Dear Colleagues,

We are excited to share with you our annual ‘yearbook’ for the 5th Design Futures Student Leadership Forum. We publish a yearbook each year as a way to 1) provide contact information to help the participants stay in touch as they build their professional and personal networks, 2) to chronicle the activities that occurred in the Forum, and 3) to share the feedback we received in the post-Forum survey from students and faculty participants.

We were thrilled to be hosted by a wonderful group of colleagues at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, and in-particular would like to thank Jim Lutz, James Wheeler, and Tom Fisher from the College of Design for their hard work and enthusiasm throughout the year as we put all the pieces in place to welcome 65 students and 35 faculty and practitioners for five days of shared learning. These five days – May 22 to May 26 – once again saw many opportunities for students to learn new skills and sharpen existing knowledge as they worked towards their goals of increasing the impact of their social justice and equity driven work.

The 65 students came from 12 participating schools. Of those schools 10 were returning participants to Design Futures and two – the University of Cincinnati and the University of Pennsylvania – were participating for the first time. This yearbook conveys the new faces brought into the network, the new content shared at the Forum, and reflects on programming explicitly meant to help students better understand the challenges of structural racism and implicit bias that inform their work.

The sense of enthusiasm to develop new skills and the commitment to the advancement of designing for equity in our society is real and contagious each year at Design Futures, and we hope this document conveys this environment that all attendees created collectively.

As coordinators of the forum our guiding principles remain unchanged: striving to build the next generation of leadership in the emergent Public Interest Design field; continuing to diversify the ecosystem of PID in terms of discipline, background, race, gender, and scale; elevating the rigor and critical capacity of PID curricula; and curating a national network of thought leadership drawn from contributing universities and practitioner faculty committed to the advancement of the field.

As we do each year, we learned a great deal from the feedback we received informally at the Forum and specifically through the online survey we sent out after the Forum. We use this information to critically examine how the Forum is structured each year and to make adjustments as we build more institutional
knowledge and experience. The survey results are summarized here, and will be considered carefully in full this fall as we look toward next year’s Forum and its programming.

We have had many exciting developments within the organizational structure at Design Futures over the past year and we are excited about the opportunities that will continue to grow out of these changes. The two most important changes we made are 1) we have a formal fiscal sponsorship relationship with the Brooklyn based Center for Urban Pedagogy, and 2) we established an advisory board to broaden the knowledge and experience base that informs our outreach and programmatic work. As we look forward to Design Futures 2018 we will start to institutionalize, more visibly, some of the positive impacts of having the support of this amazing group of people.

Finally, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to the incredible network of people that have co-created and shaped Design Futures over the preceding years. While some people have been particularly generous with their time and knowledge, we believe that every attendee over five years has contributed to where we are now and the community we are building that is committed to critical discourse and real change in our world. That community now includes 295 student alumni, over 80 academic and practitioner faculty, representing around 30 degree programs at universities across North America, as well as thought leaders from multiple small and large private practices. We are excited to continue to build our collective knowledge and to hold each other accountable for the important work we do together to ensure that design and planning disciplines are great contributors to addressing the complex and wicked problems of our time.

Sincerely,

Dan Etheridge  
Program Director  
Co-founder Design Futures

Barbara Brown Wilson  
Co-founder Design Futures

Sarah Wu  
Co-founder Design Futures
## Schedule

### MAY 22
- 1:30 pm  Intro and Welcome
- 2:00 pm  Leading with your Personal Self
- 3:15 pm  Design as Protest
- 6:30 pm  A Bridge Across the Divide: Changing the Conversation on LGBTQ Rights
- 7:30 pm  Opening Reception

### MAY 23
- 9:00 am  The Bigger Issue
- 12:00 pm  Power, Privilege, and Positionality
- 4:30 pm  Designing for Justice, Storytelling for Impact
- 6:00 pm  Faculty Reception

### MAY 24
- 9:00 am  Radical Inclusion
- 12:00 pm  Minnesota Design Center Tour
- 1:00 pm  Prototyping in the Built Environment
- 5:00 pm  Careers in PID: Panel Discussion
- 7:30 pm  Faculty Planning Dinner
**MAY 25**  
8:30am  *Financing Community Development*  
*Community Based Participatory Research*

11:30 am  Twin Cities Panel & Discussion Lunch

1:00 pm  Local Day

**MAY 26**  
9:00 am  Student-Led Open Mic

10:30 am  Reflections & Leading Forward
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dfstudentforum.org
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The principles of Community Based Participatory Research are extremely applicable to Community Engaged/Public Interest Design and in this workshop Assata Richards will define the practice, the principles and methodology. Specifically, CBPR is a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings; and begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community.

Dr. Richards and Jessica will talk about how these values and methods can be applied to design practice and will draw from their experience working with urban planners and architects. Through this analysis student will learn how to create reciprocal partnerships with residents and/or community organizations with built-in accountability structures.

“Bridging Community Stakeholders through Creative Placemaking” will share and teach [bc]’s Activating Vacancy (AV) process and principles for working with artists to creatively engage residents in their community’s history and future. [bc] AV highlights regional assets, addresses cultural challenges and uplifts narratives of historically underserved populations within a given geography to strengthen community ties and advance cultural identity therewithin. These creative placemaking projects work to bridge diverse stakeholders around shared artistic goals determined by the community to establish and strengthen civic engagement and neighborhood cohesion.

Students will also learn [bc]’s six core methods of work that are utilized within the AV process (Informing, Analyzing, Mapping, Activating, Making and Storytelling). Designing a successful creative placemaking process is a valuable skill for community-engaged designers. We believe that the AV process can be utilized as an innovative and collaborative community development tool, independently or as part of a larger initiative.

Anti-public interests are always part of politics at every scale. Nevertheless, they have been emboldened and mobilized by the Trump administration and are likely to be louder, more powerful and more destructive to the public interest.

With such a realization a question should always be on the minds of public interest design practitioners: how can a specific design project have a positive impact on the policies and systems that need be maintained to support the broader public interest? In other words: “What is the bigger issue?” What are the structural conditions that need to change to have a larger public benefit than that of a single project?
THE BIGGER ISSUE,
(Continued)

Jane Jacobs said, “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” So, how do we seek out and activate diverse voices in the design process? This session will highlight strategies for community building that have been developed by D.R.E.A.M. Builders, an education program that introduces youth from underrepresented backgrounds to design-related careers, and Workshop Architects, a firm that is nationally known for its participatory approach to university campus design. D.R.E.A.M. Builders guides youth through design-build workshops that concentrate on bringing ideas to fruition. Workshop Architects enlists stakeholders in creating a shared vision for their communities, made joyful through collaborative exchange and suffused with curiosity about what makes places beloved. Workshop strives to understand a community as a social ecology through participatory mapping and other techniques. This session will describe both approaches and their implications for community planning and design.

Workshops

RADICAL INCLUSION

Experience Tools and Strategies to Invigorate Community Engagement

Angie Tabrizi and Nick Robinson

The workshop leaders will frame the concept of ‘the Bigger Issue’ by explaining a long-term, allied partnership between the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio and Moore Community House. For over 90 years Moore Community House has been working in Biloxi at the local scale and within the state of Mississippi at the bigger scale to advocate for low-income women and children. The Gulf Coast Community Design Studio has a shorter tenure of nearly twelve years, and has worked with Moore Community House in many ways during its entire operation, which started in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. One of the programs that brings the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio together with Moore Community House is the Women in Construction Program. For the past nine years Women in Construction has trained and helped over 250 low-income women get jobs in the Gulf Coast building construction and ship building industry. The program impacts the lives of its female students through job training and empowers women by helping them gain their GED, get out of abusive relationships and create cross cultural bonds. 70% of the women have gained employment that provides self-sufficient wages. The Gulf Coast Community Design Studio works in partnership with Women in Construction to help teach professional skills and to create building projects for the students to work on. Both organizations strive to serve the low-income households of the Gulf Coast and are involved in various local and state efforts to provide employment training, child care, housing, and access to programs and resources.
She is a born leader... When we hear or use a phrase like this, we suggest that there is a predetermined set of personal traits that make up a successful leader and if some people do not have those traits they might as well settle for being very good followers. This workshop will establish the position that though leadership is intensely personal, there is no recipe of characteristics that make an authentic leader. The workshop will explore leadership types and establish this essential formula: LQ=f(SQ). [just kidding] this essential statement:

The quality of leadership is a function of the quality of oneself. (Kouzes and Posner)

Following a brief presentation discussing in more detail the above statements, the workshop will guide the participant through a series of exercises that will generate a personal vision statement for each person.

Designers typically receive little formal education about the role of external communications in their work, often leaving this critical element of a project to outside public relations specialists and journalists without deep connections to the people and social justice concerns that are at the center of a community-engaged design project. But in today’s world, where civic conversation increasingly take place online and across multiple mediums/platforms simultaneously, there is an increasing need for designers to play a role in equitably telling the story of their work.

Join a team of researchers, writers, and editors for an interactive workshop to learn about different styles of communicating externally about community-engaged design projects, practice written and verbal communication skills, explore best practice for storytelling on social media, and leave with tangible pointers for how to incorporate successful research, writing, and storytelling into your practice.

Over the last decade, a narrative aligning green building and social equity goals has been emerging in the realm of practice. Specifically illustrating this progress is the Living Building Challenge (LBC), arguably the most challenging and aspirational green building certification in the world. Traditionally not integrated into most green building certification programs, the LBC explicitly includes equity as one of the seven mandatory requirements, or Petals, for certification. However, it is less than clear that the LBC structure applies equal rigor to the issue of equity. With the goal of transformation, does the LBC challenge policies or regulations, change industry standards, or fundamentally facilitate more equitable buildings?
In this workshop, participants will be guided through a thoughtful evaluation of the efficacy of the Equity Petal through the lens of an affordable housing project pursuing certification in Austin, TX. We will examine the ways in which the LBC has transformed the design and development process, discussing tools used to evaluate project goals and priorities from the perspective of a non-profit developer. Striving to deepen our understanding of equity and the role it plays within the green building industry, we will explore a number of questions.

Participants will also explore other LBC projects through the lens of equity, including The Rose, an affordable housing development pursuing LBC certification in Minneapolis. Additionally, participants will assess the success of the Equity Petal at transforming the developments into inclusive and equitable projects.

Designers and Cities traditionally spend years and millions of dollars to concept, plan, and construct projects that can have substantial impact on the built environment. Often realizing in hindsight that some part didn’t meet the needs or demands of the community, leaving it underutilized or underperforming. Prototyping in the Built Environment borrows from the methods of human-centered design to utilize low-resolution, and iterative prototypes to better understand what should be built at a large urban scale. These prototypes allow more designers to test numerous ideas, and elicit feedback from the community long before it makes a major investment of time and money to build something permanent.

Jessica and Gray will synthesize their experience and lessons learned from leading the Reimagine Crowdus project in Dallas TX that utilized a one month prototype to experiment, test, and learn what would be a successful design for retrofitting an underutilized street into a pedestrian corridor. Reimagine Crowdus leveraged community input and dozens of designers to develop full-scale prototypes for landscapes, furniture, public art, and programming. This prototype led to great feedback, constructive debate, and an opportunity to show the municipal leaders in Dallas what might be possible for the future of Crowdus Street.

This experience has informed this interactive workshop focused on teaching participants to design, build, and test a series of prototypes for the built environment around the University of Minnesota.
As achieving equity increasingly becomes a more articulated outcome for community engaged design, understanding and navigating critical concepts like power, privilege, and positionality become imperative to community engaged practitioners. They also lay a foundation to being able to engage more nuanced concepts like allyship. This workshop will engage power, privilege, and positionality directly by exploring the personal and collective complexities of them within existing systems of systemic oppression.

Participants in the workshop will:
1. Explore the fluid and changing nature of privilege, as a situational condition that is constantly evolving and that requires students to reassess it in different environments. (Assessing one’s own position as well as those of other stakeholders and partners.)
2. Gain tools for leveraging their positions and finding active ways to be agents for equity in their real world projects.
3. Challenge colonial models of PID collaborations by identifying and exploring more respectful ways to act and engage, and obtain tools to question and think critically in real world situations.
4. Understand power and privilege not as things to be feared or feel shame about, but as real conditions that can be productively addressed to become leaders in responsible community-engaged design work.

Designers are uniquely poised to contribute to an equitable and just future. This workshop will highlight the intersectionality of the community design profession and how transdisciplinary work that partners outside of the design field strengthens outcomes and more effectively gets to the root of systemic social issues. We will share traditions of movement building and community organizing as well as facilitation tools to support effective multi-stakeholder engagement in design process. We will discuss issues of outreach and how to organize direct actions. We will share powerful precedents that intersect social justice and cultural work and discuss how this can inform our design practices. We will work on tangible tools that you can implement in the field and on campus. Students will become equipped with new engagement skills so that the new generation of design leadership can partner with larger struggles for social justice more effectively and critically push forward the social justice agenda of Public Interest Design and then students will work in small groups to develop a strategy for Design for Protest as their first action on campus after returning from Design Futures.
Revitalizing Distressed Corridors

Carlos Delgado, Jess Zimbabwe, Kenneth Little and Jim Terrell

Historically, local government economic development policies and programs have not benefited all populations, and in many cases have particularly neglected or even shortchanged people of color, immigrants, and low-income communities. There is a need for cities to be intentional about targeting their economic development programs, funding and policies at the specific populations and neighborhoods that are increasingly distance from the growth sectors of their regional and city economy. To support and to assist city leaders with the intentionality to include an equity lens to their economic development programs and policies, the National League of Cities, PolicyLink and Urban Land Institute have launched the Equitable Economic Development (EED) Fellowship program providing one year of technical assistance to an annual class of six cities to help them pursue more equitable and inclusive economic development policies, programs and funding.

This 3-hour workshop will provide students the opportunity to plan and design with an equity lens the revitalization of distressed commercial corridors in the cities of Milwaukee and Minneapolis. Project managers from these 2 cities will be part of the session. Topics covered will include: equity, community engagement, economic development, commercial corridors, urban renewal, zoning, and place-based efforts.

Financing Community Development

Marc Norman and Stephen Klimek

Underutilized parcels are often the focus of speculation and imagination for public interest designers as well as community visions. Envisioning what an empty lot or underdeveloped building could become is one part of the process. The next critical step is to successfully navigate the real estate market, financial, and regulatory processes required to realize a redevelopment project.

Students will be introduced to and subsequently test-out the basics of real estate development strategies, market trends, and financial modeling tools using real sites in the Prospect Park neighborhood adjacent to the University of Minnesota. This area has been the subject of a decades-long community planning process and is just beginning to undergo various levels of redevelopment.

Students will learn the latest tools, strategies, and technologies they can use to navigate the fields of real estate, finance, regulation and governmental priorities necessary to get projects done from parks, green streets, community facilities, affordable housing to neighborhood serving retail, pop up shops and all sorts of other possibilities.
Beginning with the premise that “community” is a complex and contested subject, the Working with People (WWP) project exposes the multiple meanings of keywords that shape the landscape of design, social, and political change, and education: Collaboration, Community, Difference, Empathy, Ethnography, Human, Participation, Politics, Power, Public, Representation, and Sustainability. In unpacking meaning and assumption, WWP’s workshops foreground the relationships of power that frequently shape projects that work with communities, but are often not addressed directly. This session, in which we will work in-depth with the WWP video library, engages participants in a process of imagining and practicing how wrestling with words can affect our work, both in preparing for community-engaged projects and in building the relationships through which they take place, deepening the possibilities for working together.
As a young boy in the inner city
Like most of my friends
I wanted to be a professional athlete when I grew older
But what I did not know then, that I do know now,
Is that had my dreams come true
My options would have been limited
I would only be able to play in the NBA or MLB
I would never get the opportunity to suit up for the US Olympic soccer team
Pitch in for eagle at Augusta
Or go up against the likes of Federer and Nadal
And it’s not because I did not possess the skills or intuition necessary to compete
But because of my geography
You see
Basketball and baseball were the only things ever knew
They were the only things I was exposed to
Faded lines on concrete pavements became floor plans to vacation homes
Where I could tune out the rest of the world while playing pick-up games of 21
Ending my days counting down
3…. 2.... 1...
As I put up buzzer beater after buzzer beater
Imagining that I had helped my team win championship after championship
Like a modern day Bill Russell
I was also fortunate to benefit from the fact that baseball
Has strong roots
Deeply embedded in the soil of Hispanic communities
And that I had family members
that had played the game their entire lives
They spent so much time with diamonds
You would think they were jewelers
Exposing me to a game I would come to love and play throughout high school
High school
My first time stepping foot on a tennis court
Was sophomore year of high school
I was visiting some family in the suburbs of Worcester and we decided to go shoot
some hoops
Beyond the 3 point line on the other side of the fence
Stood two young girls and their father
Swinging rackets at green balls that previously only represented
Pick-up games of baseball and suicide
They seemed so happy
This moment
While I stood by the local middle school and looked around
Was a pivotal one in my understanding that the built environment has far more influence than I thought
That the built environment that I was exposed to was far different than the one they knew
One the provided access to tennis and basketball courts, soccer and softball fields, lacrosse, field hockey, etc.
While I have no idea if these young girls will grow up to compete in Wimbledon or the Australian Open
I do know that they have a far better chance than anybody I grew up with
Now, I realize that competing at the highest of levels requires a certain amount of talent
But there is no denying that access allows talent to breathe
What if Michael Jordan picked up a lacrosse stick instead of a basketball?
Would we have Kobe Bryant or LeBron James?
Would young men and women be camping out for days to pick up the latest sneaker?
Would the Looney Tunes have been able to beat the Monstars!?
These are questions that we'll never be able to answer
But they are questions that we need to ask
Because the decisions that take place in the offices of planners and architects have stronger social and cultural implications than we believe
But there's hope
We can decide to create environments that allow people to thrive
We've all heard the old saying
“If you build it, they will come”
But I'll leave you with a few questions
Where exactly will we build?
And what happens to those where we don't?
Hangings resembling fruits is an interesting metaphor but i dont’ see a man decaying mid-air & think Apple Grapes grow on vines & vines look a lot more like rope.

Strung up fifteen feet above ground watching a bird’s eye view go black. It’s no wonder i yearn for my roots.

That i ravage my own flesh as a lost treasure map. A horizon in uproar. So, if ill never get their laughs then i’ll settle for the screams of my ancestors.

i want ot feel the way that frist no tasted on their tongue. i want to see a family photo where a white sheet doesn’t pose as the backdrop, where the dangling rows of feet don’t double as a smile. Never thougth i’d be jealous of a family tree. Cut down with no feeling. Or envy the drool in the canine’s mouth solely for the water. As i slowly morph from map, to paper weight to a flag, waving my surrender in teh win. i walk atop our bones every day, sneak an education in the capital of the confederacy. & all i will have is this diploma & no forefathers to share it with. Ink stains running just as thick as my blood & mama’s still gonna be proud to see her baby’s name spelled in cursive but was it worth it if th eonly thing not broken about me are those lines? Besides, at graduation is this the thing they’ll call me by? This Scotch Abomination? How fitting. Everyday people wearing black kilts-to getting wary black people killed everyday. Will they call my last name in hieroglyph, a symbol, an image to give an unclaimed thing a plague of apathy, rotting imminence from those who have never felt the sweaty pleasure of an existential crisis? In my nightmares i hear my inheritance bound & gagged sobbing in the back of history’s off-white pick-up truck
& i run as fast as i can
trying to chase it

but i’ve got two legs
& you’ve got 4 wheels

& what a metaphor for privilege
how they say the war is over

& that we’re just looking for a fight
but i know white supremacy isn’t dead

it’s just got grey hair
& my freedom

is still statutory
too young to give consent & yet
too old for anyone to believe me
when i say they took something away from me.

& i have to ask google to help me find it again
because grandma can't recall.

because memory lane is a Richmond brick
too easy to trip over

& my glass spine can't bear looking in her eyes, & only seeing myself
i can't keep begging a statue for answers

i have to stop screaming at mass graves

but i feel like an hourglass that’s been turned over for nothing-
existing as a headstone

just waiting for someone to give me a name.
Feedback

Each year we seek as much feedback as we can while the experience is still fresh in the minds of all participants. We use an online survey platform to achieve this and have been grateful to receive sufficient responses as to get a real sense of what things worked well and what elements of the Forum might be reconsidered and improved. As our programming committee looks forward to the next Design Futures the survey results are reviewed in detail to make sure we are learning from our shared experience and considering all perspectives. Below is a brief summary of survey results.

88% of attendees identified the Forum as ‘Exciting and Informative’ or ‘Transformational’.

When asked to identify the most enjoyable aspects of the forum many respondents spoke about meeting so many people with shared interest and getting to know these people as a highlight.

When asked to identify the least enjoyable aspects of the Forum respondents had a range of responses that spoke to the challenges of including as much material as possible in the schedule while maintaining time for unstructured interaction and learning. Different individuals also had different responses to specific workshops which is to be expected with the diverse programming.

Both students and faculty spoke of the benefits of sharing time and space with so many like minded colleagues and the opportunity this presented to challenge their ideas and practice and really work towards pushing the emergent field forward.

As it has in previous years, the topic of how best to encourage leadership amongst the students while also encouraging faculty and practitioners to share their stories came up. Each year we try new things to create student lead spaces and support faculty mentorship and this is an issue we intend to continue to work on and refine.

Around the issue of what did we spend too much time on and not enough time on there was a tension in the responses between some people who felt too much time was spent on larger ‘social’ issues such as power and privilege, and not enough time on how hard skills in design and planning can be technically mobilized in these areas. Many people felt this was true and as many others felt the opposite was true.

In addition to these specific areas, the survey results contain many excellent suggestions and thoughtful comments. We are grateful for the attendees that take the time to complete the survey as this really is the only space we have to organize our collective wisdom around future Design Futures Forums.

For anyone interested in seeing the full survey results report, please contact design future staff and we will be happy to share it.