

The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture

The City College
of New York



**ANNUAL REPORT
2016-2018**

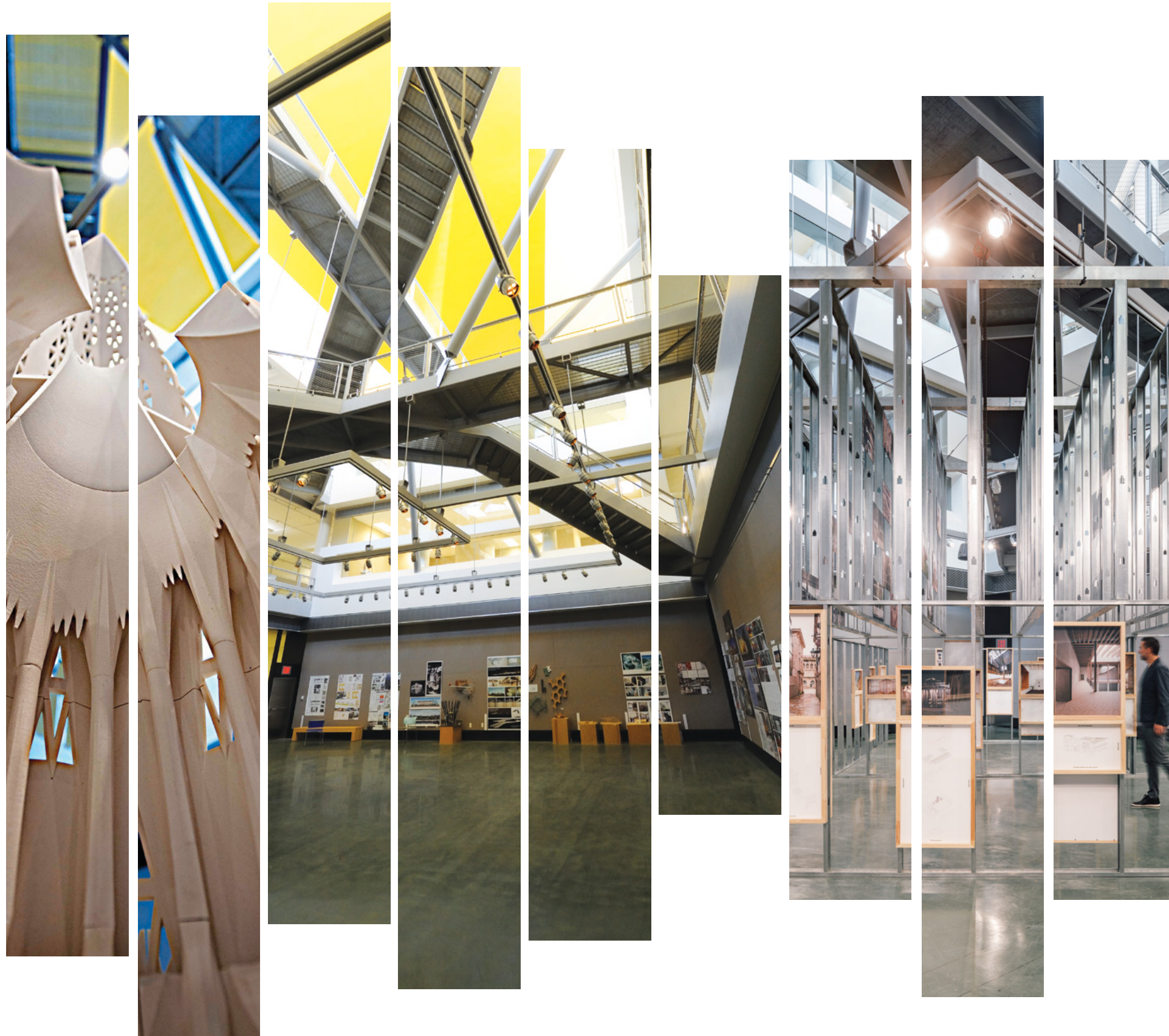


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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Dear friends of the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture:

It is a privilege to share with you the combined 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Report of the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture. The reason for this compilation is twofold—first, it continues the Spitzer School's commitment to communicating with its supporters and constituents. Second, it offers a view, through the lens of "BUILDING COMMUNITY," of an extraordinary two-year period, a glimpse of several of our truly extraordinary students, faculty research, a hint of the transformations ahead, and a look at the support of alumni and friends that make so much possible here at the Spitzer School.

We are beginning to emerge from a challenging period of transition. The college has a dynamic new president who, with a deep understanding of our students and our institution, has made a major commitment to realize the full potential of our

In the spirit of "building community," The Spitzer School has deepened and expanded its global presence, broadened its professional scope, and magnified its community engagement in the past two years

college community. Searches are well underway for several key posts on campus. I expect to be welcoming and introducing to you a permanent dean of the Spitzer School in the very near future. The college is on route to relieving the stresses of the previous few years and the future is sure to be filled with exciting transformations and realignments.

In the spirit of "building community," The Spitzer School has deepened and expanded its global presence, broadened its professional scope, and magnified its community engagement in the past two years - and this effort is central to the stories in this report. The School continues to work toward its mission—to create a just, sustainable, and imaginative future for a rapidly urbanizing planet by developing principled, innovative architects, landscape architects and urban designers who improve the profession, the city, and the world and who generate ideas that advance the practice of architecture.

During this time of rapid global, communal and environmental change, we must consider how we educate our students, while seeking partnerships with individuals and organizations external to our Harlem campus. The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture is out in the world, sending students abroad to Costa Rica, Germany, Spain, and the Maasai Mara in Kenya, and into local communities like Brooklyn and the Bronx to design, to learn, and more recently, to build.

The cover story provides a glimpse of how the School is extending its reach and fulfilling our mission globally, and how the Spitzer School engages the world around it. Students are enrolling in innovative courses. In the past two years, the Spitzer School secured support for the newly advanced studios through partnerships with three organizations who sponsor students and faculty in exciting applied research. The J. Max Bond Center has been completely renewed and transformed. Under the new directorship of Shawn Rickenbacker, the Bond Center, by forging partnerships inside and outside the college, took an active role



The Faculty and Staff at 'The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at The City College of the City University of New York'.

in reshaping New York through projects such as the rezoning of Inwood, Manhattan.

I have met with many alumni and friends – some long-term and enduring, others new - and I am impressed by their desire to connect deeply and meaningfully with each other and with the School. Your commitment is unwavering, and your partnership is essential as the Spitzer School continues to strengthen its presence as a gateway for a diverse and thriving community. Indeed, one of the most important ways Spitzer fulfills its educational mission is to advance practice and improve the world through its network of alumni and friends. To those of you who have offered the School your time, energy, and financial support - on behalf of our faculty, staff, and students, thank you for your dedication. Your commitment shapes the future of architecture and we look forward to continuing to partnering with you. To all of

our alumni who are working to improve the community, the city, and the world, we thank you. Your efforts every day help achieve the School's mission and strengthen Spitzer's city, national, and global impact and visibility.

The generosity and confidence you have shown is at the heart of our ability to keep pace with constant innovations in design and practice worldwide. Thank you for supporting us in this undertaking.

Gordon A. Gebert
Interim Dean and Professor

ABOUT US

OUR MISSION

The School acts in the spirit of the City College of New York's historic Ephebic Oath: "To transmit the city, not only not less, but greater, better, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."



After its founding in the School of Engineering in 1961, first as a small interdepartmental program and later as a department, the Architecture program became an independent school in 1968. In 1969, with the addition of programs in Urban Landscape and Urban Design as allied career alternatives and a completely new curriculum, the School was transformed into the School of Architecture and Urban Design and Landscape Architecture.

The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture is deeply committed to creating a just, sustainable, and imaginative future

for a rapidly urbanizing planet. Through innovative research and interdisciplinary collaboration, the degree programs in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, and Sustainability in the Urban Environment seek to educate a diverse student body to become engaged professionals, both reflecting and enriching the complex communities of local and global environments. The School acts in the spirit of The City College of New York's historic Ephebic Oath: "To transmit the city, not only not less, but greater, better, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

THE ONLY PUBLIC SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

IN NEW YORK CITY

BERNARD & ANNE SPITZER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

450
students

26 full-time faculty
44 adjunct faculty
17 admin staff members

106
degrees
granted in 2018

members on
dean's advisory board **16**

solar
roofpod
& urban
farm **1**

30+
Public Lectures
Symposia & Exhibits Annually

3,000 ft²
model shop & laser lab with
wood-working, milling machines,
and 3D printers

8 Degree
Programs

31 Studios

research &
advisory center **1**

35,000
volumes in our architectural library

2 visiting distinguished
critics each semester

135,000 ft²
building with roof-top amphitheater

TWO YEARS IN REVIEW



LECTURE SERIES FALL 2016



RADICAL MODERN IN BRAZIL SYMPOSIUM



LECTURE SERIES SPRING 2017



LECTURE SERIES FALL 2017



HARRY SEIDER EXHIBITION



LECTURE SERIES SPRING 2018



DELL UPTON SYMPOSIUM

BKSKARCHITECTS WOMEN IN DESIGN NETWORKING

OPEN HOUSE NY: SOLAR ROOF-POD & HARLEM GARDEN

MATERIAL INTERACTIONS SYMPOSIUM

ARCHITEXX RACE + IDENTITY DISCUSSION

SANDY, FIVE YEARS ON: HAS THE CLIMATE CHANGED? LECTURE

FIVE ARTISTS + ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION

METROPHYSICS AND TERREFORM EXHIBITION





SPITZER SCHOOL

BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES. DESIGNING THE FUTURE.

Spitzer School of Architecture is committed to addressing communal, generational, and societal challenges with holistic approaches to educational and project-oriented work. The classroom interaction of ambitious students, experienced faculty, and collaborative professionals empower Spitzer School scholars to experience architecture in congruence with the challenges of our society. Creative thinking, thoughtful decision-making and local and global interaction capacitate our students to grow into the designers of tomorrow.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Spitzer School of Architecture prepares its students to respond to today's greatest issues by teaching them to be civic and global thinkers and problem solvers. Our students engage in projects that aim to improve living conditions for our global and local communities. Their causes vary in outreach, scope, and locality, such as designs for refugee camps that ensure a just and human accommodation, finding solutions to limit the negative communal impact of gentrification, activism in environmental protection by research in combating coastal erosion, or developing interactive learning platforms for sustainable science.



CREATIVITY MEETS STEAM

- Bitsprout -

Bitsprout, an entrepreneurial team of three City College graduates, was founded by Wei Ying Zhang, Jorge Burgos, and Sabrina Cohn. Their team has been awarded the 2016 Zahn Center Innovation Prize for their efforts to develop a learning platform for sustainable science. The aspiring group of two Spitzer School and one Environmental Science student aim to bring a BitPod (prototype) to every science classroom in NYC, inspiring the next generation of scientists.

Their aspiration is to bring STEAM (science, tech, engineering, art, math) closer to the next generation of scholars, scientists and school children in New York City. Their product has three components: the BitPod, a device that grows and monitors plants, featuring pH, temperature, and humidity sensors that record live data and store it wirelessly in an online platform; a platform that allows students, teachers, and parents to access the data and track plant progress; and online lesson plans to be



"Educating young minds became such a fun, special and fulfilling mission. Slowly, with the great help of the Zahn Center, we identified the problems of the underserved and underfunded communities, and after some pivots, we arrived at our current platform and business model."

-Wei Ying Zhang

used in conjunction with the BitPod. Bitsprout won the Standard Chartered Women+Tech4NYC Prize for developing a curriculum and prototype for hands-on indoor agriculture STEAM education for middle and high school students, using small hydroponic-growing systems.

Bitsprout's success story, covered in Forbes Magazine in 2017, illustrates the linkage of local and global roots of Spitzer students and their passion to empower their communities. According to Burgos, "finding creative solutions to the problems that mankind faces today ranging from housing, access to education, proper nutrition and others are key for fostering a proactive body of leaders. My architecture education at the Spitzer School of Architecture has gifted me with the valor to face challenges of any scale."

As Sabrina Cohn reflects, "many studies have shown low performance in STEAM areas in schools across the country. Science is all about curiosity and we want to inspire students to take learning into their own hands through our unique learning platform." Bitsprout wants to inspire curiosity and inquiry of society in STEAM and the natural world around them.

FROM CLASSROOM SCIENCE TO TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION

- Mary Gilmartin -

Mary Gilmartin always had a passion for architecture but it was not until after her bachelor's degree in science and five years of working as a young professional, that she decided to return to school. Her enrollment at the Spitzer School let her grow not only in her new profession, but empowered her to experience and learn from an entire community.

She is in her final year and will graduate with her Masters in Architecture in Spring 2019. Her inspiration is drawn from the student body at Spitzer. One of the major obstacles for students is to balance responsibilities outside the classroom. But it is their drive and ambition that leads to innovative projects and new ideas. "My classmates and my undergraduate students are constantly helping me to shape the way I think about architecture and the world at large."

"Many students come here because it's the only higher education that is affordable to them. Because of this, Spitzer School brings together a larger group of people who see architecture as a means to enact social change, and the school supports that."

Mary is convinced that it is collaboration with faculty and administrative staff, rather than dictation of theory only, that makes the Spitzer School a unique place to grow and learn as a student and designer.

Last summer, Mary interned at Stantec. This year she will complete an internship at STV, enabling her to work on projects and get a feel for how architecture is applied to the world outside of school.

The intersection of studies at Spitzer School paired with professional work experience is what leads students to confidence in the field: "I am currently working on a project that is proposing to use mass timber construction. We learned about this in our Construction Technology class and I used this method of construction in a studio project, so I feel confident at work that I know what I am talking about."



As students we have the vision to use architecture as a means to better the world, from affordable housing, to what our future cities should be, and technology's role in architecture, but we rely heavily on the resources provided by our school. We won't be able to develop these ideas fully without the support of our communities.



LEARNING TO LEAD

- Kamila Jujka (BA in Architecture, 2020) -

I am currently a 4th year undergraduate student, working toward my Bachelor of Architecture and I expect to graduate from The Spitzer School in May 2020.

This school has taught me the importance of leadership. The architectural profession is a collaborative kind. In such, good leadership allows for a better collaboration within teams. It's also shown me the importance of networking through various resources - not only specific resume-based events, but on critiques-firm tours, AIA and AIAS conferences and events. You never know when you will meet a career-changing connection. The Spitzer School has taught me to always be sharp and open for new opportunities in my life.

There's no better place to study architecture than in New York. The ever-changing skyline is inspiration enough for young designers. In my opinion, the Spitzer School provides high-quality

education for its tuition. The opportunities offered through various programs such as study abroad, electives, as well as very active and passionate AIAS chapter, beats any other competing New York City architecture school.

This in connection to my practical experience has changed my outlook. Working at a firm has truly enlightened me on what the architecture profession is about. I have not only been able to advance my architectural skills, but truly learned what working in a professional environment could look like. In school, we are introduced to collaboration and working in groups. However, at a firm, you see with added professionalism and seriousness the job or project developing in a successful manner. That has not only allowed me to appreciate the Spitzer School for its push for group projects, and feel more prepared for actually working within these parameters in my future.

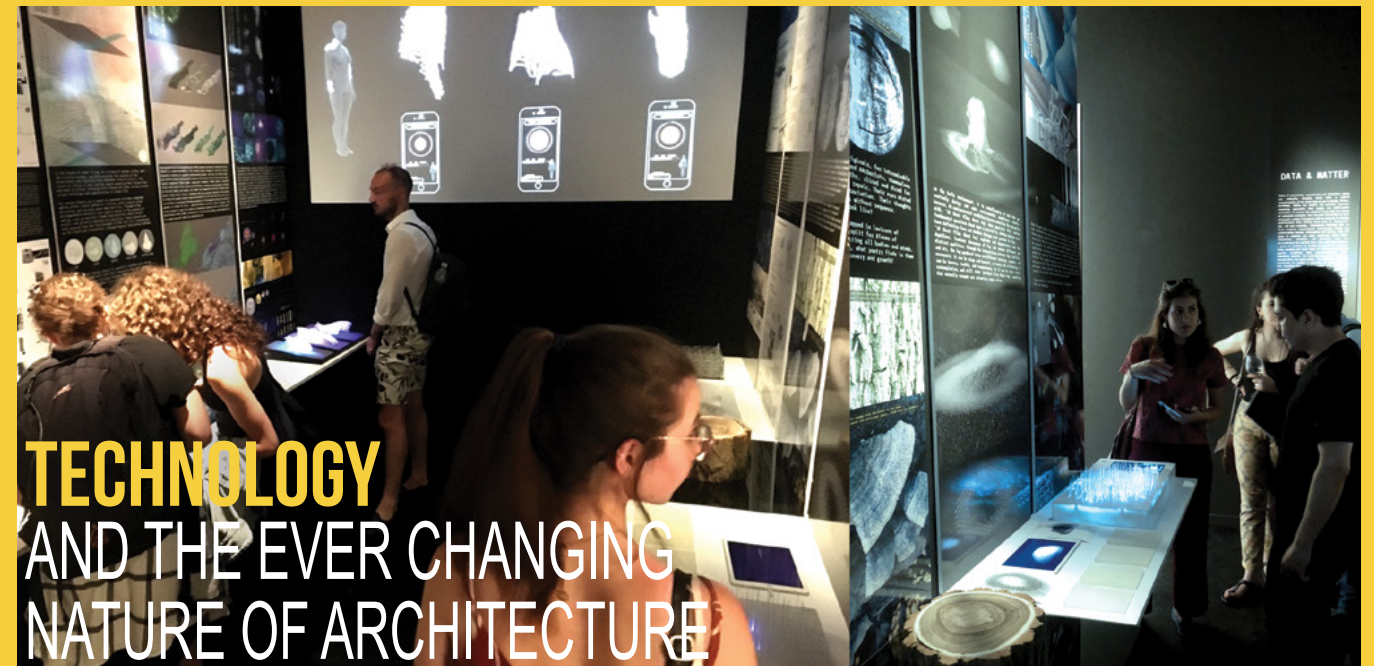
BUILDING A STRONG NETWORK

- Nikki Cheng -

"This summer, I interned at Perkins Eastman and I feel incredibly fortunate to have been surrounded by so many talented people. The practice of architecture can be so different from what I learn in school. I love seeing those who work hard to maintain the realities while incorporating the equally important constraints that are real-life client needs. The great hands-on experience collaborating with development teams to deploy and configure out the design in the healthcare field is a bonus for my career development. Practice in using Revit for the real project will definitely help my future studio work in the coming semester."



The Spitzer School of Architecture offers us great facilities. The spacious studios and the access to all the tools we need for our projects are a huge benefit for studio work. At Spitzer, I am building a strong network with faculty members and fellow students for my future career development.



TECHNOLOGY AND THE EVER CHANGING NATURE OF ARCHITECTURE

FRANK MELENDEZ | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Professor Frank Melendez began teaching at City College in the Fall of 2014, focusing on the use of digital technologies in architectural design and fabrication. He studied architecture at the University of Arizona, a public university, and shortly after started working at the office of Frank O. Gehry & Associates in Santa Monica California, where he became interested in the use of digital design technologies in architecture.

Professor Melendez pursued a Masters of Architecture at Yale, where he expanded his knowledge of architectural history, theory and design. This past summer, in collaboration with Marcella Del Signore (NYIT) and Nancy Diniz (RPI), he co-organized and curated an architectural exhibition titled DATA & MATTER, which features an international group of architects and designers that are using emerging and novel forms of reading and producing spatial conditions that connect and visualize data, responsive systems, and sensing/actuation technologies, through micro and macro scales.

The exhibition takes the opportunity to exhibit a range of projects, side by side, that transform data as an abstraction into spatial and experiential configurations. The exhibition is on display from May 26 – November 25, 2018 in Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy.

It is supported by the GAA Foundation and the European Cultural Center, Time – Space - Existence exhibition, a collateral event of the Venice Biennale.



Currently, Professor Melendez is working on establishing a lab for the Spitzer School of Architecture students and faculty. This lab, called the Material Interactions Lab, MI (I), will provide access to physical computing technologies, such as microcontrollers, sensors, and actuators, in order to design and prototype kinetic, dynamic, and responsive systems.

"I think one of the challenges our students face are the increasing roles of the architect. As technologies continue to develop at a very fast pace, and are continuously progressing, the skill sets and expectations increase. This includes drawing, modeling, BIM, VR/AR, along with changes in construction methods, team/project workflows, construction administration, etc. I believe we try to address this by providing a very well-rounded education for our students and addressing many of these diverse topics and skill sets."

MEET OUR FACULTY

RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRANSMITTING OUR CITY



ALI HOCEK | ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

I have been teaching architectural design at the Spitzer School as an adjunct professor for over twenty years. During this time, I have also been the principal in a private architecture practice. My firm, AC Höcek Architecture, has designed and seen the construction of numerous works for a variety of uses, from houses and apartment interiors, historic restorations and museum exhibitions, to a six-lane bridge and prefabricated buildings. Almost invariably my firm has hired the gifted students from our school.

I studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and the Architectural Association in London. The former derived from principles founded in the Bauhaus and exposed students to various disciplines in the arts. In this sense, architecture was a craft of drawing and the making of things. At the Architectural Association, during a heady time in the 1970s led by Alvin Boyarsky, the school was filled with architects, such as Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, and Bernard Tschumi, who each provided distinct and often differing theoretical positions in architecture. My education certainly influences how I teach, though it is equally formed by the dynamic shared among my colleagues and the parallels and intersections of our own academic and professional positions.

At the Spitzer School, we teach our profession largely in layers and not necessarily in a linear manner, but more often in a cross-referenced network that develops and pursues visceral and intellectual understandings of architecture. This covers the breadth, from the smallest detail of construction to the complex workings of cities, and the histories and theories that informs them. As a collective whole, the faculty does not hold a singular view of our discipline, which adds to the substance of our students' education. Among this weave of knowledge, we also look to involve our students in contributing to effect positive change in emerging events and contemporary places.

Recently my students and I are crafting the design and construction of a community garden pavilion serving the Brownsville neighborhood in Brooklyn. This is among the first of such projects to be designed and built by students in our school. Students in my design studio class completed the first phase of the project in the spring semester of this year and the project is currently with the NYC Building Department for a construction permit. During the semester the students worked with a cadre of in- and out-of-house professional consultants, the NYC Parks GreenThumb, and the

Isabahlia Ladies of Elegance Foundation, a local non-profit that has programs out of four community gardens in Brownsville. When the year-round multi-purpose pavilion is completed in the spring of next year, it will serve to support the various programs offered by the Isabahlia Foundation. Among these are youth arts and crafts programs, as well as adult bee-keeping, canning, and gardening workshops. During the construction phase, the students will work alongside manufacturers, tradespeople, construction managers, and contractors.

The students' exposure to professionals, community leaders, city agency officials, political representatives, and private businesses, combined with hands-on experience, will provide them with a meaningful understanding of the design process and its application in construction than they would receive solely from an academic exercise. It will also impart a greater understanding of the profession's social responsibilities by initiating and supporting positive urban projects in creative and imaginative ways.

The students at The Spitzer School of Architecture are unique as a group not only because of their diverse cultural backgrounds, but also because of their aspirations. These aspirations are illuminated by their backgrounds, but also by the challenges they face in order to obtain an education. Students are creative, they have desire, discipline and drive; they are undoubtedly the pride of their parents, and, I have to say, myself as well. In addition, they have a maturity that might not always be present in such large numbers in a private school.

During the time since I've begun teaching, I've seen two close family members pass away. Each time my students showed me kindness not often seen in others their own age. Perhaps this is because, as so many of them find themselves in the privilege of being between cultures, they have come early to understand the fragile constructs of both life and the social agreements we hold. Perhaps it is because we are each, faculty and student, invested in this wonderful exchange of knowledge and experience that our bonds can run so deeply.

THE CETRARUDDY DESIGN STUDIO AT SPITZER SCHOOL PARTNERING WITH MENTORS AND VISIONARIES

Over the past two years, the Bernard & Anne Spitzer School of Architecture partnered with CetraRuddy, an award-winning architecture, planning and design firm, as part of a newly sponsored architectural studio for students in the Master of Architecture Program.

The CetraRuddy Design Studio in Housing bridges academia and practice – building on a shared ambition to address the challenges and opportunities associated with housing design in New York City. The project displays student engagement on both sides of this collaboration – with a professional team led by Nancy J. Ruddy, John Cetra and Theresa Genovese, and with the academic side – led by Professors June Williamson and Fabian Llonch. Sponsored studios like these are an effective platform for engaging in meaningful dialogue with practitioners in the field. CetraRuddy's generous contribution of knowledge, time and resources has deepened student engagement with the issue of housing in New York City, and more broadly, expanded their horizons as aspiring young professionals.

The studio focuses on the design of multi-unit housing, a core area of architectural design and practice.

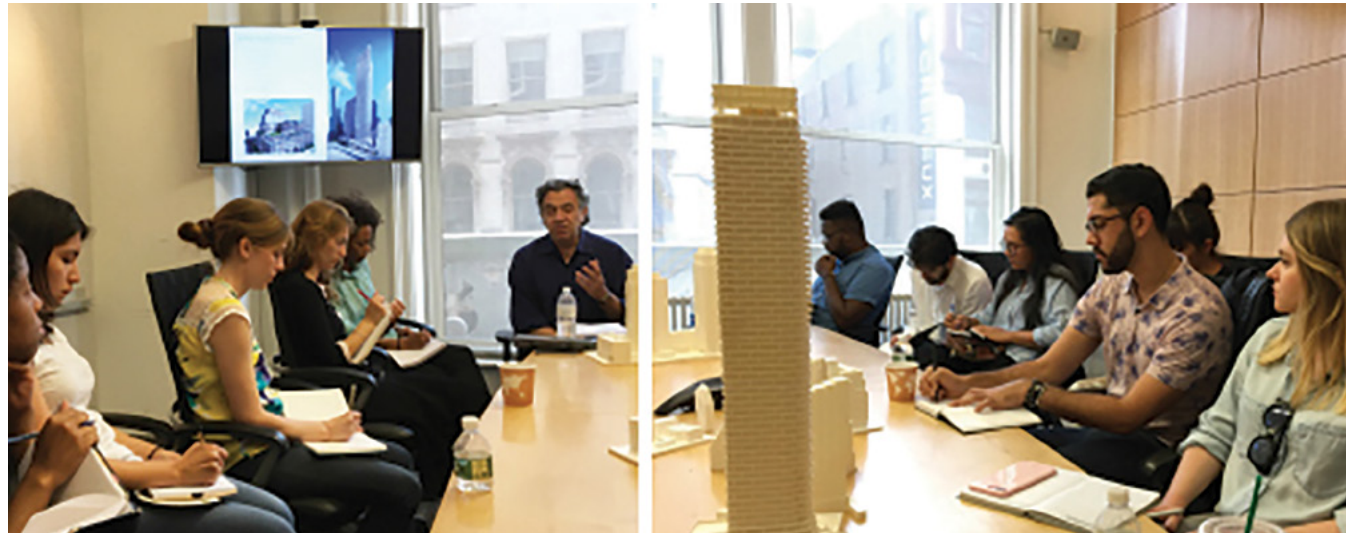


JUNE WILLIAMSON
Associate Professor

"It was gratifying for our students to see firsthand the large and successful architectural practice that they built together and continue to grow into one of the largest and most successful firms in the city, with a particular expertise in housing design."

After all, urbanized areas are mostly made up of residential uses, which make up the built fabric of neighborhoods.

The studio designed buildings for sites on vacant lots on the north shore of Staten Island, an area undergoing a rezoning process positioned for significant new infill development. It might also be considered the "forgotten" borough in New York City, which intrigued us. The project included a kick-off tour and lecture at CetraRuddy's offices; "desk crits" and in depth



feedback at reviews by the architects; an enhanced roster of studio consultants in structural engineering, building envelope, code issues, sustainable design, software training, and housing expertise; a day-long workshop with distinguished guests; and a budget to purchase materials for building high quality models, including 3D prints.

Students involved with the CetraRuddy studio were awarded publications and prizes. Mary Gilmartin and Avi Nagel's project "Stapleton Baugruppen" received a 2018 Student Design Award of Excellence from the New York Council of the Society of American Registered Architects (SARA). David Clark Smith and

Isaac Telio-Bejar publicized "House Proud" for Urban Omnibus, the publication of the Architectural League of New York. The article was inspired by research conducted in studio for the residential building for LGBTQ+ seniors that David designed with Rashidah Green Sherman.

Throughout the two semesters, students and faculty explored the very important relationship between the public and private realms. This investigation went beyond the mere definition of ownership and students designed a series of spaces that offered residents the opportunity for exchange and social interaction.



FABIAN LLONCH
Associate Professor

"Quite often I say that architecture is an act of hope - in this case, it was also an act of exploration, research and optimism. For the students, it was invaluable to experience how a globally successful architecture firm tackles

the issue of housing on an everyday basis. Witnessing how they explore new ways to improve this very challenging typology was truly remarkable."

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY



U THANT ISLAND: AN ARCHITECTURAL INVESTIGATION AND PROPOSAL FOR A FUTURE FEDERAL PRISON FOR 500 INMATES

MARTIN STIGSGAARD | ADJUNCT ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Martin Stigsgaard, Adjunct Associate Professor at the Spitzer School since 2010, challenges students to create innovative ideas that address disparities in our communities. Stigsgaard, originally from Denmark, has over twenty years of experience in architecture. With Voorsanger Architects, Stigsgaard was the lead designer of the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, a national museum in Abu Dhabi, a LaGuardia air traffic control tower, as well as several private residences. As principal at studioSTIGSGAARD, Stigsgaard's has worked on projects located in the US, Asia, and Europe. Most recently, his architecture and exhibition design for a seminal retrospective at Red Bull Arts New York - RAMMΣLLZΣΣ: Racing for Thunder - has been profiled in The New York Times, The New Yorker, Architect's Newspaper, alongside many other publications.

How can architects/architecture affect the discourse and potentially generate a new more successful typology for rehabilitation?

When I began to conceptualize a syllabus for the Spring 2017 Advanced Studio, I realized that I wanted to engage with the controversial issue of mass incarceration in the United States.

Mass incarceration is contentious, made more complex by the fact that it has permeated many layers of our society and culture. It's difficult to fathom a twenty-first-century society treating its weakest and less fortunate members with such a low level of empathy.

My thought process behind choosing U Thant island, as a site for the project, was to diminish the distance between incarceration facilities and individuals' families and communities. I was mindful that remoteness makes inmates invisible to general society and contributes to their continued stigmatization, making them a neglected and forgotten minority. The location, although both abstract and unrealistic to a large degree, served as a platform for the students to explore the core elements of the issue by proposing a future spatial alternative, as well as offering a new typology for rehabilitation. I was inspired by the Bastøy Prison in Norway, located on an island. This facility is designed to alleviate psychological pressure and conflict, and has one of the lowest rates of recidivism. Furthermore, my choice of U Thant island was motivated by its proximity to the United Nations headquarters, which I thought would highlight the notion of incarceration as an urgent issue for the global community. Instead of

obfuscating, I believed it would symbolically expose the domestic realities of abuse, racism, and unfair treatment of minorities and disenfranchised groups in American society.

Students were encouraged to find individuals who had been incarcerated and to gain an understanding of their lives and backgrounds in order to connect to the stories beyond the horizon prescribed by our culturally dictated interpretations of who an inmate is. It was also important that students get a first-hand experience of the current state of the prison system in New York City. I managed to gain access to an operating maximum-security jail located in downtown Manhattan, known colloquially as The Tombs. I alerted the students of what they were going to encounter, but nothing could have prepared them for the experience. The students and I were in equal measure moved and devastated by what we had confronted. The conditions at The Tombs were barbaric at best. At the end, of what I can only describe as a Homeric odyssey into a world that exists parallel to ours, I spoke to the deputy warden, who profoundly shared that anyone, including him, would lose their humanity in these conditions. “Human beings are not meant to be locked up in a cage. It’s only a matter of time before you turn against your captor.”

During the final review, we were privileged to have a panel of activists, defense lawyers, sociologists, and architects to weigh in on the outcome of the projects. I was deeply moved to see that regardless of the students’ background; each expressed their deep passion and commitment to improving the existing incarceration conditions. My prompt to them was simple, re-imagine prison as a humane institution that is sincerely motivated by rehabilitation. Their final design proposals were radical, thoughtful, and full of empathy.

The issues of mass incarceration echo wider problems present in our society. I’m concerned with the lack of diversity within the field, in particular race and gender imbalance. I believe this requires continued attention, alongside a better understanding of the potential barriers that may limit students from accessing, pursuing, and succeeding in architecture. The Spitzer School personifies institutional commitment to diversity by providing access, as well as cultivating and creating conditions that inspire the next generation of architects. I believe that the school’s ethos has built a dynamic student body and faculty, thus generating an extraordinary opportunity for exploring new paradigms in architecture.

I encourage students to grow both academically and professionally. Our students have the capacity, drive, and perseverance that can put them on equal footing with the very best institutions in the world. Hopefully, the studios I teach help elevate the discourse and raise the overall level of discussion, as well as give students tangible skills that will help them compete in the professional field once they graduate.

NANDINI BAGCHEE | ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Nandini Bagchee is an Associate Professor at the Spitzer School of Architecture and principal of Bagchee Architects. Professor Bagchee



has been a part of the faculty at City College since 2008, and teaches design and history within the graduate and undergraduate programs of Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture. Her work has been published in The New York Times, Interiors Now, Urban Omnibus and the Journal of Architectural Education. She is the recipient of grants from the New York State Council of the Arts and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Her research-based design work involves an engagement with activist organizations such as the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, South Bronx Unite and 596 Acres in New York City.

Professor Bagchee teaches architecture in close examination of marginalized communities, local engagement, and community-based design practices. Her teaching introduces students to critical thinking and new methodologies of research that are emerging in cities such as New York, Mumbai and Hong Kong -

that sustain community practices and challenge the status quo. Students are encouraged to develop socially conscious practices with an awareness of historic processes and their geo-spatial outcomes. In her view, both as teacher and architect, civic participation is the key to the equitable development of cities. Amid current debates about environmental justice and access to public space, she aspires to train students at the Spitzer School to detect and solve problems by finding meaning, joy and perspective via participation in discussions that impact the city. She expects that the graduates from City College will play leading roles in the transformation of their built environment.

In 2016, Professor Bagchee facilitated a design studio in collaboration with South Bronx Unite, a coalition of activist groups to design the H.E.ARTS Community Center. This studio engaged the concerns of South Bronx Unite - organizing to combat the rapid rate of development sparked by the recent real estate speculation in their neighborhood. Concerned citizens in this neighborhood have banded together to form the Mott Haven/ Port Morris Community land trust. The land trust is a means to ensure that community gardens, parks and other non-profit spaces continue to thrive in this largely low- and median-income neighborhood within the South Bronx. The trust has identified the importance of physical space to sustain the numerous grassroots organizations that have an impressive track record of progressive social reform. Their pilot project is the re-purposing of a city owned, abandoned health center into a community owned and operated space with offices, meeting areas, culinary arts kitchen, performance halls and classrooms for educational programming.

South Bronx Unite invited City College to design and participate in the “envisioning” of their future social center. The opportunity to repurpose an existing building with its rich history of activist occupancy allowed the students to examine themes of preservation and renovation anew. This civic participation and rethinking of public spaces is a critical aspect of Professor Bagchee’s teaching at the Spitzer School of Architecture.

Her recent research focuses on activism in architecture and the ways in which ground up collaborative building practices provide an alternative medium for the creation of public space within cities. In her new book, Counter Institution: Activist Estates of the Lower East Side (Fordham University Press, 2018) Professor Bagchee examines the parallel histories of three ‘activist

buildings’ in the lower east side from the 1970’s presented against the background of political and economic crises that temporarily devalued property. Urban renewal/ slum clearance followed by the fiscal crises left large pockets of New York City disinvested and abandoned.

Particularly hard hit were areas where recent immigrants, minorities and other low-income groups had settled such as East Harlem, the Bronx, and the Lower East Side. At a not so distant point in time when the municipal government struggled to regulate and maintain these properties, ad-hoc citizen undertakings filled the institutional vacuum by taking over some of these buildings and vacant lots. Artist’s collectives, guerrilla gardeners, social activists and various advocacy groups managed to convert city owned and semi-abandoned properties into places that facilitated self-organization.

Current debates on public space or the lack thereof in cities have mainly focused on accessible open spaces of assembly—that is, parks, squares, and streets. While the concept of a physical commons (in short supply and highly surveilled) is crucial, there is another kind of public space that is just as critical to democracy, one where the temporal actions of public participation are developed into propositions for political action. This space is the office, workshop, or building, where activist groups meet to organize and plan what often appear to be impromptu acts of political participation. In the many debates about public space, this somewhat less visible sphere of participation has not yet garnered attention.

In Counter-Institution, Nandini Bagchee investigates the history and legacy of such spaces and brings visibility to these “Activist Estates”. The book brings the critical relationship between real estate, architecture and community action into focus.

“Our profession (architecture) sits at the intersection of many other disciplines - it calls for creativity as well as technical know-how. Within this matrix of ingenuity and expertise, architects sometimes forget the social aspirations they began with. Our diverse student body, coming from different knowledge bases, challenge our assumptions and keep it real by bringing their own view of the world to the classroom here in New York City.”

GLOBAL COHESION



BUILDING BRIDGES FOR KENYA

ROBIN OSLER | PROFESSOR

Professor Robin Osler has made it her mission during her three years teaching at Spitzer to bridge local and global communities. Her work led to developing a studio program in 2016 to design the master plan for a school in the Maasai Mara in Kenya. The work has evolved into a singular project, an assembly space that will be built by the Maasai community to expand their educational offerings. Two Spitzer architecture students have continued to work with Professor Osler, meeting once a week after class or after work, for the past two years. The team raised the funds to travel to Kenya and present the project to the Maasai village. The most memorable moment of the trip for Prof. Osler was seeing the students speak to the village about the ideas they had developed.

“I watched my students mature before my eyes during the trip and grow into self-assured, confident and courageous ambassadors of our program. It was an incredibly moving and emotional moment for me knowing that I had helped make that happen.”

The Africa Studio was created to expose students to a very different culture and process of building. Spitzer students explored the local culture, precedents of contemporary projects designed and built in Africa by other architects – their cost, the materials, where the funding came from. They examined the geography, the soil, weather, and critical issues facing this particular community.

The idea was to give them a very broad yet specific understanding of where they were working and for whom.

“Our students produced an enormous amount of work, designing dormitories, community spaces, classrooms and bathing areas – a critical component of the project because of the scarcity of water.”

Her team collaborated with local engineers via Skype and teamed up with a nonprofit organization, The Africa Foundation, becoming reliable partners throughout the process. The students laid the groundwork for an extensive intervention in a relatively remote community. The project has since evolved into the design of a pilot project – an assembly space – because the Foundation wanted to start small as an introduction to the community.

The success and impact of the project has created the opportunity for Professor Osler and her students to expand the scope of their future work with the Maasai. The advanced studio team plans to work with The Africa Foundation and the Maasai to raise the funds required to construct this first project, while also forging ahead to develop new programs and projects.

“I see this as the beginning of an exciting partnership with the Africa Foundation and City College. The Foundation has many needs and City College has the talent to help satisfy them. It’s a fantastic opportunity to connect our students to the world in

a positive way. There is the potential to extend this partnership beyond Spitzer and into the other departments of the College creating a mutually beneficial series of programs that expand the experiences of students both here and in Africa.”

The impact of the project has encouraged Robin Osler and her students to expand their efforts in building bridges with the Maasai. The advanced studio team plans to raise more funds to further construct the project.

“Spitzer School trains students to be symphonic thinkers who understand the importance of collaboration to solve problems. It is the best example of a truly democratic culture and those who study here will take that value with them into their professional experiences. That impacts the world.”

THE PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABILITY IN ARCHITECTURE

HILLARY BROWN | DIRECTOR OF M.S. PROGRAM IN SUSTAINABILITY IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT, PROFESSOR

Although on sabbatical for the fall semester of 2018, I’m very gratified to note that this year marks my 10th year teaching at the Spitzer School of Architecture. It also marks nearly a decade of involvement with the interdisciplinary Sustainability in the Urban Environment Master of Science program, developed jointly with the Division of Science and the Grove School of Engineering, where for the past two years I’ve served as Program Director.

Having entered academia relatively late in my career, I bring to both the classroom and the design studio longstanding architectural experience working in both the private and public sectors, the latter where I began to promote sustainability and resilience thinking in both building and infrastructure design. I believe that today, students—graduates and undergraduates alike—across all disciplines must acquire basic environmental literacy and understanding of environmental and social justice issues to help prepare for our planet’s future. Given their uniquely diverse backgrounds, CCNY students especially can and should be meaningfully engaged in these arenas.

An advanced studio, focused in my area of interest – that of public infrastructure—was a recent teaching highlight. Students undertook research, programming and design of an innovative mixed-use campus—community-based facilities, urban agriculture, and parkland—that was to be integrated with new, contextually designed infrastructure: an organic waste recovery facility, located adjacent to Jamaica Bay. One student, initially painfully tentative in her work, to everyone’s delight and fascination, pursued her challenging vision to

arrive at the final review with dazzlingly beautiful and neatly resolved plans and drawings—a project so imaginative that it took my breath away. The rest of the student teams, I’m pleased to add, also produced strong creative work in this studio.

Another highpoint has been my long involvement in the Sustainability in the Urban Environment graduate program, one of the earliest interdisciplinary programs of its kind in the country. While its early enrollments averaged between 15 and 25 students, more recently, we’ve matriculated as many as 35 incoming students. As of June 2018, we’ve awarded 156 degrees. Of our graduates, including two foreign students who were Fulbright recipients, several have gone on to pursue doctoral degrees relating to urban sustainability.

In their places of employment, our graduates are ably equipped to analyze and solve challenging sustainability problems. They currently hold a variety of sustainability-related jobs in private industry, city/state/national government, education, and various non-profit development spheres. I say with confidence that they are highly committed individuals who may occupy real leadership positions as society tackles the substantial challenges wrought by climate instability and increasing socio-economic inequality. With our burgeoning enrollment, we foresee the need to expand our faculty to include a senior scholar to oversee sustainability-oriented research initiatives that can bring research dollars to the program.

My own research interests have expanded to embrace the notion of



the “circular economy”—a coherent framework for urban systems innovation and redesign, directed towards a regenerative economy. Thanks to support from the CUNY Graduate Center, CCNY Grove School, and the Advanced Science Research Center, and in conjunction with the Institute of Advanced Studies in Kőszeg, Hungary (iASK), I led a transdisciplinary team of seven CUNY- and seven Hungarian students, along with faculty colleagues, in a month-long circular economy research initiative in June 2018. The team used systems thinking and ecologically-reflexive planning to envision opportunities for economic and environmental

regeneration of the historic Hungarian town of Kőszeg, Hungary and its immediate bioregion. The pilot project’s deliverable was well received by iASK as well as by the Mayor of Kőszeg. Funding for implementation in the near future is being sought.

“As of June 2018, we’ve awarded 156 degrees of our graduates, including two foreign students who were Fulbright recipients, several have gone on to pursue doctoral degrees relating to urban sustainability.”

TRANSIENT SPACES: BUILDING SHELTER IN CRISIS CONTEXTS STUDENT-LED ARCHITECTURAL SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEE CAMPS IN GREECE

LOUKIA TSAFOULIA | ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Based on data from the UN Refugee Agency, more than 65 million people are displaced by conflict and war worldwide and the past 6 years the number has escalated because of the war in Syria. The Mediterranean basin specifically is crossed every day by large and uncontrolled flows of people of every age. As Europe dithers and the rest of the world keeps its distance, a few countries amongst which, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Greece carry the burden of hosting some four million refugees. Europe’s architecture faults are coming to the fore. Moral values collide with practical concerns, while public opinion fluctuates between compassion and fierce hostility. The prevalence and urgency of

this situation impressed upon Professor Tsafoulia the need to use the design studio environment as a platform for bridging the gap between academic theory and direct social impact by leveraging resources and opportunities across disciplines enabling students to connect directly with engineers, designers and aid workers via lectures and teleconference workshops.

Loukia Tsafoulia pursued architectural engineering at the National Polytechnic School of Athens in Greece, where she is currently a PhD Candidate, and received her Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University with a fellowship from the Gerondelis Foundation. Since fall 2015, Professor

Tsafoulia teaches at the Spitzer School of Architecture at the cross section of humanity, technology and architectural design. Her spring 2017 Advanced Design Studio titled Transient Spaces: Building Shelter in Crisis Context Studio connected architecture with human rights and promoted design projects that could address the refugee crisis in theory as well as provide students with the tools and resources necessary to realize their work amongst communities for whom these projects were conceived.

Loukia’s studio students researched the needs and complexities of the current refugee reception, hosting and housing necessities and developed design strategies for designated refugee camps in Athens. Their objective was to provide innovative spatial configurations of transitional spaces for displaced populations and their host communities to offer a sense of normality and safety in temporary and extreme situations. Overall, the studio developed strategies for disaster response that show economic and social sustainability through community integration strategies and a systems approach. It provided alternative ways for addressing every day, context-based issues that are less dependent on the global relief industry. The studio focused on the various degrees of temporality, and how to best respond to each of these conditions. In Spring 2017, the group of students researched four distinct refugee sites in Athens, Greece in terms of temporality, ranging from hyper-temporal hotspots to refugee camps as well as outside of camp contexts and within dense urban settings. Work produced in the Transient Spaces: Building Shelter in Crisis Context Studio won First Place in the Urban Design category of the international competition Rethinking The Future Sustainability Awards 2017 and was awarded First Prize in the Cities of Tomorrow Competition sponsored by Project Earth 2. Loukia also presented part of this research in June 2018 at the ACSA International Conference in Madrid titled New Instrumentalities. The presentation focused on her ongoing research on the refugee crisis in the context of Greece, intertwined with the process and the experience gained as part of the spring 2017 advanced design studio at the Spitzer School of Architecture. This kind of recognition lends credibility to the educational strategies and success of interdisciplinary courses such as this one.

Her course succeeded in establishing bridges between academic

research and various professionals involved in the humanitarian support mechanisms by placing students in correspondence with representatives of the NGO Danish Refugee Camp DRC-Greece, the Greek Ministry of Immigration Policy and the UNHCR-Greece. This interdisciplinary inquiry motivated the book publication entitled “Transient Spaces”. Transient Spaces developed out of the work produced during the Spring and Fall of 2017 in Advanced Design Studios was taught respectively by Loukia Tsafoulia and Suzan Wines at the Spitzer School of Architecture. These two courses shared a desire to address urban policy and planning concerns caused by the recent escalation in foreign migrations towards Europe and an interest in developing a teaching methodology that bridges the gap between academic research, the development of design skills and the execution of humanitarian activities on the ground. The Transient Spaces book brings together a sample of the most successful projects from both studios in direct dialog with related work by professionals and academics working in the NGO, refugee and social impact disciplines. It presents a range of attitudes around the concept and implication of transience through the work of academics, historians, artists, architects, planners and humanitarian relief professionals. The publication of the book will expose the authenticity, passion and innovative thinking behind these projects to a larger audience, hopefully setting a precedent for more cross-campus interdisciplinary collaborations with social impact aspirations. The publication of Transient Spaces is conceived and organized by Loukia Tsafoulia and Suzan Wines with help from Samantha Ong, Emir Abdul Emir and Juan Vallejo,



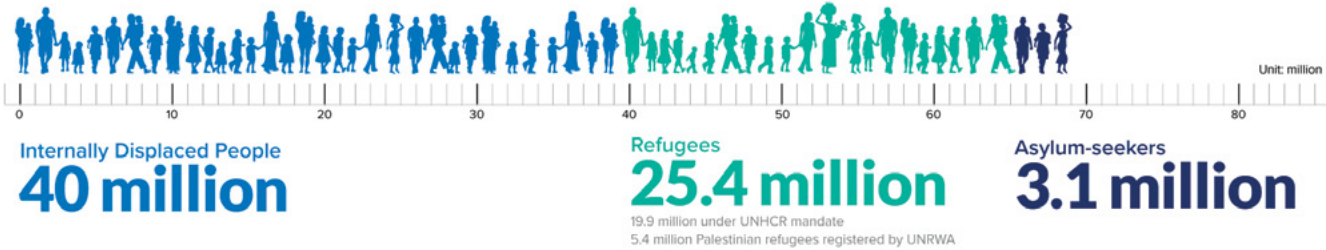
“I choose to teach in the Architecture Program at City College because of my appreciation for the cultural diversity amongst the student body and belief in CUNY’s integrity and mission of providing higher education for all and promoting a just, sustainable, and imaginative future for our rapidly urbanizing planet.”

all recent SSA graduates, and the support of Department Chair, Julio Salcedo.

“I choose to teach in the Architecture Program at City College because of my appreciation for the cultural diversity amongst the student body and belief in CUNY’s integrity and mission of providing higher education for all and promoting a just, sustainable, and imaginative future for our rapidly urbanizing planet. The years I have taught at The Spitzer School have been challenging socio-politically within the United States and across the globe; From the ongoing global refugee crisis,

to environmental issues, to a political scene that many of us see with skepticism, the context of academia and specifically architectural education is continuously challenged in terms of ethical and social imperatives. To that end, I feel that the Spitzer School of Architecture has continuously questioned its own structures to become more resilient to these new realities through a multiplicity of ways that vary from curriculum updates with the inclusion of directed seminars and the advanced options design studios, to the organization of lectures series and public events that engage in a continuous dialog across disciplines and theoretical viewpoints.”

68.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide



Where the world’s displaced people are being hosted

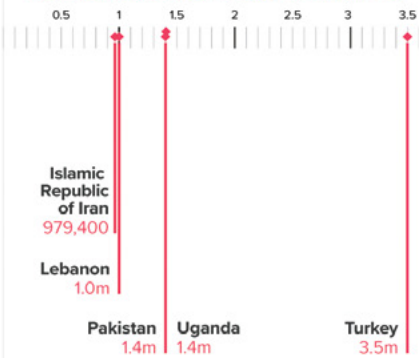


85 per cent of the world’s displaced people are in developing countries

57% of refugees worldwide came from three countries



Top refugee-hosting countries



10 million stateless people

102,800 Refugees resettled

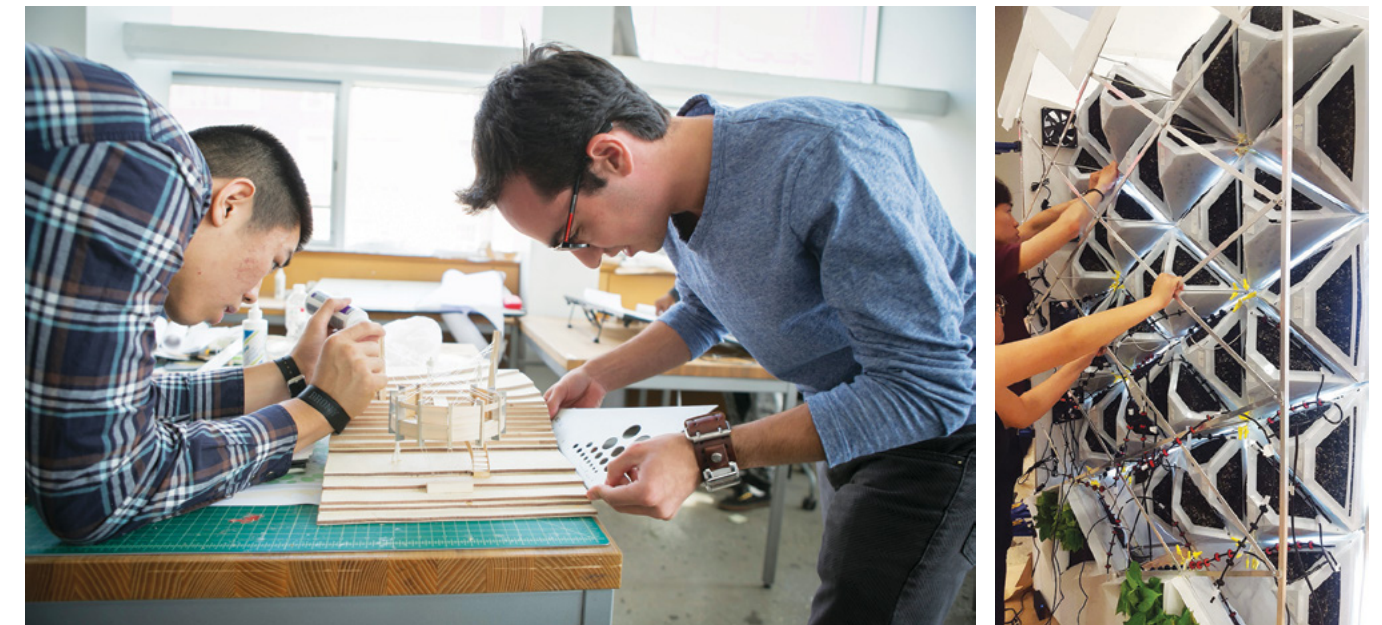
44,400 people a day forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution

11,517 staff
UNHCR employs 11,517 staff (as of 31 May 2018)

128 countries
We work in 128 countries (as of 31 May 2018)

We are funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions, with 87 per cent from governments and the European Union and 10 per cent from private donors

FACULTY RESEARCH, AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



AWARD OF CUNY INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH GRANT CONNECTING ARCHITECTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY

AHU AYDOGAN | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Ahu Aydogan an Assistant Professor teaching construction technology, design, and research at City College since 2014. She conducted interdisciplinary design research as a HASS Fellow at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Center for Architecture Science and Ecology (CASE), where she received her Ph.D. in Architectural Sciences in 2012. Her current research facilitates the interdisciplinary design of sustainable systems and technologies for integration within the built environment. She addressed the complexity involved in the management of architectural design problems which provided her an intimate understanding of the architectural design process, from the viewpoint of the architect and client, as well as the environment. In collaboration with Elizabeth Biddinger (Professor at The Grove School of Engineering), Professor Aydogan received a \$40,000 endowed CUNY Interdisciplinary research grant to

support the continuation of their research. The title of their grant is “Plant-Based Air Filtration using Engineered Growth Media: Formaldehyde Adsorption Dynamics.”



“I am very proud to witness a student’s development from the time they are a freshman to their very own graduation day. Their knowledge and confidence grows day by day and it is amazing to see them graduating with all of that experience. They have lots of different stories in their own journeys and they have an ambition to be better in their own profession. Even though they are

architectural students, our scholars will be able to work with interdisciplinary groups and bring in a diverse skill set that prepares them for a professional career.”

Our students come from different economic and social environments. Most of them need to work to support their education and families. It is very hard to work while focusing on school, especially if you are an architecture student. However, I am always inspired by our student energy and motivation while they are focusing on different things and responsibilities at the same time. Especially for me, growing up in a culture in which family support matters until you graduate is very encouraging. Our school, including all faculty and staff, is very sensitive and concerned with these issues. There is no barrier between faculty,

staff, and students. If any student needs help economically or socially, they will address the student issues first, which makes the Spitzer School unique.

In my opinion, everything is a learning process. The Spitzer School of Architecture is the first full-time teaching experience I have had in my life. I always see my students as my friends and collaborators with mutual respect at the heart of our relationships. I believe they see me the same way and I believe they can learn better this way. I see their continuous energy and motivation, beautiful comments and questions to the lectures and projects. Since I know and see some of their lives and how ambitious they are in this life, it gives me additional motivation to pursue projects that we are working on.

THE FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

JUNE WILLIAMSON | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

In June 2018, Associate Professor June Williamson was elected At-Large Director of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), which provides a forum for ideas in architectural thought, education, and research. The association includes more than 500 member schools and over 5,000 faculty across North America. One of her strategic missions for her tenure on the board is to promote inclusion and diversity on all levels - a work environment that is essential to Williamson, reflecting almost half the student body of Spitzer with a minority background.

What does your new role at ACSA include?

I have recently been elected to the Board of Directors, so I will be one of eleven elected positions from all the architecture schools in North America, along with one Public Director and one student from AIAS, to direct our shared organization in coordination with ACSA staff.

The ACSA currently has 133-member schools and 5000 members. How do you envision the ACSA growing under your combined leadership?

One objective is to increase the impact of the organization for

the member schools and their faculty. Another is to broaden the membership of the ACSA and to think more about connections to schools of architecture around the world. The ACSA is looking to forge more international connections by sending North American students to study abroad and bringing international students here. One of the things that attracted me to run for the position was that the board was recently changed from a regional structure to one that expands the geographic impact of the elected positions.

I want to touch on your body of research and how you see it informing your agenda at the ACSA.

There are three committees and I hope to serve on one of those, the Research and Scholarship committee, the Education committee, or the Leadership committee. The Leadership committee is spearheading research into the international engagement issues.

The Education committee is deeply involved in looking at equity and diversity with respect to faculty and students. I could see myself getting involved in those kinds of projects. Of course, research and scholarship is what I do. I'm continuing to work on my own research on retrofitting suburbia, and am well into a new book on that topic. We will see where that leads at the ACSA.

What additional trends do you see shaping the future of the ASCA?

I recently participated in the ACSA Annual Meeting in Denver. One topic that was put on the table at a panel session was the question of urbanism and urban design in professional architectural education. There are many highly regarded separate Masters programs in urban design that are pursued as a separate degree, but there is little framework, in the form of requirements, or credit given to schools that teach urbanism within the architectural curriculum in accredited degree programs.

It is being taught in studios and it is increasingly understood as a key knowledge area for architects in a globalizing world with all the pressures of energy use, climate change, growing populations, and rapid urbanization.

Based on the ACSA strategic plan for 2016-2019, what will happen moving forward?

I don't know yet, but this is an exciting time to be on the board because I imagine I will be very much engaged with drafting the next strategic plan.

La Sagrada Família—Gaudí's Unfinished Masterpiece: Geometry, Construction and Site Exhibition hosted by The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at The City College of New York



MEET OUR ADMINISTRATION

STUDENT SUPPORT BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



MICHAEL MILLER



ERICA WSZOLEK



HANNAH BORGESON

AT THE CORE OF OUR MISSION, THIS SCHOOL IS A COMMUNITY, JOINING FORCES AND KNOWLEDGE AND PROVIDING A HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR SCHOLARS.

MICHAEL MILLER | DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

I received my BFA in Theatre from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in 2003. I was a professional actor for many years. During my time at NYU, I worked in student affairs. I worked Off-Broadway, in film, and television. A few years ago, I decided to leave the business for a while and return to school. I took a few post-bachelor courses here at CCNY and found a job in Human Resources. Eventually, I was asked to apply for a new position at the Spitzer School as Director of Operations. It was a fantastic opportunity to combine all my skills and serve a new community of students.

My students are incredibly accomplished, brave, strong, smart, and persistent people. I am constantly amazed how they juggle school, family, work, and life's daily struggles with their course load here. I have learned that we can never make assumptions about people – students can be very private and we think of them in one way, but they have many facets. I love the mission of our school, I love to see the work and the excitement that goes into the students' work.

What makes Spitzer School unique is that our program is embedded in the urban environment. We offer a curriculum and

design approach that is deeply rooted in the community and the city. We also are the only public school of architecture in the city. We are proud of the affordability and the quality of the education you can receive here.

ERICA WSZOLEK | EXECUTIVE ASSOCIATE TO THE DEAN

Our school has provided me both with an academic path and professional experience. I obtained my degree and first work experience in directing the Office of On-Campus Student Employment, a Human Resources initiative here at City College. Currently, I am the Executive Associate to the Dean and manage the day-to-day operations of the school. I troubleshoot and support the administration, our students, and faculty on behalf of the Dean. I manage student-focused initiatives like scholarships, internships, job placement, and special fundraising initiatives. In addition, I work on special events, programming, marketing and public relations.

CCNY has changed my entire life. I found a place where I was helped to succeed and in return I have been able to give back to students who are just like me - many are working adults with family obligations and struggles some of us can't even begin to imagine. The Spitzer School, I work every day to break down

those obstacles for our students even if that means just lending an ear to a student who has had a tough day.

Every student at the Spitzer School wants to succeed in spite of the many challenges they face. I believe in each and every one of our

five graduate programs. She helps students through the initial application process and then serves as their academic advisor. Hannah also works closely with faculty, including planning events for recruitment and professional development, website content



scholars and do whatever it takes to help them achieve their goals. If a student is suffering through mental health issues, I work with the student to connect them with various resources on campus but also to create a care plan with their faculty and advisor to relieve them of school pressure so they can focus on their health and well-being which is paramount. If they have financial needs, we look for resources to bridge this gap so they can successfully complete the program.

Reassuring them that they are cared for and valued by every single person in the administration and faculty - that makes a difference in a young person's mind. Personalization and genuine concern is key to learning. CCNY and CUNY fit my values and give me purpose everyday.

"Each student is different and so are their needs. I strive to understand those needs and how to best serve them in my capacity."

HANNAH BORGESON

| GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES MANAGER

Hannah directs graduate student recruitment, enrollment, advising, and support services and ongoing outreach efforts for the school's

management, meeting with current and prospective students, tracking and reporting on data, and collaborating with colleagues within the school, across campus, and across the university to share best practices and improve the level of service.

"Collaborating with student organizations is a lot of fun, and together with other administrators and City College's Career and Professional Development Institute (CPDI), we have created a robust professional development series that has really paid off for job placements and industry connections for our students."

There is a strong sense of working toward a common good. We take CCNY's Ephebic oath to heart ("To transmit the city, not only not less, but greater, better, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us") as well as the school's mission of creating a just, sustainable, and imaginative future. We also seek to infuse the design profession – historically white and male – with people from many different perspectives and backgrounds. There's always room for improvement, but we also have a lot of successes to celebrate during the course of the year, and it is always nice when we take a moment to appreciate our accomplishments – and especially those of our students and alumni."

OUR ALUMNI SHAPING OUR COMMUNITIES

A PIPELINE FOR GROWTH

MENTORING AND EMPOWERING - FROM ALUMNI TO GRADUATE

- Venesa Alicea -

Venesa Alicea, Alumni President understands the importance of alumni giving back to students. “Alumni have made an impact in mentoring and developing me when I was a student and now it is my turn to give back.”

Under her leadership the CCNY Architecture Alumni Group has focused on recognizing faculty and alums for service work and mentorship. Venesa chose CCNY to pursue her passion for architecture after graduating from Brooklyn Technical High School. “CCNY is not only the most affordable, but it is the most diverse school of architecture and the only NAAB accredited program in the city. For me it was the obvious choice.”

Venesa worked as a lifeguard on campus while pursuing her degree which allowed her flexibility to attend college full time-while providing her a way to pay for her education. Having close ties to the school opened up a world of opportunities to her. In her third year, she secured a summer internship with DASNY as a project manager working on the Baruch Vertical Campus. In her fourth year, she had a life-changing opportunity to study abroad in Barcelona as a David Werber International Travel Fellow.

The program, currently in its 17th year and subsidized by architecture alum David Werber '74, helped her becoming an advocate and leader. The exposure helped her to understand the amount of impact our alums can have on current students, which led to her involvement with the Alumni Group while she was still a student. In 2014, after working very closely with award-winning architect and interior designer and Principal of Carol Kurth Architecture, PC, Carol Kurth she was appointed president.

A registered architect in New York State, Venesa is wholly committed to civic architecture, and encourages community engagement through design practices. Her interests converge in architecture and public policy where good design, both sustainable

and socially conscious, can influence the development of buildings, communities, and neighborhoods within our city. She is an adjunct assistant professor at the CCNY Spitzer School of Architecture, where she also serves as the Architect licensing advisor. Venesa is currently in the process of starting her own architectural practice that blends her interest in social justice and community design with sustainability and resilience.

She was formerly an Associate at Dattner Architects, where she worked for over 11 years on a diverse range of projects including schools, community centers, and sustainable affordable housing. Venesa recently completed the 2014-2017 term on the AIANY Board of Directors as the Alternate Director for Professional Development, is a past Co-Chair of the AIANY Diversity & Inclusion Committee and AIANY Emerging New York Architects Committee, and former Advisor for the AIANY Women in Architecture committee.

Through her leadership roles with the AIA, CCNY Architecture Alumni and beyond she is known to be a tireless advocate for diversity and professional development of students and emerging architects. Looking ahead, the alumni group is working on expanding its alumni network by increasing its efforts to locate and engage alumni that the group has lost contact with over the years.



“The CCNY Architecture Alumni Group is just beginning to harness the power of our network. CCNY works hard to provide access and a talent pipeline for a profession that has long lacked representation of both women and people of color and there is more work to be done. Our alumni network, once engaged and activated, can make a true impact “

A SPITZER GRADUATE NOW DESIGNING FOR GOOGLE

- Chrisoula Kapelonis -

I am Chrisoula Kapelonis and I am an architect, a designer, a strategist and a futurist. My work focuses on reimagining the human experience through crafting new human-building interfaces. I graduated from Spitzer School in 2014 with a BA in Architecture, but that was only the middle of my story. I have two Master's degrees – one in Media Arts and Sciences from the MIT Media Lab and a Master of Architecture II from the Harvard Graduate School of Design (2016). My educational journey is winding, mostly because I was constantly questioning what I truly wanted to pursue.

I started my journey at Pratt Architecture in 2007, with the assumption that I was going to be an architect. But after many late nights, and design sprints, I came to the realization that I wasn't learning how to design for people, but how to design for sculpture and patterns. I was interested in the human experience, not in the architecture of aesthetic. I transferred to Spitzer School to start over as an architecture student. I didn't know it then, but the following five years would be the most defining time to date. My experience at Spitzer School was truly extraordinary — the students I bonded with, the faculty I became inspired by, and the staff support that has helped elevate my pursuit to heights I could have never imagined. This was the way that architecture school should be taught – with the freedom to experiment, sensitivity towards human experience, and a diverse pool of people to learn from.

As I wrote my thesis at Spitzer School, I knew that I was interested in continuing the investigation about space and human experience, so graduate school seemed like the obvious right choice. I spent my entire two years at Harvard immersing myself in design, and approaching space through many mediums – wearables, system design, products, materials – not just buildings. This led me to question how technology, married with design, can facilitate even newer experience with space.

After learning how to program and prototype, I decided to apply to MIT's Media Lab to continue this investigation in a world outside of the walls of architecture school. During my time in the City Science Group, I was able to work on a diverse set of projects that crafted new human-building interactions through materials, responsive environments and sensor networks. Because of this work, I was able to start to marry spatial experience with emerging technologies, which let me to my current position at Google. I will be working as an Interaction Designer on the Google Assistant team and look forward to seeing where this new phase will lead me to explore the



“The experience I had at City College helped me set the strongest foundation for my future, and allowed me to really flourish in a way that would have never happened elsewhere. And it was because of this strength that I felt enough courage to apply to Harvard, and eventually MIT.”

future of space and the built environment

The beautiful thing about Spitzer School is that it is an affordable program with an Ivy-League education. The things I learned and the people I learned from were some of the most incredible minds I have encountered. But being a public university is a double edged sword – not having the budget of a private university is probably the biggest challenge to the students.

Spitzer School has inspired me because it gave me the right tools and freedom to pursue the curiosities I was interested in about architecture. It allowed me to learn from such a diverse set of people with varying backgrounds, and receive an education that extended its reach into the city, out of the classroom.

Some of the most memorable moments I had during my studies were twofold—they were during the trips I had outside of the classroom, and during the late-night conversations I had with my peers about architecture. I had the wonderful opportunity to visit Detroit with Elisabetta Terragni and the J. Max Bond Center to engage in the conversation during the Bruner Loeb Forum on Legacy Cities. It was one of the most insightful and riveting experiences as I worked and studied around Detroit, and experienced the city and its brilliant people and places. Having the chance to extend my education to outside of the classroom was immensely valuable.

Spitzer is very well positioned as an institution for students to craft unique solutions to and become increasingly involved with issues that are at the forefront of conversations around the built environment. So often, there are incredible collaborations that occur between students who would have never otherwise had a chance to work together had the school not been a public school. During my time at Spitzer School, I have met people from around the world, and truly learn from them.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

We are aware of our position as the only state- and city-funded architecture school within New York with a proud history of civic engagement. In a few different studios, I have pursued to bring the design students in direct contact with communities that are confronted with displacement. Students have worked hands on with organizers and residents in NYC neighborhoods to design and develop proposals for community run, community controlled spaces to counter gentrification and create a public forum.

Nandini Bagchee

The Spitzer School, along with the entire college, has experienced serious financial challenges over the past decade intensifying over the past several years. Like public universities throughout the U.S., CUNY and the City College have faced declining public assistance. Though to a lesser degree than many states, New York has gradually reduced its financial support, allowed only very modest tuition increases, and put various restrictions on us which have further weakened our financial situation – particularly for funding in support of day-to-day instructional and support operations.

The college has been hit harder than most colleges in the CUNY system and several CCNY divisions have been effected far more deeply than the Spitzer School.

At the Spitzer School we have carefully optimized total enrollment and remained resolute in maintaining a stable mix of graduate and undergraduate populations, strived to keep student services at adequate levels, and retained, and even added modestly to, our excellent and dedicated staff and faculty.

Nevertheless, we have been seriously hampered in many efforts to advance and have been forced to curtail a number of initiatives. We have struggled to keep class sizes manageable and to keep the condition of equipment and facilities and other day-to-day baseline instructional and research support from deteriorating below acceptable levels.

Future prospects are not encouraging. A recent labor agreement gave 10-14% salary and benefit increases to faculty and staff. Negotiations are underway which will undoubtedly result in additional gains for staff and faculty at the same time the university is mandating decreases in workload. While these actions are welcome and deserved, and excellent for recruitment and retention of our best faculty and staff, the associated costs are not being offset in any way by increased state subsidies. On the contrary, funding levels are sinking.

There is little relief in sight from the traditional sources. State contributions to the colleges have not only decreased but have been shifting over the last decade from direct institutional support

to increased student assistance which the college ultimately receives in the form of tuition and fees. But there are so many restrictions and conditions placed by the state on students in return for this support, that the slightest problem in advising, course offerings, or in students' personal situation can cause them to lose state benefits, often resulting in cessation of their progress – sometimes permanently – a terrible loss to the student and her family and a major lost opportunity for the profession.

Also, many students are in precarious financial, familial, and living situations. Even the smallest disruption in any of these realms has a significant negative, and sometimes a critical, effect on their ability to learn and to continue. This is particularly critical in the Spitzer School because we offer most required courses only once each year, so even a brief interruption in a students' progress can easily lead to their losing an entire year in their progress toward a degree.

We have successfully pursued several means of meeting the financial challenges – some innovative and new to the Spitzer School and some traditional. We have brought some efficiencies to instruction as well as some support operations and the pursuit of student scholarships and other support has been increased. In addition, financial sponsorship of studios, garnering of industry and corporate support, and development of professional partnerships are new approaches at which we have been successful and will continue to actively pursue and expand. We have been successful in obtaining capital funds for some major improvements and upgrades and we have been fortunate to receive in-kind and other non-traditional contributions.

But the major and long-term key to preserving and enhancing the quality and profile of the school – to continue increasing the intrinsic value of the Spitzer Degree and providing the very best in professional education – is expanded philanthropic support. The accompanying list of donors indicates the firm foundation on which the Spitzer School currently stands. Further, the depth and breadth of the list clearly signifies great potential for future philanthropic initiatives on behalf of the Spitzer School and our unique and deserving students – the future leaders of our design professions.

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