

Yellowstone in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.

The CCC ended abruptly in 1942, six months after America entered World War II in late 1941. The country needed the men to fight in Europe and Asia.

The men who built Devil's Den used to gather at the park every other summer for a reunion. Scott, the park's assistant superintendent, met many of the CCC alumni over the years until the reunions eventually fizzled out in the early 2000s.

"They were really great guys and proud of the work they did here," he said.

The men never forgot what they accomplished with the CCC. But, for decades, America did forget.

The American historic preservation movement, which grew in the 1960s, changed attitudes toward the recent past. By the 1980s, the CCC's work was recognized as valuable and worth honoring.

Rollet-Crocker came to the U of A in 1985 with an interest in preservation in small towns. She was soon enlisted by Burggraf in his research on Devil's Den.

They worked like detectives, tracking down maps and documents. Rollet-Crocker remembers once getting a tip that sent her to the Arkansas State Library in Little Rock, where on a shelf she found a stack of architectural and landscape drawings for Devil's Den.

"Probably no one had looked at them since the '40s," Rollet-Crocker said. "I took my camera, I took a tripod, and I took as many pictures as I could, because I knew what we had."

The work of Rollet-Crocker and Burggraf established that what the young men did at Devil's Den with the CCC was important. It made clear that the creation of these parks was not haphazard, even



Above, an underside view of the overlook pavilion roof. Below left, Tim Scott, the park's assistant superintendent, meets with the landscape architecture group in spring 2025. Below right, Kimball Erdman and students near the Arkansas 170 bridge in the park. Photos by Russell Cothren.



though most of the workers were untrained. Today, Devil's Den stands out as one of the most intact examples of the CCC's work in the United States.

Rollet-Crocker, who retired in 2006, still lives in Fayetteville. Burggraf died in 2020.



Preserving the Natural State

Erdman has devoted his life and career to preserving landscapes. Since arriving in Arkansas, he has also documented the CCC's work at Petit Jean State Park and the camps where Japanese Americans

were interned during World War II, located in Rohwer in Desha County and Jerome in Chicot and Drew counties.

“Every project we undertake is a service-learning opportunity,” he said.

Each summer, Fay Jones School undergraduate and graduate students help Erdman on these cultural landscape studies.

Lori Filbeck-Hart, who graduated in December 2024 from the Fay Jones School’s new Master of Design Studies program with a concentration in preservation design, assembled the research and photos of Devil’s Den before the field work. Filbeck-Hart, who received her Bachelor of Architecture from the Fay Jones School in 2005, grew up in Northwest Arkansas and owns the Bijou architectural firm in Springdale. Before working with Erdman, however, she knew nothing about the CCC’s work at Devil’s Den.

“It was kind of mind blowing that it happened so close to where I live, and I had never heard of it,” she said.

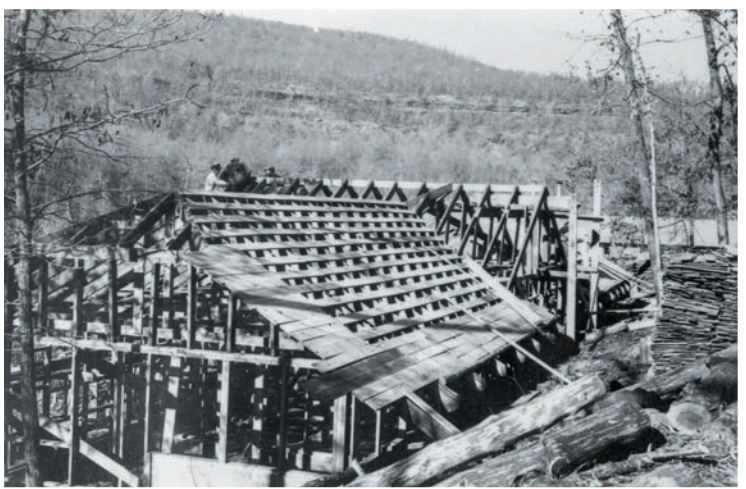
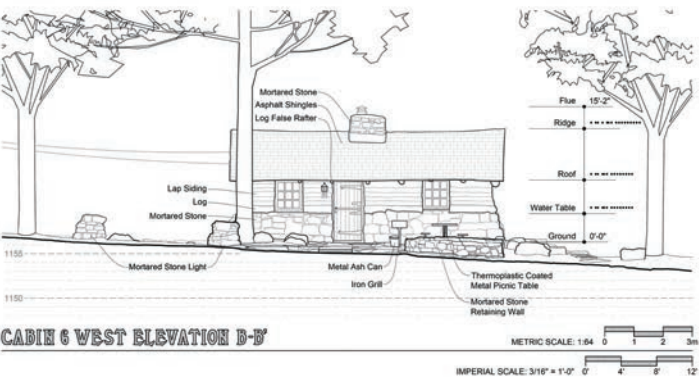
Learning about the CCC taught Filbeck-Hart lessons she uses in her own work. The CCC tried to thoughtfully blend its work into the landscape. Filbeck-Hart embraces that same philosophy of respecting what already exists when she works on renovations or additions to historic structures in Arkansas.

Erdman sees what he and others do in the Department of Landscape Architecture as integral to the original land-grant mission of the U of A to serve the people of the state.

“Almost every project that we do is for a community somewhere in Arkansas, where we are helping that community envision a better future,” he said. “I can’t think of a department on campus that embraces that mission more than landscape architecture.”



Above, a detail of lichen on stones at the park. Below, the group explores the dam. Photos by Russell Cothren. At bottom, an elevation drawing of a cabin, by landscape architecture students.



Historic images of Devil's Den State Park. Courtesy of the Civilian Conservation Corps at Devil's Den website.



Project Recognitions

Devil's Den State Park Historic American Landscapes Survey (report and drawings)

First Place — HALS Challenge (National Park Service and American Society of Landscape Architects), 2024

Civilian Conservation Corps at Devil's Den website

Award of Merit — Arkansas Historical Association, 2025

Award of Excellence, Communication category — Central States Conference, American Society of Landscape Architects, 2025

<https://ccc.cast.uark.edu/>

ANTHONY TIMBERLANDS CENTER

for Design and Materials Innovation

Michelle Parks

A proposition shaped by timber and ingenuity

In childhood, Fay Jones explored Arkansas' caves and built treehouses in his hometown of El Dorado. He grew up amid the state's southern forests — many of them rich in pines. He was inspired by nature and understood the human connection to it.

The architect Fay Jones embodied this connection, working with local materials — stone, wood and glass — for his Ozark regionalism design approach. Yvonne Farrell, of Grafton Architects, architects for the Anthony Timberlands Center for Design and Materials Innovation, said this new center for the Fay Jones School builds on that making tradition and legacy of the school's namesake.

Farrell, along with her partner at Grafton Architects, Shelley McNamara, found that heritage to be incredible, particularly in Thorncrown Chapel. Jones designed this glass chapel in the woods outside Eureka Springs and directed his crew to harvest local trees that could be hand-carried to the site.

"In Fay Jones, you have an Arkansas architect really understanding sustainability, pleasure, architectural history," Farrell said. "The University of Arkansas commissioned a building to do a job and to have an amazing workshop. They also wanted something that students would recognize, not just as a useful facility, but as a piece of architecture."

Completed and opened in August 2025, the Anthony Timberlands Center started through a design competition that brought 69 submissions from around the world, including Grafton Architects of Dublin, Ireland. The same month Grafton was announced as winning the building commission, its co-founders also were named as the 2020 Pritzker Architecture Prize laureates. The competition brief proposed a mass timber building that would showcase making, craft and innovation within the design school.

Grafton worked in partnership with Modus Studio of Fayetteville on this distinctive proposal. Mass timber was a new material for Grafton, plus this project would be their first in the United States.



Opposite page, the entry space at the Anthony Timberlands Center for Design and Materials Innovation. Above, a view of the center looking southeast. Photos by Tim Hursley.

Modus — an alumni-led firm — has a track record of working on mass timber projects. This new center was their fourth, and they're currently working on their eighth.

This collaboration between the university, the school and the design team brought them together to manifest an incomparable workspace that is both celebration and exploration of timber. "The story is, timber is the main character — and the touch of the building, the sound of the building, everything about its tactility, the smell of it, the potential of it," Farrell said. "There will be various timbers in the building that will seep into students' subconscious, because they'll be in and out of the building every day. And, maybe in 20 or 30 years, something that they experienced as they studied there will express itself in the work that they'll do."

With this new center, the university, school and designers also wanted to celebrate the rich heritage and legacy of the state's timber industry, many of which are family owned and operated. Much of



The top-level terrace on the northeast corner of the building. Photo by Tim Hursley.

the timber used in the building was sourced and manufactured in Arkansas, and John Ed and Isabel Anthony supported the building with lead gifts totaling \$10 million. He is chairman of Anthony Timberlands Inc., a seventh-generation Arkansas company.

“We’re very conscious of how high a standard the school of architecture has in terms of its research, its continuous, deep research into history, and in the moving forward of the timber industry,” Farrell said.

Dean Peter MacKeith has been working toward this visionary building initiative since he arrived at the Fay Jones School in 2014. He organized meetings and conferences to gauge interest, share resources, and advanced research around using the timber in Arkansas’ extensive forests. About 57 percent of the state, or 19.4 million acres, is dedicated to forests and houses 11.5 billion trees. Having lived and worked in Finland for 10 years, he understood the capacity and potential of timber, as well as the importance of responsible forest stewardship and management.

MacKeith led the way as the school undertook this forward-thinking endeavor, working with partnerships in agriculture, industry, government, corporate, non-profit and individual support from across the state of Arkansas. In these multiple efforts, Jonathan Boelkins, a 2004 graduate of the Fay Jones School, was an essential collaborator, writing grants and proposals, as well as the competition brief. This included writing the proposal for a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) grant



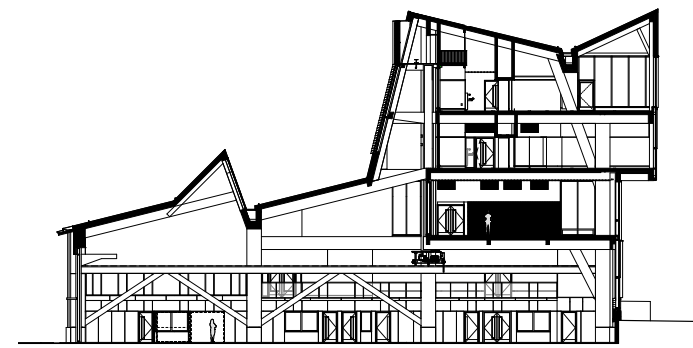
At top, the front of the center at dusk. Above, the center’s cavernous, ground-level fabrication lab. Photos by Tim Hursley.

from the U.S. Department of Commerce — which was facilitated by U.S. Sen. John Boozman, to provide \$5 million for equipment for the center.

“We have really appreciated the tenacity of the instigator, Peter MacKeith, in that no matter what happens, it just keeps on going. Because every project needs that, and you can’t build a building without it,” McNamara said.

Directly supporting the university’s land-grant mission, and with a particular focus on Arkansas-sourced timber and wood, this new applied research facility offers U of A students hands-on experience with innovative design and construction materials, and serves as a research and development laboratory for construction technologies and affordable housing for the state and region.

“What we hope about the Anthony Timberlands Center is that people will go there because they want to see an example of contemporary timber architecture that celebrates timber,” Farrell said. “This university is known for doing important timber research, and this building will hopefully add to that. The building itself is a piece of research.”



At top, a section drawing looking west. Courtesy of Grafton Architects and Modus Studio. Above, the ground-level fabrication shop space during construction. Photo by Modus Studio.

The Architects Behind the Work

Jason Wright, partner, designer and fabricator at Modus Studio, also is a 2004 graduate of the Fay Jones School. Modus Studio has worked with mass timber on several projects, including Adohi Hall on the U of A campus, which opened in fall 2019, just months before Grafton Architects received the Anthony Timberlands Center commission and paired with Modus as project partner and Arkansas architect of record.

When collaborating on this new center, they divided and conquered. Grafton took lead on the initial modeling of the design, and Modus worked with them to achieve a cohesive 3D model. With two modelers at each firm, Wright at Modus and Matt McCullagh at Grafton ran point and met multiple times a week via Zoom — in the morning hours for Wright in Fayetteville due to the six-hour time difference.

The project started at the beginning of the pandemic, which would slow the availability of labor and materials, delay the project, and impact the cost. The final cost is \$43 million.



This view looking northwest shows the cascading metal-clad roof. Photo by Tim Hursley.

The competition sketch from Grafton had established the general look of the building. The Modus team took that concept and overlaid it with U.S. Building Code and Arkansas Fire Prevention Code, to test: “Will the big gestural moves of the project be possible?” Wright said. “It was all about taking the original competition design and making it fit within the construct of the U.S. Building Code. So that was a big exercise.”

Meanwhile, they met with Fay Jones School and U of A officials to determine space programming needs and to plan those spaces. The 44,763-square-foot center houses large studio spaces, small making spaces, a lecture hall, and — the heart of the building — an immense fabrication shop.

The result is a primarily mass timber building that’s already received ample media coverage from around the world, including in *Architectural Record*, *The Architectural Review*, *Dezeen*, *The Architect’s Newspaper* and *The Guardian*, which wrote: “It has a heroic, Roman quality.”

The Materiality of the Project

When Farrell and McNamara were in design school in Dublin together, they didn’t have many fabrication facilities available to connect their student designs directly with construction. They looked to Le Corbusier as a distant mentor and were intrigued by the ways concrete can be used in building. While concrete is more monolithic, McNamara said that “timber is like a good tweed. It’s kind of woven and loose. It’s elemental; you can see and feel how all the members work. And I suppose there’s a looseness about how you use timber, which is quite liberating, which you don’t really have in other kinds of construction.”



Above, a view of the top of the queen post truss, a key to the design of the Anthony Timberlands Center, during construction. Photo by Modus Studio. Below, a diagonal member of the queen post truss is visible through windows on the top level. Photo by Tim Hursley.



Modus was particularly focused on researching and understanding the materiality of the project — such as the local materials available and best applications for various species of wood.

A mass timber building at its core, the Anthony Timberlands Center also has concrete foundations, a steel brace frame, and connectors of steel bolts and screws. On the interior, the glue-laminated columns and beams are formed from spruce, pine and fir, while the cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels are made from Southern yellow pine. Three species were used on the exterior cladding, each for specific reasons. The exterior fillagree screen is made from European larch, a member of the pine family.

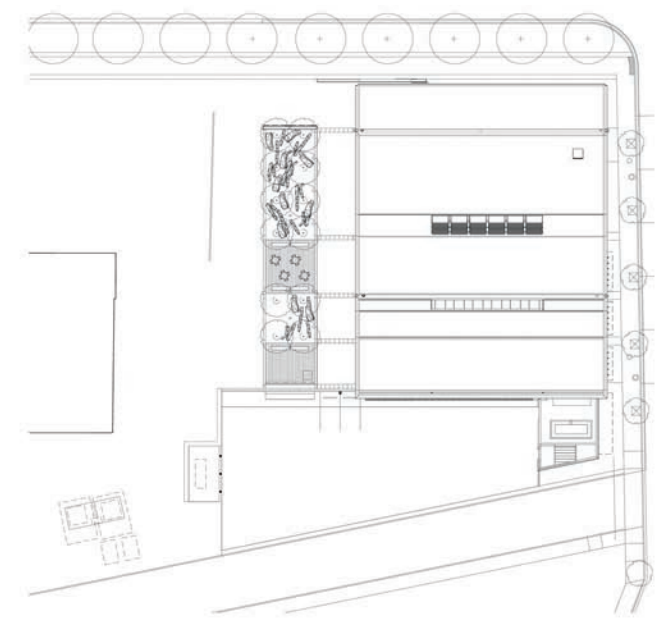
The higher portion of the structure's tall north side is clad with western red cedar, which was impregnated with fire retardant salts — a direct response to building code. As the building's profile recedes to the south, the cladding shifts to Southern yellow pine, made more durable by thermally treating it. Cooking it in a vacuum at high temperatures breaks the internal cell structure — fracturing the natural pathways for water — to prevent moisture gain.

"If you don't have water, you don't have fungus. If you don't have fungus, you won't have rot. So, the thermalizing process takes what would otherwise be a very non-durable species and turns it into a durable species," Wright said.

A key to the design of the Anthony Timberlands Center is the queen post truss, an idea championed by Grafton Architects. This enabled Levels 2, 3 and 4 to hang off the main columns, allowing for an open workshop below without support columns interrupting the flow of the space. Easily viewed from the top two levels, the truss is an important teaching element for structure, with its diagonal members in compression and its middle vertical members in tension. The two massive columns under the truss measure 42 inches wide at the square base and are



Above left, foundation work takes place during construction. Photo by Modus Studio. Above right, a site plan of the Anthony Timberlands Center project along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Courtesy of Grafton Architects and Modus Studio.



designed to support 1.2 million pounds of gravity load.

The two-story-high, 11,000-square-foot fabrication space is heated in the winter and uses passive natural ventilation system for cooling during warmer weather. Mechanically controlled dampers on the north and southeast façades respond to sensors, throttling open and closed to circulate air through the space. A double-glass wall separates the Level 2 lecture hall space from the open fabrication shop — offering great views while creating a barrier for the differing temperatures and the higher noise volumes of the shop.

A 'Kit of Parts'

Because this was the fourth mass timber project for Modus, they had expertise in the unique process of building with mass timber versus traditional methods for design and construction. "We had a good understanding of the coordination process that happens with the other consultants," Wright said.

That coordination involved determining essentially the "kit of parts" needed for the design and construction process, and working with the engineers at the mass timber manufacturer to create the building blocks — uniquely and appropriately sized and scaled for this project — that would form the structure. This method involved customizing the parts to fit the design, rather than designing something that can be built from materials widely available in lumber yards. In such a unique, three-

dimensional puzzle, the design drives the process and determines the custom "kit of parts."

That "kit of parts" must then be coordinated with the other building systems — mechanical, electrical, plumbing — and the structural engineers. And the architectural model had to articulate exact details with clearances, so the components would fit together precisely on site.

"It's not thumb in the wind stuff. It's very specific," Wright said. "It has impacts on the structure; it has impacts on the life safety elements of the building like egress, clearances in the hallways, stairwells, doorways, things like that. It's not like a stick-frame or steel stud building, where you just move the opening wherever you need to in the field to make sure you're hitting the mark. This all had to be figured out on the front end before one piece of wood shipped."

The pieces in the "kit" for the Anthony Timberlands Center came from different companies in different parts of the world — largely due to manufacturer supply chain issues, as well as the extraordinary economic conditions of the pandemic period. The timber order was split between two suppliers to meet the constraints of the construction schedule and budget. The glue-laminated beams and columns for the frame came from Binderholz in Austria, while the CLT panels came from the Mercer plant in Conway, Arkansas.

"We couldn't find domestic providers that could produce the frame and all the connections for a competitive price," Wright said.



The building starts to take shape as mass timber pieces are put into place. Photo by Modus Studio.

Modus had worked with Binderholz on the Adohi Hall project, where they'd witnessed how the prefabrication aspect of having the "kit of parts" reduces the labor and construction waste on site. With the Anthony Timberlands Center, most of the assembly remains exposed — from timber and concrete to the HVAC system, lighting systems and conduit.

"That's kind of the point," Wright said. "We want the students to realize there's a whole lot that goes into a building that typically gets overlooked (because it's hidden). And you really can't overlook it. It's just all there."

"The building is really supposed to be a teaching element," Wright said. "It's an example, a living museum of sorts, for the students that inhabit it. Students can literally look at the columns and beams and ceilings and floors and realize, 'Oh, it's a real-life one-to-one scale example of what I'm here to figure out how to do.'"

Putting It Together

Nabholz Construction also had worked on Adohi Hall — as both construction manager and timber installer. In the few years since, they have quickly become experts and leaders in the region for mass timber, said Rob Dodd, executive vice president of operations.

Among the lessons learned was the timing required for specific phases of the project. "There's a lot of savings on the install time on the back end with mass timber, but to do that you have to do a lot of work on the front end, through modeling and



A skyward view of the building's front wall of glass, with the top two levels cantilevered to cover the sidewalk below. Photo by Modus Studio.

fabrication. So, you really have to account for the time on the front end," Dodd said.

And, because the interior mass timber components are also the finished product, more care must be taken during construction, said Ben Baldwin, project executive. In addition to creating a beautiful, finished product, mass timber also shortens construction time once the structure is enclosed and reduces the need for some subcontractors, such as drywall, paint and floor coverings.

Mass timber pieces are heavily manufactured at the factory, with the ends of beams and columns CNC milled so they're ready to fit together. The penetrations for the mechanical, electrical and plumbing needs are cut before the components are shipped.

The specific desire to conceal most connections while maintaining structural integrity took focused problem solving discussions between the Anthony Timberlands Center's design and construction teams. For instance, massive mass timber columns in the cavernous fabrication space rest on steel pedestals that are enclosed in 42-inch-wide square concrete bases that were poured after installation of the columns. To accommodate this sequencing, while also achieving visual expectations for the



A mass timber column in the fabrication lab rests on a steel pedestal that was later enclosed in a concrete base. Photo by Modus Studio.

finished product, they developed an innovative method to pour concrete "in a box" without it honeycombing.

"There was a lot that went into that detail to generate what you see today, which is a very attractive concrete pedestal underneath that wood column," Baldwin said.

Another example of ingenuity is the composition of the queen post truss, which allows the top floors to cantilever over the open fabrication shop. Steel supports encapsulated within the wood members allow that engineering to work. The roof is formed from CLT panels, with two structural glulam "gutter" beams, integral to the design and construction, that also serve as gutters for channeling rainwater.

The construction required precise sequencing for assembly and keeping the building stable during the process. "When you observe the fabrication space, just creating the depths, heights and clear spans for that facility out of wood was very innovative," Baldwin said.

With the Adohi Hall project, Nabholz educated the subcontractors on how to work with mass timber, which is very different from more familiar construction methods using traditional lumber, steel and concrete. That education on this product also



Workers form one of the two "canoe" gutters for the center. Photo by Modus Studio.

extended to the fire marshal and building inspector.

Some of the mass timber pieces needed for the Anthony Timberlands Center — such as the glulam beams and columns — aren't yet manufactured domestically, due to the size of the members. But Dodd said some level of standardization will lead to wider and increased use commercially.

"As designers start designing around products that are produced as more of a commodity, instead of every single piece being a custom piece, you're going to have some standard pieces, standard sizes, standard connections," Dodd said. "As more things are becoming standardized, and the designers design around that, then that's when it's going to take off. Because it's more costly and time consuming to make a custom product."

The Details of the Design

Matt McCullagh, Grafton Architects Director, said that Grafton's design response to this project was "us as an office of architects and educators working in architecture schools, thinking, 'What should the space be like?' There was very much a strong conceptual idea volumetrically of what the space should or might feel like. Collectively, because we're all architects, we're making a space which is for architecture."



Anthony's Way, on the center's west side, is planted with loblolly pines and other native plants. Photo by Tim Hursley.

The architects refer to the building's side profile as an Ozarks cross section because it emulates the region's rolling hills, which were formed from the erosion over time of the Ozark Plateau. Grafton Architects were surprised to find that Arkansas has more annual rainfall than Ireland. With the cascading metal-clad roof, they referenced the local vernacular of barns blanketed by large roofs. Two prominent "canoe" gutters imbedded in the roof direct rainwater to gardens and a bioswale in Anthony's Way, an area parallel to the west side of the building that was designed by the landscape architects Ground Control and planted with loblolly pines and other native plants. Anthony's Way was supported by a gift from Aubra H. Anthony Jr. and his family.

"Sometimes, when you approach a new material, you can ask questions of the material that maybe you shouldn't, but you can push it in the design sense," McCullagh said. "And then I think, as architects and engineers as well, there are almost always solutions to design problems."

Their design offers a tall building with a large workshop that provides a civic presence while inviting transparency with a front wall of glass, McNamara said. It also creates a community among those inhabiting the center through the transparency and interconnectedness of internal spaces.

A concept from the original design proposal, an atrium area rises above the fabrication space and reaches up to the top levels. That void facilitates a chimney effect for the natural ventilation system and provides solar shading while bringing in natural light.

And, such a distinct design could only be done using mass timber.

"I hope that the university will be proud that they have a sample of the ingenuity and complexity that timber can actually provide," Farrell said. "And the hanging of the auditorium, and the span, all those things you can say, you can do that, because this is a kind of a living sample of the possibilities of timber."

For the students and faculty who use and experience the building on a daily basis, their mass timber education will be ongoing. The exposed timber, for instance, will reveal a story over time.

"I think that that's what's important about this building is that it is a timber experience," Farrell said. "It is a place where students work on their own ideas, while they're also able to observe over time what happens when there is an overhang to protect the timber, or what happens when there isn't an overhang."

Farrell said it's important to them that students anchor themselves where they are and take pride in that place. The center's outside terraces and studios



Rainwater caught by a "canoe" gutter is diverted by a downspout to gardens below. Photo by Modus Studio.

offer treetop-level views of the Ozark landscape, "which hopefully will encourage students to be aware that this is their unique place in the world, their place," she said. "So, for each student, you'll know that you're in Arkansas, you're studying architecture and timber, and you're in this building which celebrates timber."

An Innovative Space for Making

John Folan, department head and professor of architecture, also leads the school's Urban Design Build Studio housed in the new center. While making and fabrication facilities are typically unseen, this center foregrounds this work and literally puts it on public display — with the work visible to the sidewalks and major thoroughfare on the city's south side. The studio spaces on the two upper levels have a direct relationship and visual connection to the large ground-level fabrication space — allowing fluid movement between drawing, critical thinking and prototyping.

"The building truly reflects the nature of contemporary practice where ideas are explored in one space and tested through active making and prototyping in another," Folan said. "There is literally no limit to what a student can explore with the tooling and facilities at ATC."



The custom entry door handle was designed by Juhani Pallasmaa, a Finnish architect and educator. Photo by Tim Hursley.

Work at the scale of a common household product like a lamp or chair will be explored next to full-scale sections of buildings and homes. This wood-centered facility empowers students, staff and faculty to develop solutions to some of the greatest existential challenges facing Arkansas residents — such as affordable housing and navigating a changing climate.

The building itself is a living laboratory and a member of the faculty. The study of its joinery, fire performance, acoustics and structural behavior through observation and experience deepens students' knowledge beyond theory and simulation, Folan said.

"The structure exploits the inherent beauty and logic of mass timber construction while inviting students to engage directly with those tectonics in promoting material literacy, spatial awareness, and an understanding of low-carbon design strategies that are essential in contemporary practice," he said.

By foregrounding this material in an academic setting, the project not only reflects current industry trends but also positions students to be leaders in advancing its use — equipping them with relevant, forward-looking skills as the profession transitions toward more regenerative practices.



The top-level studio features an angled ceiling formed from cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels and glue-laminated beams. The studios on the top two levels are furnished with CLT desks designed by Fay Jones School students. Photo by Tim Hursley.

“In professional practice, mass timber is gaining significant momentum due to its reduced environmental impact, speed of construction and aesthetic appeal,” Folan said. “It’s increasingly used in mid- to high-rise construction as codes evolve within the context of greater performative understanding.”

The fabrication lab and the extended outdoor fabrication yard allow students to make across scales, while using a range of tools and equipment. A gantry with a bridge crane allows large structures to be moved in and out of the space.

Advanced digital tools like robotic arms, both mobile and stationary, will be used for 3D printing of buildings and building components. Students can explore design and making with these and other innovative technologies alongside traditional hand tools and power tools.

Through a previous studio supported by Weyerhaeuser, Fay Jones School students designed more than 30 custom studio desks for the new center. An elegant design provides space for four students per desk. A large “gutter” along the desk’s middle provides a space to hide cords and store items, while mimicking the two canoe gutters on the building’s roof. Students also designed and built an entry table and a 24-foot-long conference table for the center.

“Having this building now provides us the platform by which to make visible, make tangible, the presence of Arkansas forests and timberlands, and wood products, industries and economies to our students,” MacKeith said. “This is kind of the place-attentive education at a very large scale, at



At top, the center’s custom-made entry door designed by Rachel McClintock. Above, an aerial view of the sun setting behind the center. Photos by Tim Hursley.

the scale of the state. I think the other dimension of that too, which we are able now to point out to students, is architecture is inextricably bound to both environment and economy. And their education, therefore, is inextricably bound to environment and economy.”

DEDICATION DAY — AUGUST 29, 2025

Photos by Russell Cothren, Chieko Hara & Kaslyn Tidmore



John Ed Anthony addresses the dedication day crowd.



Denise Dodd, Rob Dodd and Charles Nabholz discuss the new center.



Kevin Trainor, Tammy Knowles, Robert Koenig, Nate Looney, Brandy Cox and Scott Varady.



John Ed Anthony shares the story of his family’s timber industry legacy in the state.



Yvonne Farrell, Shelley McNamara and Peter MacKeith visit after the dedication.



Yvonne Farrell addresses the audience.



John Ed Anthony visits with Dawn and John Bonham and their son, Andrew Bonham.



The dedication day crowd fills the fabrication lab and mezzanine level spaces.

ALUMNI *Design* AWARDS

Designs for community, educational, cultural, tourism, residential, adaptive reuse, religious, retail, hospitality, recreational, corporate and governmental spaces, as well as urban planning and landscape design projects, were among 45 projects vying for recognition in the 2024 Fay Jones School Alumni Design Awards competition.

Honor Award — Architecture



Tonal House Portland, Oregon

Observation Studio
Chris Brown (B.Arch. '03)

Perched on the extinct volcanic formation of Mount Tabor, the Tonal House exemplifies both restraint and a celebration of local craft. With stunning views of Mount St. Helens on one side and the Portland city center on the other, the house gestures toward both with large, alternating openings. Each level of the house integrates with the surrounding environment, increasing in scale while descending into the forest. The project balances the local and the universal, combining materials and skills from local manufacturers and craftspeople with a timeless approach to form. The foundation and primary walls are sustainably sourced, constructed from stacked insulated concrete form blocks produced less than 100 miles away. The plaster coating the house inside and out changes color with the weather and season, and subtle tonal shifts emerge with the passing sun.

“The designers beautifully integrate site, building and detail using an innovative Faswall block building system,” the jury said. “The house’s masses, forms and openings create a fantastic dialogue that creates a sense of tension while keeping an overall feeling of balance.”

Merit Award — Regional and Urban Design



Downtown Cary Park
Cary, North Carolina

Tzu Chen

Machado Silvetti

S. Austin Ward (B.Arch. '13)

The Downtown Cary Park program features indoor and outdoor event spaces, a concert and performance area, food and beverage options (including a market and bar), public restrooms, and staff and operations support areas. The outdoor spaces are made to accommodate concerts, festivals, food trucks and educational programs.

“This project has a unique and fun character,” the jury said. “Dedicating one formal language throughout the project facilitates several interesting spaces.”

Merit Award — Historic Preservation



Richard and Alma Brothers Residence Restoration
Fayetteville, Arkansas

McKee Properties LLC

McKee Properties LLC

David W. McKee (B.Arch. '82)

This 1956 Fay Jones-designed mid-century modern home was recently restored to preserve and refurbish the defining elements of Jones' organic architecture. Initially uninhabitable, the residence required complete system replacements and a new roof after 66 years. Extensive site work was undertaken to restore and protect this historic home.

“This is an extremely well-executed example of residential historic preservation with a faithful response to Fay Jones' work,” the jury said.

Merit Award — Architecture



Greenland School District Administration Office
Greenland, Arkansas

Timothy Hursley

Modus Studio

Amanda Burcham (M.Des. '23, B.I.D. '14)

Sarah McElroy (B.Arch. '01)

Josh Siebert (B.Arch. '02)

Chris M. Baribeau (B.Arch. '03)

The Greenland School District Administration Office design honors the mid-century architecture of the existing campus while creating a community beacon and healthy workspace for the district's administration. Its two-sided entry celebrates both a pedestrian approach and conventional automobile arrivals.

“This small project is very well done. It feels cohesive, and none of the elements seem out of place,” the jury said. “The design language from steel, brick, glass and concrete materials is consistent inside and outside.”

Merit Award — Unbuilt



Tower 14
De Smet, South Dakota

Rendering by Nick Ryan

Independent project

Nick Ryan (B.Arch. '20)

De Smet, South Dakota, plans to integrate Highway 14 as the gateway to its new observation tower and trail system, offering ideal vantage points for observing the area's historic natural features. The elevator core of Tower 14 doubles as an illuminated beacon, with wood and polycarbonate materials enhancing its durability.

“This project is compelling,” the jury said. “The composition with bold forms and proportions and attention to materials and details give this project a powerful presence.”

Citation Award —
Public Good



Rett Peek

Argenta Parklets
North Little Rock, Arkansas

AMR Architects
Kyle Heflin (B.Arch. '15)

Citation Award —
Regional and Urban Design



Black Elk Media

ArtCourt
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Ecological Design Group
Mary Nell Miskin (B.L.A. '15)
Shannon Norman (B.L.A. '09)
Tanner Weeks (B.L.A. '98)

Citation Award —
Historic Preservation



Rett Peek

LA Davis Student Union Renovation
Pine Bluff, Arkansas

AMR Architects
Adam Day (B.Arch. '08)
Kyle Heflin (B.Arch. '15)

Citation Award —
Architecture



Matt Winqvist

Maricopa County Southeast Justice Center
Mesa, Arizona

Multistudio
Joey Gamblin (B.Arch. '12)

Citation Award —
Architecture

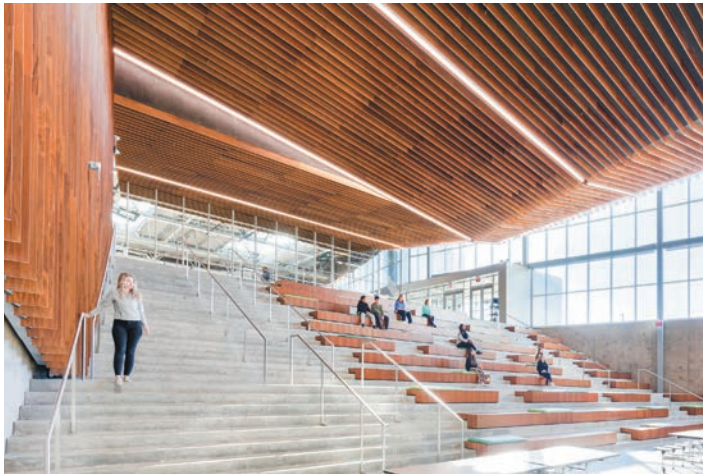


Steve Hall

Galien River Retreat
New Buffalo, Michigan

Wheeler Kearns Architects
Calli Verkamp (B.Arch. '13)

Citation Award —
Interior Architecture and Design



Gayle Babcock / Architectural Imageworks, LLC

Jarrett Middle School
Springfield, Missouri

Dake Wells Architecture
Joey Hamm (B.Arch. '14)

Citation Award —
Landscape Architecture



Rendering by Ecological Design Group

Underwood Park Master Plan
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Ecological Design Group
Joiner Dotson (B.L.A. '22)
Shannon Norman (B.L.A. '09)
Reva Meeks (B.Arch. '08)

Editor's Note:

The award for Public Good celebrates and encourages projects that engage with minoritized and/or low-income communities through the design and building of architecture, interiors and/or landscapes that mitigate deficits and inequalities in housing, education, culture, health, other public services, public and/or community spaces, landscapes and/or infrastructure.

FACULTY NEWS

Scott Biehle, teaching associate professor of landscape architecture, and a team of students designed *Ville de Pollinisateurs*, one of 26 gardens chosen to be a part of the 2024 Chaumont International Garden Festival in France (see p. 9). The installation ran for more than six months at the Domain of Chaumont-sur-Loire. *Ville des Pollinisateurs*, city of pollinators, challenges garden visitors to imagine a world in which birds, bees, insects and bats, among the world's pollinators, have evolved to become the urbanizers of the world, leaving humanity at the periphery. After the garden festival closed, the installation was brought back to Arkansas and reenvisioned for Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs.

Marlon Blackwell, with his professional practice, Marlon Blackwell Architects, was selected to be on the design team for “Porch: An Architecture of Generosity” at the U.S. Pavilion for the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in Italy. The exhibition ran from May through November 2025 (see p. 12). The firm's current projects include an air traffic control tower in Columbus, Indiana, and the Greenfield Farm Writers Residency in rural Mississippi. The Thaden School in Bentonville, Arkansas, a collaborative effort between Marlon Blackwell Architects, Eskew Dumez Ripple and Andropogon Associates, was awarded the 2025 Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize, based in the College of Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology, in Chicago. The Thaden School was selected from a field of more than 250 nominees. It was the only U.S. project and educational project among the five finalists, and its design team is the first U.S. team to receive the Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize. Blackwell retired from the school in summer 2025 as Distinguished Professor after 33 years of teaching (see p. 14).

Jessica Colangelo, associate professor of architecture, and **Charles Sharpless**, assistant professor of interior architecture and design, with their professional practice, Somewhere Studio, were accepted into the U.S. Pavilion for the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in Italy. Their proposal, “Pavilions as Porches: Temporary Gatherings and Reframing Public Spaces,” highlighted work from their two public pavilion projects: *Salvage Swings* (2019) and *Ground Rules* (2023). Somewhere Studio was also invited by the curators to develop an interactive workshop as part of the public opening weekend in May 2025. In February 2025, the firm celebrated the opening of the Reddy Vineyards wine tasting room in Stonewall, Texas. Sharpless also presented his advanced studio course “Staging Surfaces” at the 2025 Interior Design Educators Conference in Chicago.

Kimball Erdman, professor of landscape architecture, and a team of students completed a detailed Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) of Devil's Den State Park. He worked with the U of A's Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies to document the overlook pavilion, using drones and lasers to map the 2,500-acre park. The survey was awarded first place in the 2024 HALS

Challenge. Erdman and his team launched the collection of works, illustrated histories, historic photos, interactive maps and 3D models, on a website last year — ccc.cast.uark.edu. The site has won numerous awards, including the 2025 Arkansas Historical Association's Award of Merit and the Central States Conference and American Society of Landscape Architects 2025 Award of Excellence in the communication category (see p. 24).

John Folan, professor and head of the Department of Architecture, was elected to the AIA College of Fellows in February 2025 (see p. 6). Work executed on “Sensing the Forest,” a pilot project and installation for the Ross and Mary Whipple Family Forest Education Center at Garvan Woodland Gardens in Hot Springs, was recognized with the 2025 ACSA Design Build Award. The project also received a 2024 AIA Arkansas Honor Award for Design Excellence. The “Negotiation Room” installation designed for the 2023 Venice Biennale was recognized with a 2024 AIA Arkansas Merit Award for Design Excellence (see p. 8).

Greg Herman, associate professor of architecture and director of the Fay and Gus Jones House Stewardship, led a team to create a website dedicated to the Jones House, a property owned and curated by the Fay Jones School. Fay Jones designed the home and shared it with his family from its completion in 1956 until his death in 2004. The website, fayjoneshouse.com, includes information about the house's history, its critical role in the education of architects and designers, details related to its preservation and scheduling a visit, as well as a photo gallery. In addition, the Fay and Gus Jones House has been included in the inventory of the Iconic Houses Network (iconichouses.org), an internationally respected catalogue of documented, visitable houses designed by famed architects. The Jones House joins such globally recognized properties as Le Corbusier's Villa Savoy and Alvar Aalto's Villa Mairea.



Cover of *Architecture and Social Change*.

Brian Holland, associate professor of architecture, published the book *Architecture and Social Change: Shaping an Impactful Practice* (Routledge, 2025). Supported by a Dean's Grant for Creative Research and Practice in 2024, the book features student-led interviews with 15 influential design leaders at the forefront of efforts to confront pressing challenges like housing insecurity, racial and economic inequality, environmental degradation and architectural waste. It gathers inspirational stories alongside practical advice for how to navigate a career in architecture while seeking to make a positive impact. Holland was also named director of the Fay Jones School's Honors Program and promoted to associate professor.

Steve Luoni, Distinguished Professor, and the team at the University of Arkansas Community Design Center (UACDC) won multiple awards including the 2025 Merit CNU Charter Award from The Congress for the New Urbanism; EDRA Great Places Award from the Environmental Design Research Association and Project for Public Spaces; the Green GOOD DESIGN Award from The European Centre for Architecture Art Design and Urban Studies and the Chicago Athenaeum: Museum of Architecture and Design; and the ACSA/AIA Practice and Leadership Award from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the American Institute of Architects.

Carl Matthews, professor and head of the Department of Interior Architecture and Design, was honored with the Keith Hooks Volunteer Excellence Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) and interior design education. In 2024, Matthews also served on a special task force examining the structural efficacy of CIDA's accreditation standards, making recommendations for future strategic development that support evolving program contexts in higher education. This kind of “above and beyond” service is emblematic of Matthews' contribution to both interior design higher education and to CIDA's quality assurance mission.

Carl Smith, professor of landscape architecture, contributed the chapter “We Just Demolished Their Story: Using Drawing and Storytelling to Understand the Changing Post-Soviet City in Tajikistan” for the forthcoming University of Exeter Press book *Miniatures: A Reader in the History of Everyday Life*, edited by historians Kate Ferris, Ph.D., with the University of St. Andrews and Huw Halstead, Ph.D., with the University of Edinburgh. This work, and previous collaborations with Halstead, led to Smith being appointed Visiting Scholar of History, Classics, and Archeology at the University of Edinburgh, for fall 2025. At the U of A, Smith was appointed co-director of the university's prestigious Teaching Academy in August 2024, and he was part of the provost search committee charged by Chancellor Robinson in fall 2024.

Rachel Smith Loerts, instructor of architecture, and Alison Turner, teaching associate professor, co-authored and presented a paper titled “PLAYing” at the 2025 National Conference on the Beginning Design Student in February at North Carolina State University, in Raleigh. The paper highlighted a design tool that Turner and Smith Loerts created to incorporate into design outreach workshops targeted to K-12 students.



“The Beginning and the End”

Laura Terry, associate professor of architecture, exhibited her artworks “In Between Dusk and Dawn” and “The Beginning and the End” in the national juried exhibition *Ink and Clay 46*, one of the oldest exhibitions exclusively for printmaking and ceramics. The exhibition was held at the W. Keith and Janet Kellogg University Art Gallery at Cal Poly Pomona in November 2024.

Jake Tucci and **Jinoh Park**, both assistant professors of interior architecture and design, received a \$30,000 grant from the Nuckolls Fund for Lighting Education to develop a professional elective that enables students to learn, appreciate and apply the fundamentals of lighting design. The course, “Premiumization, Sustainability and Making of Bespoke Lighting,” recognizes the achievements of James L. Nuckolls, the late lighting designer and pioneer in lighting education. Work from the course was displayed in the exhibit “Luminaires: Premiumization, Sustainability, & Bespoke Design,” at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF), the leading platform for contemporary furnishing design (see p. 16).

Alison Turner, director of community education, was promoted to teaching associate professor and awarded the Distinguished Faculty Research and Teaching Award from the Honors College in spring 2025. Turner teaches an honors section of Environmental Technology I, a core course for architecture students, and has expanded the program by adding honors sections to elective courses as well. She works closely with students who are considering their potential projects over multiple semesters, beginning with an independent study. The award honors leadership “with extraordinary intellectual service as mentors of undergraduate research, who invite honors students into their research world at an intense level.” Turner was awarded \$1,000 in academic funding and was listed on the Faculty Awards page of the Honors College.

Daughter of Fay Jones Honors Family with \$500,000 and AIA Gold Medal Gifts

Michelle Parks

University of Arkansas alumna Jean Cameron “Cami” Jones, a daughter of Fay and Gus Jones, is honoring her parents with two gifts to the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design at the University of Arkansas. Cami, the younger of the Joneses’ two daughters, has committed a \$500,000 planned gift to establish the Fay and Gus Jones Legacy Endowment in Architecture and Design. This endowment is intended to provide funding for publications, exhibitions and other events in the Fay Jones School that extend the legacy of its namesake, Fay Jones.

In honoring her parents, she aims to celebrate the architect her father was and spotlight the workhorse her mother was to keep the household running. She wants to ensure that Fay Jones is remembered as an architect, teacher and father, and that Gus Jones is remembered for her part in raising the couple’s two daughters, managing their home and supporting Fay in his career in immeasurable ways.

Cami, with her sister, Janis Jones, also donated the Gold Medal awarded to Fay Jones in 1990 by the American Institute of Architects. The Gold Medal is AIA’s highest annual honor, recognizing individuals whose work has had a lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture.

Cami, who lives in Fayetteville, earned a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Education, both with an emphasis in elementary education, from the College of Education and Health Professions at the U of A. She was also a member of Chi Omega at the U of A. She is retired from the Texas Education Agency, where she was the director of early childhood education. She recently moved back to Fayetteville after living and working in Houston for 12 years and then Austin for 36 years.

“Upholding and sustaining the legacy of Fay Jones and his work is of undeniable importance to our school, to our identity and our mission,” said Peter MacKeith, dean of the Fay Jones School. “But this is also a legacy of a family, both parents and children, devoted to the culture of the state, region and nation. Cami Jones’ gifts to the school to sustain that deep legacy are of superlative value and are a true cause for celebration among all who are devoted to the school and our larger mission in architectural education. On behalf of the school, thank you Cami!”

“Fay Jones’ influence on architecture is undeniable, and the impact of his work continues to resonate today, but none of it would have been possible without the

steadfast support of his wife, Gus,” said Chancellor Charles Robinson. “By honoring both of her parents with this generous gift, Cami Jones ensures that their shared legacy will continue to inspire University of Arkansas students for generations to come.”

A native Arkansan, Fay Jones attended the earliest architecture classes offered at the University of Arkansas, in the architecture program founded by John G. Williams. Fay Jones graduated in the first class of architecture students, and eventually returned to teach for 35 years and serve as the school’s first dean. In his professional practice, he designed 135 houses and 15 chapels and churches across the country, but most were in Arkansas.

“I realize how fortunate I am to have had my parents.” — Cami Jones

“We are immensely grateful to Cami Jones for generously supporting the Fay Jones School,” said Scott Varady, vice chancellor for university advancement. “Her gift is a moving tribute to the values and vision her parents brought to the world of architecture and will have a profound effect on architectural innovators and those who experience the spaces they create. The family legacy will continue to inspire and guide generations of students.”

Nurturing a Career and a Family

In the years since her father’s death in 2004 at age 83 and her mother’s death in 2014 at age 92 — Cami has reflected on her parents’ lives and careers, recalling details of their early years and some big, and small, memorable moments.

“I realize how fortunate I am to have had my parents,” she said.

Fay had three jobs and was helping to raise two daughters while working his way through college — first at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, then at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

Gus managed Fay’s office in the beginning, handling the finances and paperwork, before they eventually hired an accountant. His office was in the ground level of their home before he used a couple of spaces along Dickson Street. He eventually moved it to the top floor of the Underwood Building he designed.

“My father would have never been able to do what he did. He did all this without hiring a secretary. He didn’t hire Mother either,” she said. “She just did everything for everybody and kept it going.”

Gus would entertain in their home on Hillcrest Avenue on Razorback home football game weekends.



Gus and Fay Jones, in their Fayetteville home designed by Fay.

The games were usually in the afternoon, long before the stadium was equipped with nighttime lighting. After attending the game, everyone would meet at the Jones House for a meal — typically Gus’ homemade lasagna.

Cami recalls sitting around and listening to everyone’s stories. Many of Fay’s clients were good friends before they worked together, or a friendship was formed through their collaboration.

Fay designed the family’s home in the 1950s, incorporating a boulder into the space that was Fay’s office on the ground floor. Gus took care of plants at the house, planting ivy around their house and on the neighboring lot they owned, and installed ferns along a rock wall. She also added plants on and around the boulder, making it a garden room. She meticulously maintained the plants.

“Talk about tender loving care — you would never, ever see a brown leaf on anything,” Cami said.

When Fay had a heart attack just before his 54th birthday, Gus got an American Heart Association cookbook to make meals from. He cooperated with the dietary guidelines but still insisted on bacon for a BLT.

Gus would later take care of Fay, when he developed Parkinson’s disease. With the additional help of caregivers, Fay was able to stay in their home until his death.

Winning the AIA Gold Medal

When her dad found out he was one of three finalists being considered to receive the AIA Gold Medal, he doubted he’d be selected, Cami said. He had a small practice in mid-America, while the other finalists were part of large firms. But he sent in his work, as requested, including framed photos and written descriptions.

In character, Fay didn’t simply pack his work in standard crates to ship. He designed his crates with detailed handles with scoring. Inside, beautifully crafted boxes contained his work.

Cami recalls the week of activities — now 35 years ago — that surrounded her father receiving the AIA Gold Medal in Washington, D.C. It started with the unveiling of his name after it was chiseled into the granite Wall of Honor in the lobby of the AIA headquarters building. Cami said her father was concerned his name would be misspelled. Though he’d been using E. Fay Jones at the time, he was worried that Fay would be set in stone as “Faye” — a common misspelling of his name. He was greatly relieved at the unveiling.

“That was just the beginning of it,” she said.

Then, in a ceremony at the White House in the early afternoon of February 22, 1990, President George H.W. Bush made remarks before awarding Fay Jones the Gold Medal.

“Through humble materials and simple forms, Mr. Jones has created architecture of great power and space. His reverence for the land and his respect for the inner needs of the people who visit or dwell in his buildings give his architecture rare beauty and dignity,” President Bush said.

That evening, a gala was held at the National Building Museum. Peter Jennings, the late television news anchor, served as the emcee, and then-Prince Charles of Wales made remarks. Cami was star-eyed at the celebrities in attendance.

After the ceremony, Fay didn’t take off his Gold Medal — and he even wore it to bed that night. He only removed it to shower, she said.

Cami said a journalist interviewing Fay at the time asked him what he was going to do differently once he returned to his practice in Fayetteville.

Fay told them, “I think I’m just going to stick with what brought me here. I really don’t see any changes,” Cami said.

True to his word, Fay and his family returned to their regular life after the week of celebrations in Washington, D.C. For several weeks, a few local restaurants insisted the family’s meals were on the house. One restaurant kept that pledge until Fay’s death.

Honoring a Family’s Legacy

Cami and her sister, Janis, have previously contributed funds to the U of A to honor and mark the legacy of their parents. The sisters gave money to have the fourth-floor conference room of Vol Walker Hall, home to the Fay Jones School, named for their mother, Mary Elizabeth “Gus” Jones, in 2017. In 2018, Cami committed a planned gift of more than \$1 million to benefit the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design and University Libraries. That gift was directed toward preserving the family home, supporting a visiting lecturer or professor of design, and digitizing portions of the Fay Jones Collection in Special Collections.

Cami is a life member of the Arkansas Alumni

Association and included in the Towers of Old Main, a giving society for the university's most generous benefactors.

Once she and Janis are gone, Cami wants to ensure that someone else can continue to tell the stories. She's very aware that she's been a keeper of the stories. Some are poignant now, and some still make her laugh.

"It's nice to remember. And when I remember one thing, it reminds me of a story that's connected to it," Cami said. "I just wish Daddy were here to tell the stories because he was a real storyteller. Also, you did have to watch his face, because his facial expressions were as good as whatever he was telling you."

In her mother's later years, Cami helped her with finances and bookkeeping. Caring for their family's legacy is the "closest thing I have to being close to her," Cami says of Gus.

Another story Cami tells is the one in which Gus presented remarks and accepted Fay's final AIA honor, the Twenty-five Year Award for Thorncrown Chapel, given to him posthumously in 2006. Made of glass, stone and steel, this chapel in the woods of Eureka Springs was Jones' first chapel commission and propelled him to international stature. The chapel received an AIA Honor Award in 1981 and was ranked fourth on the AIA's list of the top 10 buildings in the 20th century.

In February 2006, Gus was again at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., for the gala event. Cami recalls her mother's new gray jacket that matched the gray in her hair.

"She got up there, and she did the best job," Cami said. "Nobody could do anything like Fay could. She did it, and she looked so pretty."

Hill's Endowment for Fay Jones School Focuses on Healthcare, Wellness Design

Dominic Rossetti

University of Arkansas alumnus Charles C. Hill has established two endowments to benefit the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design. The \$100,000 planned gift will create the Charles C. Hill Endowed Scholarship in Healthcare and Wellness Design and the Charles C. Hill Endowed Lecture in Healthcare and Wellness Design, each in the amount of \$50,000.

The endowed scholarship provides financial support to students in the Master of Design Studies program with a concentration in healthcare and wellness design. Creating an endowment for graduate students greatly improves access to financial resources for students who often have limited options for scholarships.

The endowed lecture will underwrite one lecture each year in the Fay Jones School, intended to engage, inform and educate students, other design professionals and members of the community about the impacts and significance of healthcare and wellness design.

Together, the endowments will help the Fay Jones School prepare students for the evolving future of healthcare design by promoting innovative teaching, exposing students to progressive design concepts that originate in the world's most advanced healthcare systems, and reducing the financial burden for the school's graduate students.

"Charles Hill's support for healthcare and wellness design will have a lasting impact, not just on the

students who benefit from these endowments but also on the communities they go on to serve," said Chancellor Charles Robinson. "We appreciate his generosity, ongoing commitment to our students and support of the university's mission to improve the lives of all Arkansans."

"The Fay Jones School continues to expand and deepen its stellar professional undergraduate degree programs into directed graduate programs aimed at addressing state, regional and national imperative issues through architecture and design," said Peter MacKeith,

"To be a successful architect, you must enjoy and care about people. It's who we design buildings for."

— Charles Hill

dean of the school. "Alumnus Charles Hill, with this generous gift, is enabling us to further our ambition in the specific imperative of health and wellness design. On behalf of the school, I am very grateful to Charles for this foresighted, compassionate contribution to the school and our students' future."



Charles Hill

A holistic knowledge of the healthcare system is critical to interpreting its current and future needs, and adaptability is a key part of that knowledge. As an example, Hill referenced the changing healthcare needs of baby boomers.

"When baby boomers became adults, an overwhelming need for obstetrics and pediatrics emerged," Hill said. "Recently, boomers' needs have shifted to geriatrics, orthopedics and extended care. We need to develop curriculum that inspires architects to identify the evolving needs of our healthcare system and prepare our students to design for those needs."

"We are grateful to Charles Hill for his commitment to advancing opportunities for students embarking in the evolving landscape of healthcare design," said Scott Varady, vice chancellor for advancement. "This investment in the Fay Jones School will help ensure that graduates are equipped to excel in this concentration and address related needs in the communities they serve."

Hill's connection to the Fay Jones School is older

than the school itself. When he was a student, the Department of Architecture was part of the College of Arts and Sciences. "It all worked together," Hill said, recalling the days when architecture, theater, music and art were all housed within the Fine Arts Center. It wasn't until 1974, a year after Hill graduated, that the Department of Architecture became the School of Architecture, naming E. Fay Jones as its first dean.

Hill spent much of his childhood living at Buffalo River State Park, which later became part of the Buffalo National River, where he grew to love the outdoors. At age 11, his family moved to Little Rock. The transition to city life was challenging, but as he adapted, Hill developed an interest in engineering and architecture and decided to study civil engineering at Arkansas Tech University.

Later, Hill decided to attend the University of Arkansas. Professor Gatchell at the University of Arkansas school of engineering suggested that he might want to consider architecture based on his varied interest in building structure and art. John Williams, the founder of the architecture program at the university, explained how architecture was a melding of the technical aspects of engineering with environmental and aesthetic aspects of design; Hill chose architecture. He was selected to fill one of 50 spots available in the architecture program in the fall of 1963.

Like many young men at the time, in 1968, Hill left school and enlisted in the Army National Guard. Following basic training, he first worked for the Arkansas Highway Department and then with a local architecture firm in North Little Rock. It didn't take long though for Hill to return to the U of A to complete his architecture degree in 1973.

Hill's early experiences established a career-long connection to healthcare design. A key school assignment involved researching extended care facilities, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities, to determine how design could impact care and improve the quality of life for residents. In the late 1960s, his first project at Renshaw and Taylor, a North Little Rock architecture firm, was an extended care facility. When he graduated, Hill joined Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch and Blass, a Little Rock firm founded in 1930 that specialized in healthcare design.

"I chose architecture because I value the creative process, the organization — and because I enjoy people," Hill said. "To be a successful architect, you must enjoy and care about people. It's who we design buildings for. If you don't, you are missing the point of the profession."

Hill graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture in 1973. He is a member of Chancellor's Society, a member of the Arkansas Alumni Association and recognized as a Thorofred for his consecutive years of giving to the university.

Hill continues to support the Fay Jones School as a member of the Dean's Circle — a group of designers and related industry leaders who provide guidance, expertise and financial support. They also serve as mentors and ambassadors for the Fay Jones School.

2024 / 2025 Fay Jones School Events

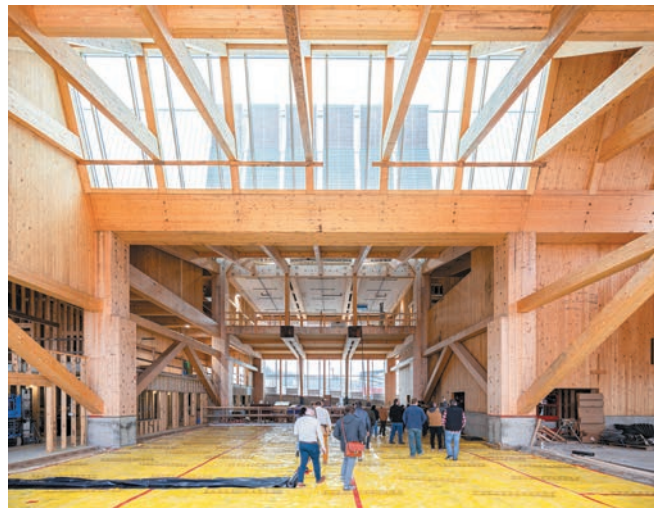
Winter Fest Celebration / Arkansas
Mass Timber Conference /
Career Fair / Honors Recognition
Reception and Ceremony / Interiors
Education 50th Anniversary / Final
Reviews



Photos by Chieko Hara

Winter Fest Celebration

The Fay Jones School held the 2024 Winter Fest Reception and Alumni Recognition Ceremony on Jan. 17, 2025, in Vol Walker Hall. Individuals and organizations that have made contributions to the school, university and culture of design received Awards for Distinction. Distinguished Alumni Awards went to Scott Emmelkamp (B.L.A. '87), Karen Cordes Spence, Ph.D. (B.Arch. '87) and Jody Pickering (B.I.D. '03). Emerging Alumni Awards went to Gabriella M. Bermea (B.Arch. '18), Benjamin Magee (B.L.A. '18) and Sierra Peterson (B.I.D. '16). Dean's Medals went to the U.S. Green Building Council - Arkansas Chapter; Groundwork - Northwest Arkansas Council; Marty Matlock, Professor, UA Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department; and Jerry Goux and Sherry Tsepas Goux, Edmondson House. The school also presented its Alumni Design Awards (see p. 44) and recognized Golden Graduates — the school's alumni who graduated 50 years prior, in 1974.



Photos courtesy of Justin Conner, ISG videographer and producer

Arkansas Mass Timber Conference

The Fay Jones School, in partnership with the architecture and design firm ISG, hosted the 2025 Arkansas Mass Timber Conference on Feb. 7-9 on the U of A campus. As a national hub for mass timber design, construction and manufacturing, Arkansas became the ideal location for this conference that brought together more than 130 industry design professionals, academic researchers and manufacturers of mass timber systems and components. This conference highlighted the ways that mass timber is an emerging material with significant potential in the building industry. As populations grow and infrastructure demands increase, sustainable development will increasingly rely on this rapidly renewable resource. Beyond its environmental benefits, mass timber offers a unique aesthetic appeal and, in some circumstances, an opportunity to accelerate construction timelines.

Career Fair

The Fay Jones School's annual Career Fair was held Feb. 25, 2025, in the Arkansas Union Ballroom, hosted in partnership with the U of A Career Development Center. Nearly 70 firms and organizations from around the state and across the country came to meet our architecture, interior architecture and design, and landscape architecture students and discuss internship and employment opportunities.



Photos by Rachel Callahan & Jeff Smith



Photos by Amanda Collen & Marilyn Chavez-Razo

Honors Recognition Ceremony

The Fay Jones School's annual Honors Recognition Reception and Ceremony was held April 11, 2025, in Vol Walker Hall, where scholarships and awards for 120 students were announced. This year, more than \$288,000 was handed out through scholarships that recognized various aspects of achievement among architecture, interior architecture and design, and landscape architecture students.

Photos by Chieko Hara

Interiors Education 50th Anniversary

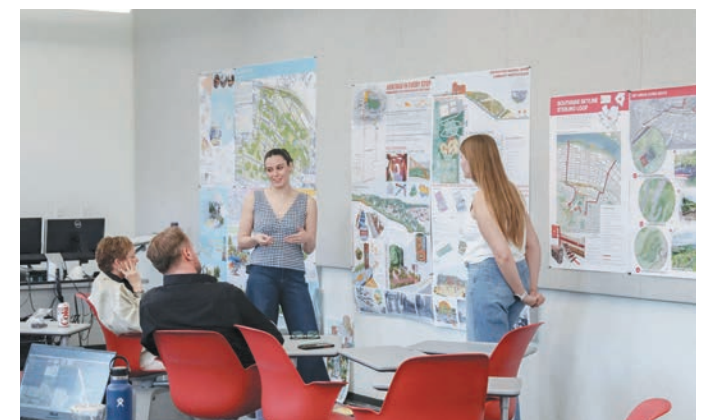
A weekend of events on April 25 and 26, 2025, marked the 50th anniversary of interiors education at the University of Arkansas and brought together students, faculty and alumni from across the country. Festivities honoring five decades of interiors education started with a construction site tour at the Anthony Timberlands Center for Design and Materials Innovation, followed by a social hour. The second day began with breakfast and a tour of the newly restored Fay and Gus Jones House. A networking lunch featured presentations on the 50-year legacy and major milestones of interior design within Arkansas, with content curated by alumni and faculty. An alumni group led an open panel discussion on topics such as design passion, AI in the industry, career paths and advice for students. Alumni panelists, pictured at top left, were Hunter McDaniel, Amanda Collen (moderator), Shaina Kay, Nikki Stelloh, Natalie Biles and Valli Wiggins. The weekend concluded with a tour and networking event at the Institute for Integrative and Innovative Research (IIR), a newly opened mass timber campus facility.



Photos by Rachel Callahan & Jeff Smith

Final Reviews

Fay Jones School students and faculty held final reviews of studio work for the fall 2024 semester (above) and spring 2025 semester (opposite page) in Vol Walker Hall, at the U of A Community Design Center on the downtown Fayetteville square and at the former Urban Design Build Studio Build Lab, located on Lt. Col. Leroy Pond Avenue in the Art and Design District of the U of A campus.





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