

ASLA Spotlight

Livable Landscapes

Jennifer Horn, ASLA,
shares residential LA
design trends her clients
are asking for on repeat

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We Want to Hear from You

Tell us about a topic you're passionate about. Send us the details of your latest project. Share a recent accomplishment. This is your chance to be featured in a future issue of *Spotlight*.



Shining Bright: ASLA Spotlight Showcases Our Extraordinary Members

Allow me to start by wishing ASLA a very happy 125th anniversary! There's no better way to mark this momentous milestone than to launch *ASLA Spotlight*, a new quarterly publication by members, for members. In this issue and those to come, we will be putting the focus on our members and the impressive work they're doing each and every day. We'll be sharing personal stories of thoughtful, aesthetically excellent design, but also insights into how our members are tackling societal and systemic challenges.

In my recent travels to visit ASLA chapters and speak at universities—giving the graduation address at my alma mater Ball State was a proud full-circle moment for me—I have been impressed and lifted up by the quality of work I've seen. Being able to showcase and celebrate local chapters, along with individual members, students, corporate members, and work products alike is something that we are all personally and collectively passionate about.

That's why I'm focusing on building community and creating a deeper sense of belonging for my year of service as the 79th president of ASLA—and why I'm thrilled to present this inaugural issue of *Spotlight*. The tremendous impact that we're all making on our local regions as well as around the country and throughout the world deserves to be celebrated. We want to make *Spotlight* as inclusive and dynamic as possible, which means hearing and learning from our members and providing opportunities to contribute, mentor, and advocate.

Here's to making our 126th year the best one yet.

SuLin

SuLin Kotowicz, FASLA
President



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From greenhouses and outdoor kitchens to stormwater management and native plants, Jennifer Horn, ASLA, shares the hottest trends in residential LA design. Photo courtesy of Jennifer Horn.

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The views expressed in ASLA Spotlight do not necessarily reflect the views of ASLA.

Clockwise from top left: Jennifer Horn, Brooke Freeman, Josh Popehn

Into the Woods

Kirk Bereuter, ASLA, gives a behind-the-scenes look at his latest project, a destination hemp farm.

► BY KIRK BEREUTER, ASLA

During the pandemic, I invented a project type—destination hemp farm master planning. Finding these projects involves a lot of proactive legwork, from finding the farms to developing relationships with the farmers. I’ve worked on three of these types of projects now, and I’m proud to call all the farmers involved friends, as well as collaborators.

What’s in the Works?

Send us the scoop on your latest work in progress.



The latest project, shown here, is set in the untamed wilderness of West Virginia. The site features innovative bio-intensive agricultural practices on a humble log cabin homestead, and our work has been dedicated to developing a destination site program that supports a sustainable business model. It’s a field that requires creativity to become financially viable. To that end, we’ve created designs that include a community pavilion for performances and events, a trail system with campsites that can double as outdoor classrooms, and irrigation improvements to expand crop footprint. Site analysis, concepting, and preliminary designs are complete. We’ve had positive reviews with the client and received a bounty from the farm as payment, but we see the potential in developing these projects across the country, digging deep into each site’s potential and the individualized focus of the farmers. ♦

The hemp farm (below and right) sits on an isolated 80-acre homestead, just a stone’s throw from the world-renowned class V rapids of the Gauley River.



PROJECT Appalachia Hemp Farm
LOCATION West Virginia
FIRM Kirk Bereuter Landscape Architecture, LLC



Kirk Bereuter



Stainless Steel Is the Sustainable Choice

► BY FRED OGRAM, ASLA

For aquatic features, Fred Ogram, ASLA, says you can't beat the environmental advantages of using stainless steel over concrete.

Landscape architects should be leaders in sustainable planning and design, helping to preserve natural resources for future generations. When it comes to aquatic design projects such as pools, spas, and water features, stainless steel is a more sustainable choice than concrete in terms of environmental impact, longevity, life cycle, and more.

Environmental Impact

It takes tremendous energy to create the components of concrete, particularly clinker. As a result, concrete production produces more carbon dioxide emissions than any industry except coal, oil, and gas. Massive amounts of water are also required to cool the heat created during the concrete hydration process. Plus,



Fred Ogram, ASLA,
Bradford Aquatic
Group, Arizona

Felix Mizionikov / Alamy

My team at Bradford Aquatic Group designed the water features at The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Sunny Isles Beach in Florida (shown here), including the private swimming pools and amenity decks with sweeping views of the ocean below for some of the top-floor units.

transporting the heavy core materials from factory to supplier and supplier to site requires significant energy.

While steel production is also energy-intensive, the American steel industry's furnaces are among the most carbon-efficient in the world. The metal's light weight means a stainless-steel pool can be shipped, assembled, and installed efficiently—and at the end of its lifespan, the steel can be fully recycled.

Durability and Maintenance

A fully welded stainless-steel pool is completely watertight, and its nonporous surface resists algae and stains, and eliminates the risk of outgassing. Unlike concrete, a steel pool won't develop cracks or fissures because of the shifting and heaving ground that surrounds it.

This durability also makes stainless steel a safer choice for above-ground uses where other materials can't be risked. The rooftop penthouse pools at The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Sunny Isles Beach in Florida, for example, sit above stacks of multimillion-dollar condominiums. A leak would be disastrous, so the developers opted for steel pools.

A Forward-Thinking Option

Stainless steel is the wave of the future when it comes to aquatic design. Its ecological advantages make it a smarter choice than concrete, and its durability and other strengths translate into long-term savings that offset any higher upfront costs for the client. ♦

Share Your POV

Have a topic you're particularly passionate about? Tell us all about it!





NORTH DAKOTA

Introduce a Girl to Landscape Architecture

Confluence, a national firm of landscape architects, urban designers, and planners, was excited to bring “Introduce a Girl to Landscape Architecture” to Oak Grove Elementary in Fargo, North Dakota. The event, which was sponsored by ASLA, aims to promote the importance of STEM literacy education while introducing young girls to the design of outdoor spaces.

As part of the program, students participated in story time with children’s books written by landscape architects, and an interactive activity to build a 3D model of a park. It started with group brainstorming about the four building blocks of their designs—play, paths, people, and plants—and sketching ideas of features they’d like to include. They were split into small groups and given a materials basket and model base to create their park. It was a joy to see the collaboration and creativity in their models. Each design was unique and meticulously crafted with purpose!

► BY LAURA BOWLES, ASLA, ASSOCIATE, CONFLUENCE

PENNSYLVANIA

A Community Gardening Story

Green Green: A Community Gardening Story is a poetic and colorful picture book that I wrote with Marie Lamba about the joys of creating a community garden for everyone to share. The book reveals how green land grows into a vibrant city, and how unused lots can be transformed into much-needed productive and beautiful green spaces, inspiring children and the community to become stewards of the land for the benefit of all its inhabitants. The book concludes with simple things kids can do to create a greener world, save threatened Monarch butterflies and honeybees, and enjoy the rhythms of nature all around them.

► BY BALDEV LAMBA, ASLA PRINCIPAL, LAMBA ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY



CALIFORNIA

Landscape Architecture-Only Career Fair

To connect landscape architecture (LA) students with local firms, ASLA CA Sierra Chapter’s Emerging Professionals Group (EPG) started an annual career fair in 2022. By teaming up with the UC Davis student chapter, we’ve developed a fun, collaborative career fair conveniently located in the courtyard of the UC Davis LA building. Students work with EPG to invite local firms to participate—and firms are encouraged to attend even if they aren’t hiring—introducing students to a wide variety of potential future work opportunities.



This April, the 3rd annual UC Davis – Sierra Chapter Career Fair successfully connected the majority of current LA students with local firms and potential employers.

► BY HALEY BORDEN, ASLA, CA SIERRA CHAPTER VP; EPG CHAIR; LANDSCAPE JOB CAPTAIN, THE HLA GROUP, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS, INC.

WHAT’S NEW?

We want to shine a light on what’s happening in your corner of the ASLA world. Send us your news for the next issue of *Spotlight*.



Clockwise from top left: Laura Bowles, Haley Borden, Baldev Lamba

product focus

Drawer Ren litter receptacle: Stella of Sunne™ collection

At Victor Stanley, we’ve dedicated over 60 years perfecting outdoor furnishings that blend form, function, and durability. Today, we introduce the Drawer Ren litter receptacle, a standout addition to our Stella of Sunne™ collection. The Drawer Ren features a long sought after, fully-enclosed design that addresses a common concern in public spaces: keeping waste in and rodents out to maintain your community’s environment. This receptacle is engineered for ease of use and long-lasting performance. You can access the interior via a convenient drawer handle or stainless-steel foot pedal, both rigorously tested to withstand the harshest environments year after year.

Our Stella of Sunne collection, inspired by classic Scandinavian aesthetics, includes benches, tables, chairs, waste receptacles, and bike racks. Each piece, characterized by eased edges and clean lines, seamlessly fits into both bustling urban centers and serene parks. But Stella is more than just visually appealing—it’s built to last. Stella is available in lpe wood, one of the toughest hardwoods known for its resistance to decay, abrasion, insects, and weather. Additionally, we offer an attractive selection of slim-profile recycled slats in our new lineup of colors: black, espresso, light gray, or wheat. These materials are not only aesthetically pleasing but also provide enhanced durability against the elements and vandalism.

Beyond beauty and durability, Stella also integrates cutting-edge technology. The Drawer Ren can be equipped with Victor Stanley’s innovative

Relay sensors. These embedded sensors monitor fill levels, temperatures, nearby foot traffic, and more, providing real-time data to optimize waste collection. This technology can significantly reduce operational costs and environmental impact by eliminating unnecessary collection runs. The actionable data collected can support funding applications and future urban planning.

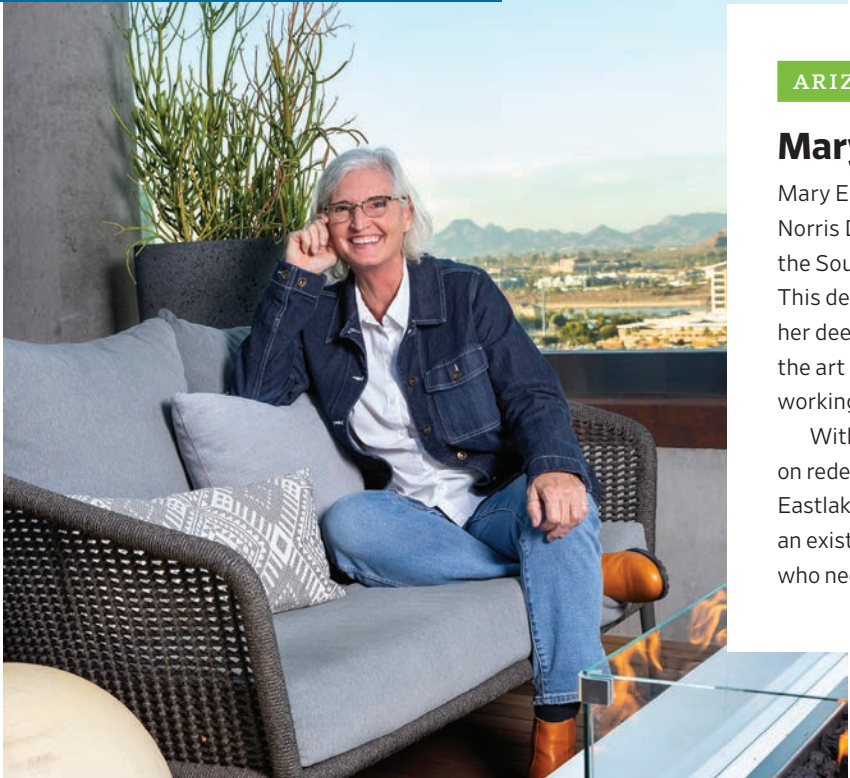
Experience the future of waste management and schedule a Relay demonstration or a Q&A session featuring live data with Ty Martindale at victorstanleyrelay.com. Learn more about the entire Stella of Sunne collection and how it can enhance your space at victorstanley.com.

NEW! Fully-Enclosed Design



Ren Side-Door Drawer (patent pending) showing drawer open and closed, Stella of Sunne™ Collection.





ARIZONA

Mary Estes Named ‘Master of SW’

Mary Estes, ASLA, a principal and landscape architect with Norris Design in Arizona, was recently named a Master of the Southwest by *Phoenix Home and Garden* magazine. This designation recognizes her affinity for sustainability, her deep connection with clients, and her ability to fuse the art of her craft with logistics of the mediums she is working with, from concrete to desert plants.

With a focus on residential design, Estes recently worked on redeveloping the City Housing Department’s Edison Eastlake community in Phoenix, which included improving an existing park in a neighborhood with many inner-city kids who needed one.

KANSAS

Katie Kingery-Page Receives Top Award

Katie Kingery-Page, ASLA, the associate dean at the College of Architecture, Planning and Design at Kansas State University, recently received the 2024 Alton Thomas Award—the ASLA Prairie Gateway Chapter’s highest honor given to an individual who has performed above and beyond, directly promoting or enhancing the image of landscape architecture. It is her unwavering commitment to advancing accessibility and inclusivity within the profession that was a key factor in her selection for this award.

Additionally, in 2019, Kingery-Page was presented with the Central States ASLA Community Service in Design Award for her role as project director for the Meadow, a native grassland mini-park on the Kansas State campus.

MARYLAND

Richard Mattiello Honored as USACE Landscape Architect of the Year



Richard Mattiello, ASLA, has been honored as the 2024 Landscape Architect of the Year by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). His exceptional work on projects across the Baltimore

District and leadership within the USACE’s Landscape Architecture Community of Practice contributed to this prestigious recognition.

Each year, USACE recognizes employees’ and teams’ contributions of excellence in performance, leadership, professional development, and community support throughout the fields of engineering and construction. Mattiello exemplifies the core values of the organization through his steadfast dedication to his multidisciplinary teams and his collaborative spirit.

Share Your Successes We want to celebrate your achievements. Send us your latest accomplishment to be featured in a future issue of *Spotlight*.



Clockwise from top left: Mary Estes, Richard Mattiello, Katie Kingery-Page



Livable Landscapes

For Jennifer Horn, ASLA, residential landscape architecture trends are rooted in sustainable design and beautiful yet functional outdoor spaces.



Jennifer Horn, ASLA, Virginia

Thoughtfully designed, environmentally conscious landscapes are no longer a nicety but a necessity for many homeowners, says Jennifer Horn, ASLA, principal of Horn & Co., the Arlington, Virginia-based firm she founded in 2009. These are the trends that Horn's D.C.-area clients are asking for on repeat.

Gardens Under Glass

Horn completed two greenhouses last year, and has two in the works and two in the design phase. Her firm has also been busy designing elaborate vegetable gardens. "We love the idea that our clients have that connection to nature," Horn says.

Outside the D.C. metro area, Horn's House on Willow Hill project features a 320-square-foot greenhouse that was born from the homeowners' desire to grow their own food and introduce their children to the joy of growing food. The greenhouse is tucked within a larger garden enclosure replete with tidy vegetable and flower plots, and a pavilion used for rest, reading, and entertainment. Reminiscent of a historic conservatory, the greenhouse features vintage decorative panels, glass-paneled walls, and a glass roof offset by black metal framing.



Horn's House on Willow Hill project outside of D.C. features two of the most common homeowner trends: greenhouses (above) and native plants (left).



In Horn's Embassy Row project in D.C., amenities like a fire pit (above) and an outdoor grill island (below) maximize usability.

Indoor Comforts, Outside

Clients continue to look for more creative ways to maximize the usability of their outdoor spaces, Horn says. Outdoor radiant heaters, like those that grace restaurant patios, are standard, allowing homeowners to enjoy their covered porches well after the autumn leaves have fallen.

Outdoor kitchens continue to top many wish lists, though the elements of these cooking stations vary from homeowner to homeowner. More elaborate designs may include smokers, side burners, fridges, and sinks; others keep it simple with no-frills grilling stations. "We have one client who cooks three meals a day in his outdoor kitchen," Horn says. "But then we have clients who feel like it's too much and want a simple grill island."

Horn's Embassy Row townhouse design in Washington, D.C., features a minimalist-yet-

elegant example of an outdoor grill island. Wrapped in the same limestone as the adjacent fountain, the island houses a gas grill and trash pull-out bin. The practical design makes good use of a small space.

Zoned In

"Technology continues to make outdoor living easier," Horn says. Preset lighting control systems are necessities for clients who want to create unique scenes for different activities by controlling multiple zones of light. Horn uses these systems to program scenes for parties or illuminate hardscapes and patios for safe access at night. Another zoned technology that Horn is installing often are outdoor AV systems and speakers that allow homeowners to zone sound throughout their properties.

Repeaters are also high on wish lists. The Wi-Fi signal boosters ensure that homeowners are always within range, no matter where they are in their gardens.

Homeowners love to monitor and control their irrigation via cellphone apps integrated with smart irrigation systems that provide real-time weather and soil data. "The rain sensors aren't foolproof," cautions Horn, who advises clients to work with their landscapers or landscape designer to ensure the systems are calibrated and running well.



Stacy Zarin Goldberg

Clients are increasingly aware of the fragility of nature and how landscapes can affect delicate ecosystems.

The Way of Stormwater

Clients are increasingly aware of the fragility of nature and how landscapes can affect delicate ecosystems, says Horn, who points to stormwater management as one area where her clients have become progressively more engaged. "There's this critical mass where clients really understand it, are committed to it, and are engaged with it," Horn says. "And thank goodness, because stormwater management is such a massive problem."

Stormwater management conversations with clients revolve around understanding the geography, the density of the neighborhood, the watershed of the property, and the municipal framework to support stormwater management, says Horn, who notes that landscape architects are well-positioned to see the evolution of a property's stormwater plan over time.

"In the best situations, we're working with clients for a really long time," Horn says. "I think landscape architects have a unique opportunity to troubleshoot stormwater plans because we've seen it post-occupancy, and we've seen it five years down the road, more so than other trades do."

Savvy Plant Selection

Climate change has made plant selection more and more complicated. Warmer temperatures could potentially allow landscape architects to push the envelope by using plants normally reserved for warmer plant hardiness zones, Horn says, but extreme temperatures and unpredictable freezes force landscape architects to tread lightly.

For Horn, native plants are always a safe choice, and one that resonates with clients' environmentally conscious ethos. "We personally try to follow the Two-Thirds for the Birds program. We push natives as much

as possible but we're not 100 percent native in our plant selection." Some of Horn's favorites are serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), summersweet (*Clethra*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia*), lobelia, and Virginia bluebell (*Mertensia*).

For Horn, her clients' renewed enthusiasm for growing food and embracing the outdoors has been rewarding. Pushing the needle on environmentally progressive design is not so much a trend as the new normal. At the end of the day, though, it's about continuing to do meaningful work.

"We would like to continue to work with engaged, passionate clients and teams on properties where we can do something a little different—a little creative." ♦



Horn's House on Willow Hill project (left and below), which includes a cabin from the 1800s, a barn, a pool, and a greenhouse, required landscape design that helped the structures speak to each other.

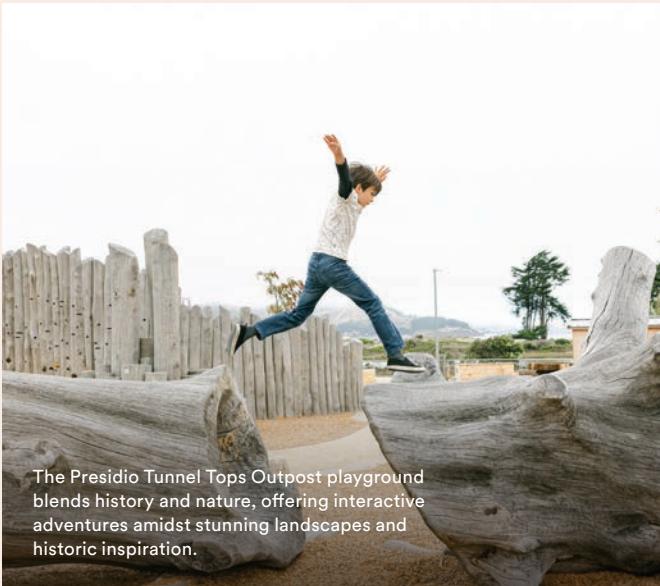


Jennifer Horn

THE EVOLVING ROLE OF PLAYGROUNDS:

Context and Collaboration

BY JANELLE ZWART



The Presidio Tunnel Tops Outpost playground blends history and nature, offering interactive adventures amidst stunning landscapes and historic inspiration.



PLAYGROUNDS, at their most primary level, provide spaces for children to play, explore, and interact in an outdoor environment. Children are, by nature, uninhibited with other people and their surroundings, serving as a kind of connective tissue between parents and caregivers. Consequently, playgrounds often emerge as central hubs of activity within parks, also offering rare havens where individuals may feel permitted to simply enjoy the moment, free from the pressures of productivity that often define so much of our daily lives.

As public parks continue to gain importance in our communities as places to foster connection, inclusion, good health, and buffer against the impacts of climate change, the role of playgrounds is evolving to hold increasing significance in achieving these key goals. We have both opportunity and responsibility to design playgrounds in ways that directly respond to site-specific and community-specific needs.

The Presidio Tunnel Tops in San Francisco and Warren Gateway Park in Detroit are examples of places where play has been used as a means of exploring big ideas in two different contexts. These

projects, with their unique characteristics, contribute to growing our understanding of how playgrounds can be highly impactful spaces within the larger framework of public parks.

The Presidio Tunnel Tops is a 14-acre public space in San Francisco’s Presidio, one of the most visited U.S. national park sites. Located over and around the tunneled Presidio Parkway that leads to the Golden Gate Bridge, it features a series of pathways, bluff landscapes, dynamic overlooks, and gathering places, making it a hub for locals and visitors to learn, experience, enjoy, and build community.

In collaboration with lead consultant Field Operations and the Presidio Trust, Earthscape designed a bespoke natural playscape for the Tunnel Tops Outpost playground, inspired by authentic forms of the Presidio’s natural and cultural history. Designed to withstand a high volume of annual visitors and periodic seismic activity, the playground is nonetheless seamlessly integrated with the Presidio’s spectacular landscape, appearing as if conjured by nature. It offers an accessible space for children and adults to actively and passively experience nature through play.

Natural-form structures, such as the Forest Den and the Nests, allow children to embody a critter’s perspective: Kids can scramble above or crawl on hands and knees among twigs and branches, mimicking insects. The Nests offer elevated nets for lounging, akin to an Oriole chick’s experience. Over time, the smaller of the two Nests will be enveloped into a living willow arrangement around the seating area.

The tightly planted historic forest of the Presidio is represented in the Woodland Wall, through a parametric wave of vertical logs that subtly lean forward and backward. Climbers can traverse the wall laterally via climbing hand and footholds that mimic animal habitat.

Central to the playground is the 75-foot-long Fallen Tree. The 250-year-old senior white oak came to the end of its natural life after a storm felled the tree and lifted its roots. Cut into three sections, it was carefully removed from the forest so it could be hand-processed to remove the bark and sapwood. The result is a one-of-a-kind play sculpture that is entirely faithful to its natural form.

Joe Louis Greenway in Detroit, Michigan, is a 27.5-mile trail loop for biking and walking designed to solve real-world connectivity issues between neighborhoods. It tells the proud story of one of Detroit’s most famous and inspiring citizens, Joe Louis, celebrated not just for his boxing achievements but also as a civil rights leader and advocate for racial equality.

Warren Gateway Park, a 4-acre entryway to the Greenway, exemplifies Detroit’s commitment to investing in struggling neighborhoods. The park’s design, led by Smithgroup and influenced by extensive community consultation, reflects the theme of unity.

Visitors are greeted by two monumental playground towers, the Unity Towers, which are connected by a circle symbolizing something bigger than the sum of its parts. Night lighting illuminates the circle as dusk falls, so that the playground remains inviting and offers a sense of safety after daylight hours.

Each Unity Tower offers a distinct play experience. One tower is more challenging, requiring perseverance to reach the top, where a spectacular view of the Greenway and a 27-foot tube slide, Michigan’s tallest, await. The playground also features an accessible embankment slide, a giant rope swing, Log Jam climbers for various age groups, swings, and wobble boards.

Ample seating areas for socializing and resting are nestled throughout, complementing the active play areas. The park has quickly become a landmark destination, offering a place for people to gather, play, rest, and celebrate.

We have both opportunity and responsibility to design playgrounds in ways that directly respond to site-specific and community-specific needs.

Playgrounds play a crucial role in shaping children’s perceptions of the world, forming lasting memories, and fostering community bonds. The responsive designs of the Presidio Tunnel Tops and Warren Gateway Park demonstrate what it looks like to ask more of our playgrounds; tailoring them to address community-specific needs, and to serve as anchors that tell the stories of places and people in engaging and interactive ways. ●

To learn more, email **Janelle Zwart, CPSI**, at janelle@earthscapeplay.com or visit earthscapeplay.com



The Unity Towers at Warren Gateway Park celebrate unity and perseverance, offering unparalleled play experiences and stunning city views.

Clockwise from left: Chelsea Irons-Light; Courtney Yee; Photo Flood Studio

The Beauty (and Benefits) of

Outdoor Learning Spaces

The nonprofit organization Out Teach proves that outdoor learning spaces can be community-driven projects.



Brooke Freeman,
ASLA, Georgia

At L.P. Miles Elementary School in Atlanta, nonprofit outdoor learning lab design firm Out Teach hosted an event called Design and Dine. It was a chance for the school's teachers to come together to brainstorm ideas and share goals for their future space. One of their goals: raise awareness of Black scientists, farmers, and horticulturalists.

This goal was realized with the addition of three signs celebrating African American luminaries in science and horticulture. Around those, an inspired outdoor learning lab was born, complete with raised vegetable beds, a butterfly garden, birdhouses, a small library, and flexible seating.

It's all part of Out Teach's mission: to help teachers around the country transform outdoor spaces into learning labs that bring science to life for students. And the beauty of Out Teach's approach is that it involves the community with volunteer opportunities to help create the outdoor learning lab that will benefit their neighborhood.

Brooke Freeman



Freeman's project at L.P. Miles Elementary School in Atlanta includes raised vegetable beds, a butterfly garden, birdhouses, and signs celebrating African American scientists, farmers, and horticulturalists.



“We like to say when teachers ‘Out Teach,’ students outperform.”

BROOKE FREEMAN, ASLA

“With music and vibrant energy in the air, volunteers assemble features, paint decoratively, and install plants. At L.P Miles, students came out one group at a time to help create a new butterfly garden,” says Out Teach landscape architect Brooke Freeman, ASLA. “While engaging in curriculum-based lessons, students worked with volunteers to ask questions and predict outcomes. It’s engagement like this that really excites the volunteers.”

The Purpose of Out Teach

Based in Washington, D.C., Out Teach works with underserved K–12 schools and helps equip teach-

ers with the knowledge they need to design and build dynamic outdoor learning labs that include a multitude of tools, which the organization’s landscape architects design themselves.

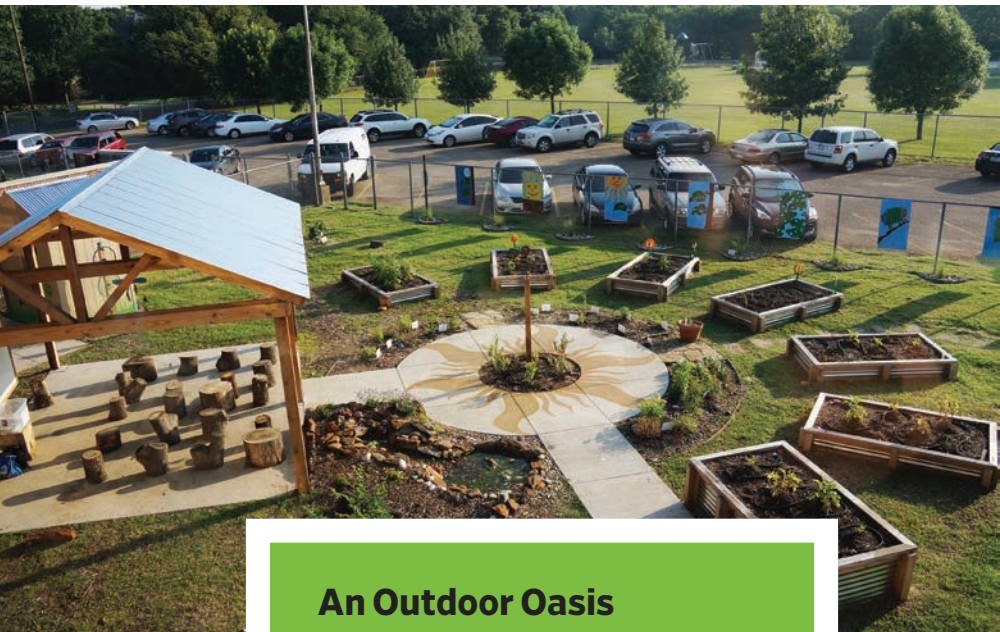
“We are working to ensure that all students, no matter their resources, have access to an engaging, hands-on education that transforms their lives,” Freeman says.

Out Teach collaborates with partners and engages teachers and students in the design and build processes with student design competitions and the teacher Design and Dine engagement events. In the end, the learning lab is built by volunteers during a one-day transformation called a “Big Dig.”

“We have the opportunity to work with educators and students to transform unused schoolyard spaces into new and exciting outdoor learning labs that celebrate the distinct cultures and values of the schools we serve,” Freeman says. “I work with our coaches to develop novel learning tools informed by curriculum: giant interactive multiplication arrays, produce washing stations, and signage celebrating African American icons in science and horticulture.”

The Benefits of Outdoor Learning

“We like to say when teachers ‘Out Teach,’ students outperform,” says Freeman, who notes that the nonprofit finds learning successes by coaching teachers in high-needs elementary schools on how to use the outdoors as an academic tool—making learning real and relevant to the lives of those students. “Most of these students don’t have the resources to attend summer camps or STEM camps or visit parks and



An Outdoor Oasis in Dallas

At Sudie L. Williams Talented and Gifted Academy in Dallas (above), which serves grades four to eight, an 8,000-square-foot outdoor learning lab was born. Created in collaboration with Out Teach, the space includes 77 plants, herbs, and trees, plus vegetable beds, seating, and paving.



A Comprehensive Collaboration in Charlotte

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Greenway Park Elementary School (above) is home to a brand-new outdoor learning lab created in partnership with Out Teach. The space boasts a giant whiteboard with modern bench seating, insect habitats, raised vegetable beds, an earth science station, a root viewer, yoga station signs, a birdbath, and more.

museums—so this is a gap-narrowing strategy,” she adds.

Outdoor learning labs also help increase interest in science, math, and English language arts, while underscoring the importance of health, wellness, and nutrition. “[This is natural] because we are making learning real and relevant—transitioning to a 3D environment from one that is often filled with worksheets,” Freeman says.

Outdoor learning also provides balance from screen time and encourages students to get out and move. “Getting the wiggles out so they can better focus on academics, but also so they will be calmer when they return to class,” Freeman adds.

The Beauty of Community Engagement

Freeman has a strong passion for community engagement, environmental education, and horticulture. “I’m so grateful that my role at Out Teach allows me to apply my love for community engagement,” she says. “At the

University of Georgia, I was lucky enough to take a community engagement studio with Professor Katherine Melcher, who inspired my passion for community-led design.”

She adds that when a client is able to feel that a space is for them, the ownership they feel over the space is invaluable for its sustainability.

“From native plant selection to teaching fifth graders how to install transplants into their veggie beds, we’re inspiring a whole new generation of gardeners and environmental stewards,” Freeman says. “Seeing young minds be excited to care for our earth drives me to be a better designer every day.” ♦

Out Teach

Out Teach



Where Healing Happens

Discover how a two-acre project has developed and evolved over 20 years of collaboration and growth.

In the mid-2000s, Landform joined forces with the Fraumshuh Cancer Center outside Minneapolis to create a space that is calming, inspiring, and energizing for staff, patients, and visitors alike. From carefully crafting its original design to providing ongoing consulting, Landform has seen the Healing Garden grow and evolve. Here, **Josh Popehn**, ASLA, senior designer at Landform, shares more about what makes this space so special.

What was the original design intent and how has it evolved?

Our initial vision was a sanctuary of quietude. We envisioned a simple, open space meant for contemplation and meditation. However, through heartfelt conversations with the hospital's beating heart—the staff, patients, and even the maintenance crew—alongside our

PROJECT
Fraumshuh
Cancer Center
Healing Garden
LOCATION St. Louis
Park, Minnesota
FIRM Landform



architectural partners BWBR, the design blossomed into a vibrant exploration space. It became a testament to the human spirit's enduring strength, a testament to the fight, a testament to hope.

What was the plan for planting?

Weaving native species throughout the design creates a powerful connection to the nearby Minnehaha Creek, restored initially by Inter-Fluve. A meandering boardwalk further strengthens this bond, inviting visitors to immerse themselves.

The hospital staff expressed a desire for ornamentals that evoked cherished memories of loved ones lost to cancer. We embraced this deeply personal element, incorporating unique selections that whispered stories of love and remembrance. For instance, a stately pin oak, chosen by the

Josh Popehn

project's leading benefactor, stands tall as a powerful homage to their generosity.

Delicate lady slippers—Minnesota's official flower—speaks not just to the state's natural heritage, but also to the meticulous care poured into every aspect of this healing space.

How did you approach the larger two-acre space?

Our challenge was to transform a sterile two-acre expanse into a connection between the vibrant Minnehaha Creek and the very heart of the Cancer Center, while silently managing the hospital's stormwater.

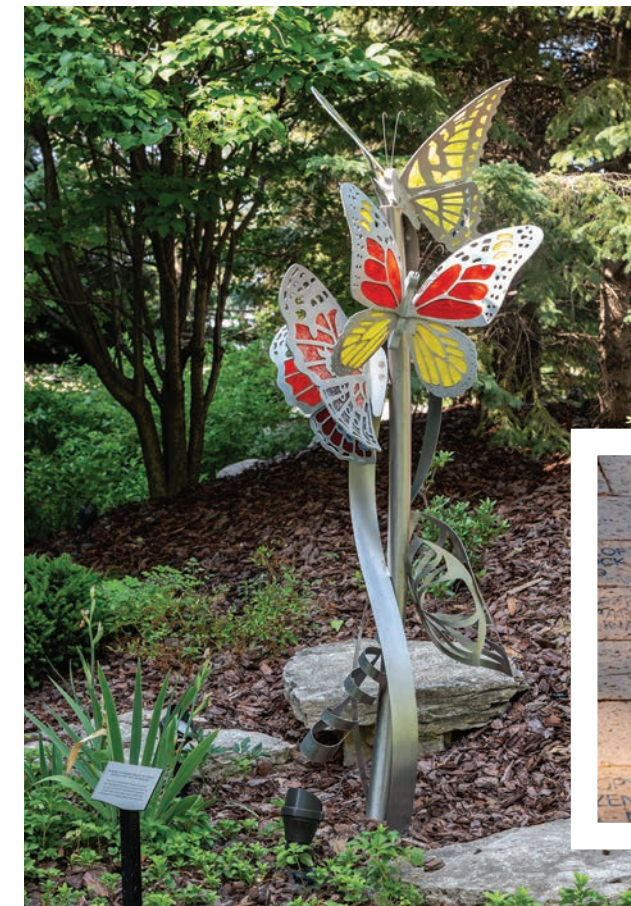
We began by carving pathways through the underutilized land, letting the flow of movement guide us. A dry creek bed, mimicking the natural flow of water, wove its way through the design, a testament to both functionality and aesthetics. As these elements took shape, the garden began to reveal itself.

How does the character of the landscape change with the seasons?

The healing garden faithfully reflects Minnesota's vibrant tapestry of seasons. Evergreen trees stand tall throughout the year, cloaking an adjacent driveway from sight while simultaneously providing a constant structural anchor within the garden.

Perennials and flowering shrubs erupt in a kaleidoscope of colors as spring awakens. Fall ignites the senses with a fiery display. Rows of native quaking aspen trees transform into beacons of golden yellow, their leaves shimmering in the crisp breeze, offering a touch of uplifting vibrancy.

While the garden is beneath a blanket of snow in winter, the space transforms



Landform transformed a sterile two-acre plot of land into a calming space for patients, visitors, and hospital staff that also silently manages the hospital's stormwater.



into a captivating interplay of textures, smooth expanses contrasting with the curving lines of the dry creek bed. In its seasonal metamorphosis, the healing garden offers a constant reminder that life, like nature, is a beautiful cycle of change, renewal, and hope. ♦

Do You Have a Project We Should Feature?

We want to hear about it.





Where Do You Go to Find Inspiration?

“Embarking on a journey of design starts with a single sketch, where imagination meets the canvas of possibilities. There’s an undeniable beauty in hand drawings that capture the essence of our vision.”

STEPHEN CARROLL, ASLA, EPTDESIGN, CALIFORNIA



LoKiLeCh

“ANY LOCAL CONSERVATION LAND, PREFERABLY WITH RUNNING WATER. MY FAVORITE IN OUR AREA IS KING PHILIP’S OVERLOOK, IN THE ROCKY NARROWS RESERVE ALONG THE CHARLES RIVER. THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF HISTORY COMPACTED INTO A SMALL SITE, WITH OLD GROWTH FOREST AND SWEEPING VIEWS (AT LEAST FOR MASSACHUSETTS).”

MICHAEL EASLER, ASLA, HORSLEY WITTEN GROUP, MASSACHUSETTS



Right out my door! I am lucky to live in **Anchorage, Alaska**. Today, I saw a crane, eagle, several shorebirds, dabblers, and dippers as I walked along our coastal trail via a human-made lagoon lined with birch, alder, willow, and an occasional spruce. Last year, an orchid popped up between the newly sprouting grasses that line the lagoon’s shore. Still looking for it and very inspired by all the surprises I see each day I’m out walking on trails designed by landscape architects.”

M. ELISE HUGGINS, FASLA, EARTHSCAPE, ALASKA

“I walk in our gardens, fields, or forest. If I want to travel beyond my property, I can walk half a mile down the road to the shores of Lake Champlain with the Adirondacks rising into the sky on the other side.”

JIM DONOVAN, FASLA, BROADREACH PLANNING & DESIGN, VERMONT

“We look to art for inspiration. Many of Richard Serra’s corten steel sculptures have informed our site design.”

KATE STICKLEY, FASLA, ARTERRA LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, CALIFORNIA

Zetong Li/Unsplash