

# B/a+p

News from the School of Architecture and Planning  
University at Buffalo

**Spring 2014**

**The Buffalo School's Continuing Legacy  
in Historic Preservation**

Story on p.14





# Welcome From the Dean

Robert G. Shibley  
FAIA, AICP

## Dear Alumni and Friends:

Here at the Buffalo School, we take a certain amount of pride in our status as one of the best kept secrets in higher education for architecture and urban planning. It's part of that scrappy, renegade spirit that defines us. Of course, the Buffalo School has always been a forerunner in the study and practice of our disciplines, a culture instilled more than 40 years ago when this revolutionary experiment in design education began. Lately, however, the world has begun to take notice.

In just the past few months, our faculty, students and the collective work of the school have received a string of high-profile awards and recognitions. It was headline material: GROW House earns UB a spot in elite Solar Decathlon competition...Joyce Hwang honored with 2014 Emerging Voices award...Samina Raja wins 2014 Dale Prize in Urban and Regional Planning. When the American Institute of Architects honored me with the 2014 Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture they also recognized the contributions of our faculty, students and alumni in setting the stage for Buffalo's rebirth through creative planning and design. Even as this magazine hit the presses we received word that two projects by our architecture faculty – Nicholas Bruscia's and Christopher Romano's steel wall in Buffalo's Silo City, and Jin Young Song's minimalist dining set – have landed prestigious Architizer A+ Awards.

This storyline of innovation and experimentation continues in the following pages. Dive into a chronicle of our work in historic preservation, now codified in two new graduate-level degree programs. Explore the global impact of our graduates at CannonDesign, an international design firm and a top employer of our alumni. Get a student's inside perspective on our Ecological Practices Research Group.

Buffalo continues to provide fertile ground for built works and applied research. Covered in this issue is the "Front Yard," a cultural installation at the Burchfield Penney Art Center designed and built by the Buffalo School. We also explore a recent planning practicum that has positioned a rural community in Western New York on the front lines of local energy planning.

The national stage on which this work places us presents key opportunities to spread the word and raise the Buffalo School profile. We intend to take every advantage of this. Join us in Chicago in June for a party and alumni event at the national AIA convention. Take part in our "Buffalo in..." alumni networking series, which kicked off in Philadelphia in March. By connecting our alumni with one another and with the Buffalo School community we can enrich and extend our story.

Perhaps most importantly, we ask you to direct the best and brightest prospective students to the Buffalo School. Only in training tomorrow's architects and planners can we cross new frontiers and find new stories to share with the world. Thank you, as always, for being a part of our one-of-a-kind Buffalo School community.




# In Brief

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## Awards & Announcements



ABOVE  
William S. Huff, professor emeritus of architecture, at the Ulm Museum in Ulm, Germany, where graphics and models from his collection, including creations by his students in Buffalo, were on exhibit. Photo by Claudio Guerri

BELOW  
Robert Shibley (fourth from right) participates in the recent groundbreaking ceremony for UB's new medical school on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Photo by Douglas Levere

### Basic Design: An Exhibition of Works by Students of William S. Huff

The works of students of William S. Huff, professor emeritus of architecture, were featured in "Basic Design," a recent exhibition at the Ulm Museum in Ulm, Germany. An internationally noted scholar, Huff studied at the Ulm School of Design and Yale University and then taught at Carnegie-Mellon University before joining the faculty of the Buffalo School in 1974. Over the years, Huff has amassed a collection of material documenting design theory, from the Bauhaus to the HfG/Ulm to the latest methods in design education. Huff has gradually donated much of this material, including the results of many Buffalo School student design assignments, to the HfG/Ulm Archive. "Basic Design" features 40 graphic works and 20 study models from this collection, highlighting Huff's experimentation with symmetry (programmed design), black & white and color rasters (grid manipulation), congruent sectioning of space, effecting color in pigments as color in light, and the deformation of parquet patterns. Huff's fundamental doctrine has impacted basic design teaching around the world.

### UB's New Medical School Rises in Downtown Buffalo

Ground has broken on UB's new medical school in downtown Buffalo. As UB's campus architect, Dean Robert Shibley led an international design competition to select an architectural team for the \$375 million project. Designed by HOK, the new medical school's signature feature is a light-filled, six-story glass atrium that joins the building's two L-shaped structures and links with adjacent health care complexes. The new medical school will bring 2,000 faculty, staff and students daily to downtown Buffalo.

### Targeting Affordable Housing Development in Shrinking Cities

Even in shrinking cities like Buffalo and Detroit, gentrification and rising costs threaten accessibility to affordable housing. Robert Mark Silverman, PhD, associate professor of urban and regional planning, hopes to stem the tide with a project that will help the federal government target affordable housing development in "neighborhoods of opportunity," or areas in shrinking cities with access to quality schools and services. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Research Grant Program, the project will focus on 10 of the fastest-shrinking U.S. cities. Silverman's research team includes Associate Professor Li Yin in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Kelly Patterson, assistant professor in UB's School of Social Work.



Ground has broken!

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BELOW TOP  
Samina Raja, winner of  
the 2014 Dale Prize.  
Photo by Douglas Levere

/  
BELOW LEFT  
Joyce Hwang's "Bat Tower"  
is an architectural expression  
of multiple ecologies in the form  
of a freestanding bat habitat.  
Photo by Joyce Hwang

/  
BELOW RIGHT  
Jin Young Song's award-winning  
proposal for a prefabricated  
apartment remodeling unit.  
Image courtesy of Jin Young Song

**Joyce Hwang Honored with "Emerging Voices" Award**

Associate Professor of Architecture Joyce Hwang, whose eco-sculptures provide habitat for bats and birds and call attention to misunderstood or ignored ecological conditions, has received a 2014 Emerging Voices award from the Architectural League of New York, a most coveted recognition in the field. Hwang, who also leads the architectural practice Ants of the Prairie, was selected, along with seven other practitioners and firms across the United States, Canada and Mexico, for her "distinct design voice" and potential to influence the disciplines of architecture, landscape design and urbanism.



**Samina Raja Receives National Honor for Excellence in Planning**

Samina Raja, PhD, associate professor of urban and regional planning, has won the 2014 William R. and June Dale Prize for Excellence in Urban and Regional Planning. Awarded by Cal Poly Pomona's Department of Urban and Regional Planning, the 2014 Dale Prize recognized both a scholar and practitioner engaged with the theme, "We Are What We Eat: Food Systems and the Healthy City." Raja is an internationally regarded expert on planning for sustainable food systems and healthy communities and founder of the Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab at the Buffalo School.

**Jin Young Song Garner's Top Prize for Prefabricated Apartment Remodeling Unit**

Jin Young Song, assistant professor of architecture, has won the Grand Prize in the Hyundai Engineering & Construction Technology Forum for his proposal for a prefabricated unit for apartment remodeling. Song's proposal, developed through his architectural practice Doinno Architecture, would eliminate the need for onsite construction, drastically reducing project cost and time. He will receive a \$10,000 award with additional support to patent the proposal with Hyundai Engineering & Construction.

Jin Young Song has won the Grand Prize in the Hyundai Engineering & Construction Technology Forum





ABOVE  
Kenneth MacKay has been recognized as Mentor of the Year by the Buffalo/WNY AIA.

BELOW LEFT  
Brijhette Farmer, a graduate student in architecture and engineering, will present her research to a national engineering conference this July.

BELOW RIGHT  
Trenton Van Epps works with freshman architecture students. Photo by Max Warshaw

### **Kenneth MacKay Named Mentor of the Year by Buffalo/WNY AIA**

The Buffalo/Western New York AIA has awarded the 2014 Mentor of the Year Award to Kenneth MacKay, clinical associate professor of architecture, in recognition of his outstanding guidance to young architects. The award highlights MacKay's particular dedication to guiding students in their transition from academia to professional practice. Since joining the Buffalo School in 1998, MacKay has guided students through undergraduate studios, "Professional Practice" courses, and as a graduate thesis advisor. A practicing architect, MacKay is founder and owner of Kenneth MacKay Architecture.

### **Brijhette Farmer to Present Research on Post-Disaster Housing at National Conference**

Brijhette Farmer, a dual MArch/MS Engineering student in the Inclusive Design Research Group, will present her research on post-disaster and transitional housing this July at the 10th U.S. National Conference on Earthquake Engineering, organized by the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute. Farmer's work stands behind the idea that the design of post-disaster housing can have a profound effect on occupants. Her work strives to bridge engineering and heedful design intentions.

### **Buffalo School to Train Citizen Planners to Mobilize Ideas into Community Action**

This spring, the Buffalo School's UB Regional Institute will launch a Citizen Planning School to teach concerned regional citizens how to mobilize their ideas into action. Enrollees receive free technical assistance and training on issues such as land use and transportation planning in four sessions taught by local practitioners. Sponsored through One Region Forward, a federally-funded collaborative planning effort for sustainable development in Erie and Niagara counties, the program seeks to empower citizens as change agents. Participants will showcase their work at a concluding Sustainability Action Summit next fall.

### **Trenton Van Epps Honored with SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence**

Trenton Van Epps (Architecture BS '14) has received the 2014 SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence in recognition of his integration of academic excellence with leadership, campus involvement and community service. He was the 2013 president of UB's Senenmut

Chapter of the Alpha Rho Chi architecture fraternity, which hosted the professional fraternity's annual Leadership Conference in Buffalo last fall. He has also participated in the Architecture + Education program to introduce young children in Buffalo's public schools to architecture and design. In 2013, he organized an exhibition on the Buffalo School's study abroad program.





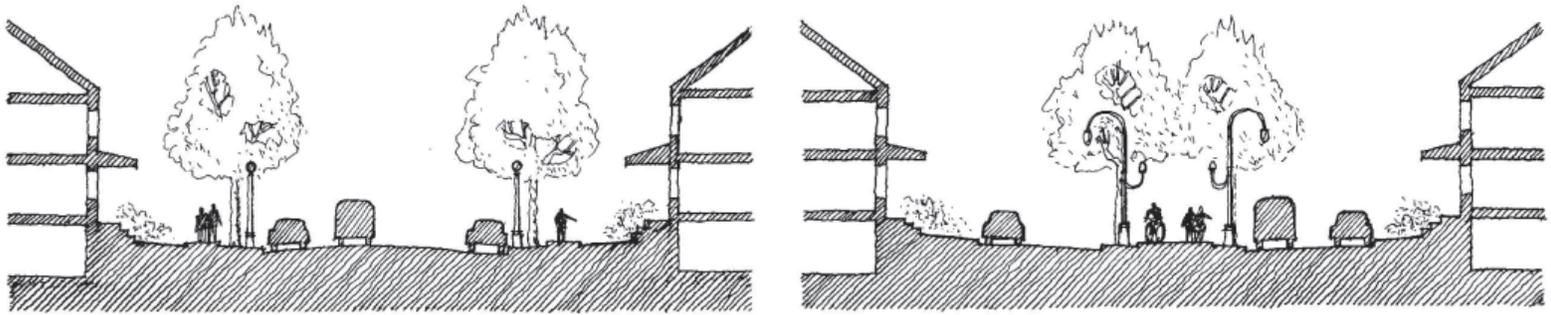
BELOW  
 The solar-powered GRoW House will be designed and built by a collaborative team of UB faculty and students. Rendering by Ned Schelleng through a design studio led by Brad Wales

### “GRoW House” Lands UB a Spot in National Solar Decathlon

The Buffalo School will partner with UB’s engineering and management schools to design and build a 1,400-square-foot, solar-powered home as finalists in the U.S. Department of Energy’s elite Solar Decathlon competition. UB is one of 20 collegiate teams from around the world selected to compete in the two-year contest. UB’s GRoW House proposes three main spaces: a Garden box or greenhouse for year-round gardening; a Relax box as a spatially and thermally efficient place of rest; and the Work box with a kitchen for cooking and storing food. The net zero house will be built in Western New York, shipped to Irvine, Ca., for judging, then returned to Buffalo. Ultimately, organizers hope the GRoW House will become a community resource, open for tours to educate the public about sustainable, low-energy design. Leading the project for the Buffalo School are Assistant Professor Martha Bohm and Clinical Associate Professor Brad Wales. **The GRoW House team can use your support. For information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Nick Lane at 716-881-8051 or nmlane2@buffalo.edu.**

### Work Resumes on Hayes Hall

With the start of spring, the Buffalo School’s \$50 million restoration of Hayes and Crosby Halls is back on course. Due to unanticipated structural issues last fall, the Hayes Hall contract was temporarily halted and rebid. Contractors have returned to the site to resume the project. Faculty, staff and students are expected to reoccupy Hayes Hall in 2015.



ABOVE  
A traditional residential street (left) and the reimagined pedestrian pathway (right).  
Drawings by Hiroaki Hata

BELOW  
"Four Seasons" by architecture student Irfat Alam proposes a year-round recreational and leisure course for Buffalo's Route 5 skyway.

### Rethinking the Sidewalk: A New Model for Residential Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods today function quite differently than they did throughout the 20th century. For instance, pedestrians are more likely to jog or walk for recreation than they are for utilitarian purposes such as shopping. In response to this shift, a recent study by Daniel Hess, PhD, and Hiroaki Hata, associate professors of urban and regional planning, along with professor and department chair Ernest Sternberg, PhD, re-examines the traditional street section and neighborhood grid pattern. "Pathways and Artifacts: Neighborhood Design for Physical Activity," recently published in the *Journal of Urbanism*, proposes a wide, vegetated central pathway that meanders across streets and open spaces to provide stronger community connections, increased recreational opportunities and greater access to natural and cultural artifacts in the landscape. Overall, the authors hope to engage citizens more with their environment and neighbors. Next steps in their research include developing a neighborhood prototype and testing their hypotheses in partnership with a developer.

### Graduate Architecture Students Reimagine the Future of the Skyway

A recent studio led by Edward Steinfeld, ArchD, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Architecture and director of the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access, challenged students to propose adaptive reuse solutions for Buffalo's Route 5 skyway. Demolition costs for the hulking structure are estimated at more than \$10 million. Alternatively, students imagined a series of designs that capitalize on the site's waterfront views and unique infrastructure, including a hub for international tourism, a space for community events and an entertainment complex. The student designs have been presented to the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation as public debate around the roadway's future continues.



Since 1991, Will and Nan Clarkson have generously endowed the Clarkson Chair Program to bring distinguished scholars and professionals in architecture, planning and design to Buffalo. Through public lectures and seminars, the Clarkson Chair program promotes dialogue and scholarship on the study and practice of our disciplines.

### 2014 Will and Nan Clarkson Chairs



ABOVE LEFT  
Lewis D. Hopkins, FAICP  
2014 Clarkson Chair in Planning



ABOVE RIGHT  
Guy Nordenson  
2014 Clarkson Chair in Architecture

#### Guy Nordenson

Guy Nordenson is a professor of architecture and structural engineering at Princeton University. A practicing structural engineer since 1978, he co-founded the Structural Engineers Association of New York in 1994. He was structural engineer for the Museum of Modern Art expansion in New York, the Jubilee Church in Rome and the Santa Fe Opera House; current projects include the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. His research project “On the Water | Palisade Bay” won the 2007 American Institute of Architects Latrobe Prize for research. Currently he and his team have been developing “Structures of Coastal Resilience,” research on climate adaptation and flood hazard mitigation in collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

#### Lewis D. Hopkins

Lewis D. Hopkins, FAICP, is professor emeritus and former head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. Hopkins investigates how plans are made and used and how computing tools can enhance these processes. Recently he has published research on forecasting and scenarios in planning (*Engaging the Future: Forecasts, Scenarios, Plans, and Projects*, coedited with Marisa A. Zapata). He is also developing tools for Information Systems of Plans (ISoP), or web-based systems to analyze networks of plans created at different times and for varying purposes. He is the 2007 recipient of the American Institute of Certified Planners Distinguished Educator Award and is former chair of the Planning Accreditation Board.

# Behind the Design: The “Front Yard” at the Burchfield Penney Art Center

by Rachel Teaman

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BELOW  
The Front Yard turned on last fall with a community celebration. The three towers each stand at 26 feet and project a continuous stream of audio and video onto the art center’s sweeping façade. Image courtesy of the Burchfield Penney Art Center. Photo by Bill Wippert

Since the switch was flipped last fall, three steel-sheathed towers designed and built by the Buffalo School have projected a nonstop stream of audio and video onto the sweeping, 90-foot façade of the Burchfield Penney Art Center. The “Front Yard” installation has transformed the gallery’s Elmwood Avenue lawn into a permanent digital media amphitheater and an exciting new cultural space for Buffalo.

But take a closer look at the sides of the towers, and you’ll note that linear LED lights shine through stainless steel panels perforated with over 30,000 holes, patterned after details of three of Charles Burchfield’s classic paintings. Peer inside the holes and you’ll see a feat of engineering – 42 steel panels joined together with machine-like precision to form three 26-foot-tall, structurally engineered towers sized just large enough to allow a technician access to the 7,000-lumen projectors housed at the top.

The “Front Yard” is the product of the creative efforts and support of dozens of partners in the community, as well as an act of “curatorial braveness” on the part of the Burchfield Penney Art Center, says Brad Wales, a practicing architect and clinical assistant professor, who has led the project since its inception.

It all began in 2008, when Wales, in partnership with media artist and Buffalo State faculty member Brian Milbrand, responded to a public art competition sponsored by the Burchfield Penney. The pair’s proposal for a three-channel video amphitheater for the rear of the gallery won out of a field of 46 entries. Called “Cycles,” the installation responded to cues drawn from changes in the weather in reference to Burchfield’s unique interest in the cycles of the seasons.



RIGHT  
 The design concept for the Front Yard emerged from “Cycles” (2008), a proposal for a three-channel video amphitheater for the rear of the Burchfield Penney Art Center. Rendering courtesy of Brad Wales, R.A., and Brian Milbrand



It wasn't until fall 2012, when Wales organized a design charette through the school's Small Built Works Program, that the project moved to the next stage. Students developed a series of options for a set of towers designed to be as slim and as visually transparent as possible, architecturally referential to the gallery and watertight to protect the equipment inside.

By November 2012, with seven concepts in hand, Wales and his students presented “Cycles II” to Burchfield Penney's director, Anthony Bannon. Within a month the team had the go-ahead from the art center's Board of Trustees.

**“This was a gutsy curatorial move,” said Wales, noting that Bannon had just been appointed director of the Burchfield Penney. “The Burchfield made a bold, visionary curatorial decision that will enrich the city for many years.”**

Small Built Works Students:

Brian Belluscio  
 Isabella Brito  
 Andrew Durkee  
 Ryan Dussault  
 You-chiang Feng  
 David Heaton  
 Hanna Ihrke  
 Ian Liu  
 Alex Marchuk  
 Mike Mieszczański  
 Charlie Schmidt  
 Maya Shermer  
 Ryan Sidor  
 Trenton Van Epps

The finished towers were co-designed by Wales and Isabella Brito, a Brazilian exchange student who developed the Burchfield-based iconographic concept. Over the summer of 2013, Brito was hired as an intern to create scores of technical drawings. Mike Pratt from Watts Architects & Engineers donated structural engineering services. Meanwhile, Milbrand and Burchfield Penney curators Don Metz and Scott Propeack developed the audio and visual program featuring an international lineup of new media artists and sounds recorded from the very landscapes that inspired Burchfield more than 50 years ago.

Rigidized Metals Corp. would fabricate the steel panels, CNC-laser cutting the holes in the stainless steel to create perforated renditions of Burchfield's paintings. The towers were fabricated in the school's Materials and Methods Shop by staff, students and alumnus Wade Georgi (March '11, Architecture BS '09). The fabrication process consumed over 40 miles of welding wire.

Community sponsorship was also essential to the project's success. The \$500,000 installation was supported by M&T Bank, Louis P. Ciminelli and LP Ciminelli, with major in kind donations from Rigidized Metals, Buffalo Structural Steel and Klein Steel. In kind and pedagogical support from the Buffalo School was provided under the leadership of Dean Robert Shibley and Omar Khan, associate professor and chair of the Department of Architecture.

Looking ahead, Wales says he is most excited by what the Burchfield Penney will do next. For instance, the team intentionally left blank conduits in the towers to allow for live performances in the new outdoor space. “Hopefully, we've created an infrastructure that will facilitate a kind of open-ended usage by their curators,” he said.

# AIA Award Honors Dean Robert Shibley for Contributions to Design Excellence in Public Architecture

by Rachel Teaman

BELOW  
As part of his planning and design work in the region, Shibley has engaged thousands of regional citizens in conversations about Buffalo's future.  
Photo by James Sickler

Dean Robert G. Shibley will receive the American Institute of Architects' prestigious Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture in recognition of his more than 40 years of public service as a practitioner, teacher and scholar.

The award puts Buffalo in the national spotlight. Among other things, the jury cited Shibley's leadership in producing award-winning plans for Buffalo, spurring new investment and elevating public expectations for design and planning.

He directed efforts to draft Buffalo's comprehensive plan, along with plans for the city's waterfront, downtown, Larkin District and Olmsted park and parkway system. Today, these efforts are bearing fruit in the form of a booming medical corridor and dense development activity downtown and on the waterfront.

Shibley won the Jefferson Award in a category that recognizes public officials or individuals who "have furthered the public's awareness and/or appreciation of design excellence in public architecture."

"In the post-industrial city, urban design is crucial, and the history of Shibley's work is very impressive," said William Bates, a Pittsburgh-based architect and chair of the awards jury. "He's done a lot within the city in planning, and he seemed to be serving as a catalyst for redevelopment and reuse of the waterfront as well as other types of sites."

Yet Shibley says the significance of the award is the national platform it gives Buffalo, its story of rebirth, and the diverse cast of players behind that work.

"This is really a celebration of Buffalo's resurgence and the role that planning and design play in the remaking of legacy cities and regions," says Shibley. "This is the result of year-after-year of hard work, setbacks and incremental achievements by citizen activists, planners, our university, legislators, philanthropists, developers and business people."





ABOVE  
The AIA New York State cited Shibley's innovative use of design competitions for public architecture, including UB's new medical school under construction in downtown Buffalo. Rendering by HOK

An architect and urban planner, Shibley joined UB in 1982. In 1990, he founded the Urban Design Project, an award-winning center for the study and critical practice of urban design that recently aligned with the UB Regional Institute. He is a widely published scholar of urban design and place-making. As UB's first campus architect, Shibley led the development of an ambitious comprehensive plan that sets new standards for campus architecture.

Looking ahead, Shibley says there is a huge amount of work left to do. "While we celebrate this recognition for the region, we have to have the courage to know that we are far from done. There is no tipping point where the path to a just and equitable city and region becomes easy."

The Jefferson Award is granted annually in three categories. The other 2014 award winners are James L. Abell, a private sector architect in Arizona, and Carole J. Olshavsky, a public sector architect in Ohio.

Shibley will receive his award in June at the 2014 AIA Convention in Chicago, the first of many national arenas for telling Buffalo's story. Says Shibley: "Here in Buffalo, we are modeling this work for others as a sure and steady path to remaking cities and regions. Place-based institutions like UB and our school have an important role to play in the future of a city and region."

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Shibley Also to Receive AIA New York State Award

The AIA New York State has just announced that Dean Shibley will receive the 2014 Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller Award. Part of the AIANYS's inaugural Excelsior Awards program, the award recognizes public sector architects in New York State whose work has furthered the cause of design excellence in public architecture.

The jury cited Shibley, who also serves as UB's campus architect, for his leadership of UB's campus master plan and innovative use of design competitions in imagining UB's new medical school in downtown Buffalo and the Solar Strand, a ground-mounted solar array on UB's North Campus. Also highlighted were his contributions to economic development planning in Western New York through his leadership of the UB Regional Institute. The 2011 strategic plan for the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council laid the groundwork for Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's commitment to invest \$1 billion in Buffalo and the region.

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Join the Conversation

Be a part of this dialogue through our "Buffalo in..." alumni networking and lecture series.

We'll be in Chicago for the 2014 AIA Convention, June 26-28:

65th Annual Honors & Awards Celebration

Thomas Jefferson Awards for Public Architecture  
Friday, June 27, 11 am – 12 pm  
AIA Honors & Awards Gallery and Lounge  
McCormick Place, 2301 South Lake Shore Drive

Buffalo School Alumni Reception  
Friday, June 27, 6 pm  
Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, 301 East North Water Street

Stay tuned to [ap.buffalo.edu/events/buffalo-in-chicago](http://ap.buffalo.edu/events/buffalo-in-chicago) for the latest information

# The Buffalo School Experience

## The Buffalo School's Continuing Legacy in Historic Preservation

by Bradshaw Hovey



ABOVE  
Beverly "Bonnie" Foit-Albert in her Hayes Hall studio in 1992. A founding faculty member of the Buffalo School, Foit-Albert was a driving force in its historic preservation work. She carries this legacy forward today as founding CEO of Foit-Albert Associates. Photo courtesy of University Archives

When Kerry Traynor, clinical assistant professor of urban and regional planning, convenes the Buffalo School's reimagined Preservation Planning Studio next semester, it will be just the latest episode in the school's long-running project of preserving and interpreting the architectural legacy of Buffalo and its region.

That same week, Ashima Krishna, PhD, a newly hired assistant professor of urban and regional planning, will roll out her new course in Documentation and Methods in Historic Preservation, the second of five required of students in the new advanced graduate certificate in historic preservation program.

One might say the just-launched certificate program and master of science in architecture degree in urban design and historic preservation represent a new commitment to preserving our historic architecture. But the Buffalo School has always been preoccupied not just with buildings yet to be built but with buildings that already were.

Beverly "Bonnie" Foit-Albert, PhD, was a young professional in 1969, fresh out of architecture school at Cornell University, when she buttonholed John Eberhard, newly-appointed first dean of UB's "School of Architecture and Environmental Design," to beg to teach architectural history. "Do it," Foit-Albert recalls Eberhard's simple reply. "Millard Fillmore College."

Foit-Albert did, indeed, teach architectural history through Millard Fillmore College, then UB's "night school," right through the time she enrolled in the Master of Architecture program. One hour she was a teacher, the next a student.

In 1974, Harold Cohen arrived in Buffalo to assume the duties of dean, and soon thereafter hired Peter Reyner Banham, a larger-than-life character and giant-sized intellect. Banham made a mark of similar size on Buffalo with the attention he brought to our ensemble of giant grain elevators in the book, *A Concrete Atlantis*.

Few, if any, understood before then where the bleached-bone silos fit in the unfolding history of modern architecture or in the evolving technology of American industry. Few paid attention to the emergence of the multi-story daylight factory building, also treated in *A Concrete Atlantis*. Banham laid it all out.

In 1974, Harold Cohen arrived in Buffalo to assume the duties of dean, and soon thereafter hired Peter Reyner Banham, a larger-than-life character and giant-sized intellect.





/ ABOVE

Today, Buffalo School faculty and students are reinventing architecture in the same way their predecessors did with the grain elevators in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Above, Elevator B, a 22-foot steel tower and habitat for bees, rises in Buffalo's "Silo City."

Photo courtesy of  
Hive City Design Team

/ BELOW

Harold Cohen, dean emeritus of the Buffalo School, was critical to the creation of today's vibrant theater district and the preservation of the Shea's Buffalo Theater.

Photo by Jim Bush, courtesy of  
Visit Buffalo Niagara

Later on, the grain elevators would become the focus of photography by various UB faculty members: Patricia Layman Bazelon, Bruce Jackson and Thomas Bittner. The Buffalo School's Lynda Schneekloth, a landscape architect and professor emerita of architecture, and Robert Shibley, architect, urban designer, professor and, today, dean of the school, produced a conference and book – "Reconsidering Concrete Atlantis." Contributors included architecture faculty member Hadas Steiner, Buffalo historians Francis Kowsky and Michael Frisch, and preservationist Thomas Yots (MArch '02).

Still later, the Silo City development of Buffalo School patron and Rigidized Metals Corporation CEO Rick Smith also built on the Banham legacy and set the stage for recent award-winning experimentations by UB architecture faculty members and alums Nicholas Bruscia and Christopher Romano ("Project 2XmT"), and a group of architecture and urban planning students ("Elevator B").

In long retrospect, it is hard to imagine Doug Swift (MArch '93) doing the Larkin at Exchange or RiverWorks projects (see pg. 24) or Shibley's Urban Design Project leading planning efforts for the Larkin District had not Banham written what he did. Likewise, it would be hard to imagine two Trico buildings still in use and a third in planning for adaptive reuse.

But Banham had an even broader concern for architecture in historical context. He saw preservation not as a matter of saving a building at the end of its life but rather as part of a process in which all buildings were made, used, renovated, repurposed, then terminated or repurposed again. Architects needed to understand "total building biographies" if they were to deal with buildings at all. This concept of "Building Life Cycles" became the focus of a master of arts in humanities program pioneered by Banham and Foit-Albert at UB in the late 1970s.

Meanwhile, Cohen was taking the Buffalo School's concern with historic buildings to the streets with a graduate studio project focused on the idea of creating – perhaps recreating – a theater district in downtown Buffalo. Cohen's students surveyed a 20-block area surrounding the endangered Shea's Buffalo Theater and presented recommendations to plan, design, program and manage a district that at the time seemed abandoned and – in some minds – ready for the wrecking ball.

The studio set the agenda for a series of city-supported projects to stabilize and then restore Shea's Buffalo Theater, create the first new downtown housing in decades in a project called Theater Place, restore the 19th-century era shopping mall called the Market Arcade, and eventually build an eight-screen movie theater. It also sowed the seed for the business improvement district that was to become Buffalo Place Inc.

There's a whole "cultural landscape" in downtown Buffalo, not to mention an economic engine, that wouldn't exist if not for those efforts. Yet Cohen understood what he was working against. "It's not just buildings you have to resurrect," he said. "It's people's attitudes. We had to change the culture. Buffalo hated itself. People thought Buffalo was ugly."

Public education was crucial. Cohen asked Banham to research, write, illustrate and produce a reference book on local historic treasures. With money from William Clarkson (today a faculty member at the Buffalo School), Banham and his wife, Mary, produced what would become the definitive text on Buffalo architecture.

"This book," Banham's preface explained bluntly, "is intended to make it impossible, ever again, for anyone who cares about architecture to say 'We drove by Buffalo on the Thruway but decided not to stop because there's nothing here to look at – is there?'"

Many the newcomer to Buffalo would see the city first through the pages of *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide*. Perhaps more importantly, many longtime residents would see the city with fresh eyes through the book.





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ABOVE LEFT  
The deteriorated halls of  
H.H. Richardson's Buffalo  
State Hospital, vacated in  
the late 1970s.



/  
ABOVE RIGHT  
Today's Richardson  
Olmsted Complex and  
restored South Lawn.  
Photos by Barbara A.  
Campagna, courtesy  
of the Richardson  
Center Corporation

Banham left town but Foit-Albert, who also was running her own private practice, Foit-Albert Associates, stayed. She focused next on the future of H.H. Richardson's Buffalo State Hospital, de-institutionalized and emptied out in the late 1970s. The spires of the hospital glowered then as now above the north terminus of Richmond Avenue, but in terms of public consciousness they might as well have disappeared.

Foit-Albert focused simply on getting people interested in the property. She took her studio group out to the grounds to "experience by presence" and to catalog the asset. She got late New York State Assemblyman William B. Hoyt to put up \$25,000 for research. She schmoozed the director of the hospital and campaigned with staff from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Then she produced the 1982 "Historic Structures Report and Reuse Feasibility Study" – the first in a series of such studies for the complex.

Barbara A. Campagna entered the bachelor of professional studies program in architecture at UB in 1980. She remembers taking a studio with Ted Lownie, a well-known local architect with strong preservationist credentials, in which she was challenged to design a new building to fit an historic architectural context. Later she took a historic preservation course with Foit-Albert. "That was when I decided to become a preservation architect," Campagna recalls. "I remember that class made it concrete."

She went on to earn her M.S. in historic preservation at Columbia University, but she didn't leave Buffalo behind. Her master's thesis (1986) proposed the adaptive reuse of the Buffalo State Hospital. As others before her, she prescribed mixed uses, but she did so in a way to leave the corridors intact. The spaces were too grand and the light too beautiful not to make use of them.

In the early 1990s, Campagna returned to Buffalo to become the first executive director of the Landmark Society of Western New York. Working with Schneekloth and Marcia Feuerstein (MArch '81), they mounted a three-part program to draw attention to the potential of the Richardson buildings: a lecture series, a symposium and a book (*Changing Places: Remaking Institutional Buildings and Grounds*, 1995). The lecture series was crucial.

"We were at a point where much of the local community thought the place was awful and scary and dark and foreboding," Campagna said. The series of talks gave people a broader understanding that the place had value and – most of all – was an opportunity.

Her relationship to the Richardson complex went on: as "project philosopher" on an early master plan and later as a member of the Richardson Center Corporation board in 2006.

Elizabeth Cromley came to Buffalo in 1980 to replace Banham as historian on the faculty. Early on she worked with fellow faculty member Francis Downing to create a history of Buffalo housing types. Members of a graduate studio did measured drawings of Buffalo houses ranging from working-class cottages to grand mansions.

Just as important, and more interesting from Cromley's perspective, the students researched the lives of the people who lived in those homes. They combed through census files, street directories and newspapers to find out who those inhabitants were and how they lived. Were they servants? Were they immigrants? What work did they do?

This was the kind of research Cromley did in producing her 1990 book, *Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments*. She even scoured novels for clues to lives lived. It was painstaking work.

Cromley served on the Buffalo Preservation Board in the mid-1980s. The experience underscored for her the importance of public awareness in promoting historic preservation. If people didn't understand the value of the architecture and the stories behind it, there was little hope of getting their support for the programs that made preservation possible.

"One of the things that made work in preservation so difficult," Cromley recalled, "was that the constituencies were so diverse and they held different things as important."

There was an older Buffalo element whose interests were defined by personal memories of places and a particular aesthetic sensibility. And there were those who were interested in the actual history of buildings. A proposal to expunge the "modernist improvements" to facades and signage on a section of Main Street in downtown generated

conflict along those lines. Cromley's research of old photographs of the street revealed that building facades were varied and signage was jumbled and garish – not discreet and orderly as some "remembered."

**"Oh no," people said, "It was never like that." Except that it was.**

Like another Buffalo School faculty member, Jack Quinan, Cromley was also involved at the beginning of efforts to preserve the Darwin D. Martin House, a Frank Lloyd Wright masterpiece. UB acquired the building in the 1960s but later abandoned the idea that it serve as the official house of the university president. As UB President Robert Ketter prepared to vacate, some began to realize that the whole house was in jeopardy. Frank Lloyd Wright furniture and windows were hot items at the time; some pieces from the house went missing.

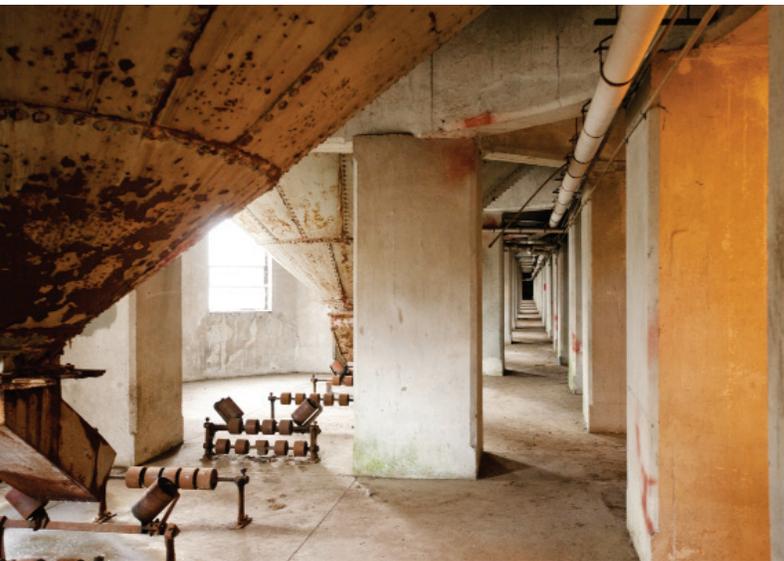
They began to talk not only about preserving the house but exactly how and for what purposes. The minions of Wright's estate showed up from Taliesin West to suggest strongly it should be preserved to highlight the bottomless genius of the architect. Some identified the year 1909 as the building's "moment of perfection" and thus the period to which it should be restored.

That would have meant, Cromley points out, removing the skylight that had been put in somewhat later to help with Mrs. Martin's poor eyesight. It would also have required restoring the original position of a wall that had been moved to allow more natural daylight to penetrate the house.

"If you're going to be committed to the idea of a 'moment of perfection' you have to lie," Cromley said. In that case, you had to deny the fact that still later the house was divided into two units or that parts of the complex were later demolished to make way for construction of a small apartment building. "Very few preservationists are interested in the full biography of the house."



ABOVE  
The Darwin Martin House today,  
after its \$50 million restoration  
Photo by Biff Henrich /IMG\_INK,  
courtesy Martin House  
Restoration Corporation



ABOVE /  
Kerry Traynor (above top), clinical assistant professor of urban and regional planning, says she is drawn to stories of the people who worked in Buffalo's historic spaces – for instance, the scoopers who helped move grain from ships to storage bins and tanks in Buffalo's grain silos (above bottom).  
Photos by Douglas Levere; background image in portrait of Kerry Traynor by Bruce Jackson

Traynor, who came to UB in the late 1980s, remembers Cromley. “She was an amazing history teacher,” Traynor said. “She could make the stories of people come alive. For me, historic preservation is about the story.”

Traynor finished a bachelor’s degree and then her master of architecture at UB in 1991. After graduate studies and a faculty job at Mississippi State University, she returned to Buffalo in 1996. Today Traynor is a key member of the team delivering the new degree and certificate programs in historic preservation.

Traynor, who also studied with Foit-Albert, appreciates the “headline” stories about celebrated architects like Louis Sullivan or Frank Lloyd Wright or their famous clients. But the out-of-the-way stories are even more appealing. She worked with UB faculty member Bruce Jackson to document the grain silos of the Old First Ward. Sure, there is the story about the formalist and modernist agendas, the technologies of continuous concrete pouring that made the buildings possible. But they also found caricatures of the workers and the people of the Old First Ward etched in the concrete of those silos.

The practical work of the preservation architect is in crafting national register nominations, tax credit applications, surveys and the like. And Traynor, who runs a preservation planning consultancy, has done all of the above. But for Traynor the fascination comes in the deeper researches. Like Cromley, she has examined the flowering of apartment buildings in Buffalo around the turn of the century. Before 1896 there was no mention in the city directory of anything called an “apartment.” In the year that term first appeared, it described 70 buildings in Buffalo. By 1900 that number almost doubled. It grew another increment by 1910 before leveling off. What was going on there? Surely more than just a developer blip around the Pan American Exposition.

The difference with Traynor’s work is that searchable computer databases of city directories and census data make it possible to track who lived at a particular address, how

long they lived there, and their occupation, which makes it easier to piece together some idea of why people took to this new form of housing and how they lived.

**“To me, that’s historic preservation,” said Traynor, who has pursued much of this work through award-winning preservation planning studios at the Buffalo School. “It’s the story about the city.”**

It has been to a great extent also a story about the Buffalo School. The lives and careers of people who care about our history and our architecture are intertwined in the lives of the buildings and in the lives of each other. Like much of this work, the effort to save H.H. Richardson’s monumental Buffalo State Hospital has come full circle.



ABOVE  
A shared passion: Buffalo School graduates Barbara A. Campagna (left) and Monica Pellegrino Faix (right) at today's Richardson Olmsted Complex. Photo courtesy of Barbara A. Campagna

Monica Pellegrino Faix earned her MUP from the Buffalo School in 2006 and the next year became the first executive director of the Richardson Center Corporation. There she has been responsible for setting up the financial system, facilitating the deliberations of the board, managing public engagement, supervising studies and reports, and overseeing implementation of the Richardson Olmsted Complex master plan, developed in 2009 with the help of Shibley and the Urban Design Project. Her assistant is recent Buffalo School graduate Christine Krolewicz (MUP '13). Overseeing the design team is Courtney Creenan (MARCH/MUP '12) of Flynn Battaglia Architects, a leading Buffalo practice co-founded by alumnus Peter T. Flynn (MARCH '73).

Last fall, the Richardson Center Corporation unveiled the new South Lawn landscape design, a project chosen to dramatize the progress taking place. Pellegrino Faix says the \$10 million stabilization effort on the other side of the complex (parts of which have been completed by Foit-Albert Associates) is practically speaking more consequential.

In 2016 the first phase of work will be complete with the opening of the hotel, conference center and architecture center – a tidy decade after the founding of the new organization. “I think 10 years is a really remarkable time frame for such an enormous undertaking,” Pellegrino Faix concluded. The board was deliberate in setting the vision and direction of the project, she said, but after that “it moved at breakneck speed.”

Of course, Foit-Albert points out, it's not just 10 years. It's more than 30 years since people first started to ask questions about the future of the old Buffalo State Hospital. Or since they first started talking about the grain elevators. Or worrying about the fate of the Martin House. “It's been a long time,” said Foit-Albert, “but that's what it takes.”

The work continues now through new educational programs and a broader, international view of the topic.

BELOW  
Ashima Krishna at Hampi, a World Heritage Site in the state of Karnataka, India. The newly appointed faculty member brings a global perspective to the program through her research of historic urban landscapes in developing countries. Photo courtesy of Ashima Krishna

Krishna, who grew up in Lucknow, India, is an architect and historic preservation planner who researches the preservation and management of historic landscapes, including religious and world heritage sites, in developing countries. She hopes the new programs will “get our students to not only think locally and regionally, but also try and understand the incredible cognitive, cultural, physical and economic impacts of cultural heritage and its preservation in a more global perspective.”

She also brings an interest in management and governance of preservation processes — the political and financial nitty-gritty of how to get it all done. Which sounds like something that might come in handy around here.



# Research Spotlight

## Graduate Planning Students Help Put Rural WNY Community on the Map for Local Energy Planning

by Rachel Teaman

A group of Buffalo School graduate planning students has just handed off a plan that could make Wyoming County in Western New York a flagship for alternative energy development in New York State, if not the nation. Nestled between the Genesee Valley and the plains of Lake Erie, the primarily rural community is already a hotbed of alternative energy development. Nearly 300 wind turbines rise from its hilly terrain, pumping clean energy to the grid. As the state's largest dairy producer, Wyoming County has also begun to tap the potential of biogas generation from manure and organic waste. Energy development is now the county's second largest industry, bringing jobs and building the tax base.

But the trend is not universally embraced, viewed by some as a threat to the county's primary livelihood and rural charm. National and state energy policy is also volatile, with the future of energy subsidies uncertain. Meanwhile, municipal leaders face complex policy decisions with economic and environmental implications well beyond the county border.

"Energy development is an area of great potential, but it also poses risks to our primary economic engine and land use – farming," said Art Buckley, AICP, director of planning for the county and an advisor to its 16 town and seven village governments. "Our communities need to be informed and prepared when these industries come knocking on our door."

Jim Fleischman, former supervisor of the Town of Java in Wyoming County, picked up the phone and called Ernest Sternberg, professor and chair of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. The challenge was a perfect fit for the program's graduate planning studio.

"Our graduate practicum, which we informally call a 'studio,' is the epitome of learning by doing—of reflective practice," said Sternberg. "This was a wonderful opportunity for our students to explore a globally significant planning problem right in our backyard."

Last fall, Assistant Professor Himanshu Grover, PhD, an expert on energy and climate action planning, set to work with nine Master of Urban Planning students to develop an energy plan for Wyoming County. By semester's end they would hand the county a town-by-town assessment of energy development opportunities along with a step-by-step planning and policy framework.

"There are always winners and losers," Grover said, underscoring the value of a plan. As one example, farmland can lose its productivity for years when soils are uprooted for transmission lines or roadways are widened to make way for trucks and equipment. A plan can also help host communities proactively negotiate benefits packages with prospective developers.

From the start, Grover's team set the bar high, envisioning Wyoming County as a model for green economic development through alternative energy. Indeed, the county showed itself progressive simply by pursuing such a plan. With the field still nascent, few precedent local energy plans exist, particularly for rural communities.



ABOVE  
Grover and his students get a close look at a wind turbine during their visit to a developing wind farm in Wyoming County. Photo by Laiyun Wu

Working closely with Buckley and Fleischman, both UB graduates themselves, the students grounded their research in field work, site visits, interviews and public opinion analysis. They also examined the existing planning framework across the 23 municipalities.

The final plan identifies vast potential for new green energy development across the county, but also an inadequate planning infrastructure and mixed public opinion. For instance, while a majority of towns and villages have passed ordinances on wind energy, few address solar, waste-to-energy or natural gas development in their zoning codes or comprehensive plans. Those that have passed laws tend to be communities with vocal opposition.

Taking these factors into consideration, the plan still found room for 235 more wind turbines across 17 square miles of suitable land. And as dairy farms expand to meet increasing demand for yogurt, biogas generation is another area of

promise that can turn farms into self-sufficient operations. The county already has the largest biodigester facility in the Northeast. While still viable on a small scale, solar and geothermal developments are less feasible in Wyoming County.

Just the additional wind turbines would almost double the county’s current wind energy production levels. This surge in clean energy would more than offset carbon emissions generated by energy consumption, thereby reducing the county’s overall carbon footprint and climate impact.

“Those environmental returns convert economically, as well,” said Grover. “Offset carbon emissions turn into carbon credits that the county can sell on the market.”

Grover says the planning exercise has also revealed the promise of rural alternative energy development in general. “Rural areas can be pioneers in this area. Alternative energy development can be an engine for their economic growth while generating carbon-free energy for urban areas, where consumption is very high.”

Designed as a practical guide and technical resource, the plan outlines site requirements, costs and energy technologies for each energy type, along with detailed maps of gas fields, wind turbines and energy facilities. The report’s “Planning Walkthrough” provides sample energy ordinances and zoning language on issues ranging from road maintenance agreements to design guidelines for the size and color of wind turbines.

Now in the hands of county officials, the plan will go up for review by its Board of Supervisors, which represents all 23 municipalities.

Buckley says the plan could help attract energy companies to the county. “It makes the process much more transparent. It shows that we’ve thought this through, that we have a vision, and brings a level of certainty to the business.”

Grover’s students, meanwhile, have gained valuable experience in a rapidly evolving field. “I now have a detailed knowledge base in energy policy and a specialization I can highlight on my resume,” said Matthew Wattles (MUP ’14).

Linnea Brett (MUP ’14) said in addition to the satisfaction that comes from creating a plan from start to finish, the practicum cemented for her one of the most important lessons in planning. “We learned the importance of listening to the client to understand their needs. We didn’t just come in as the expert.”

////////////////////

- Student Planners:
- Leyla Akhuzada
- Linnea Brett
- Parnitha Marnekar
- Huan Qi
- Mingxin Qi
- Melanie Reimondo
- Kejia Tian
- Matthew Wattles
- Laiyun Wu

# Ecological Practices: Beyond the Cliché

by Madelyn McClellan (MARCH '15)

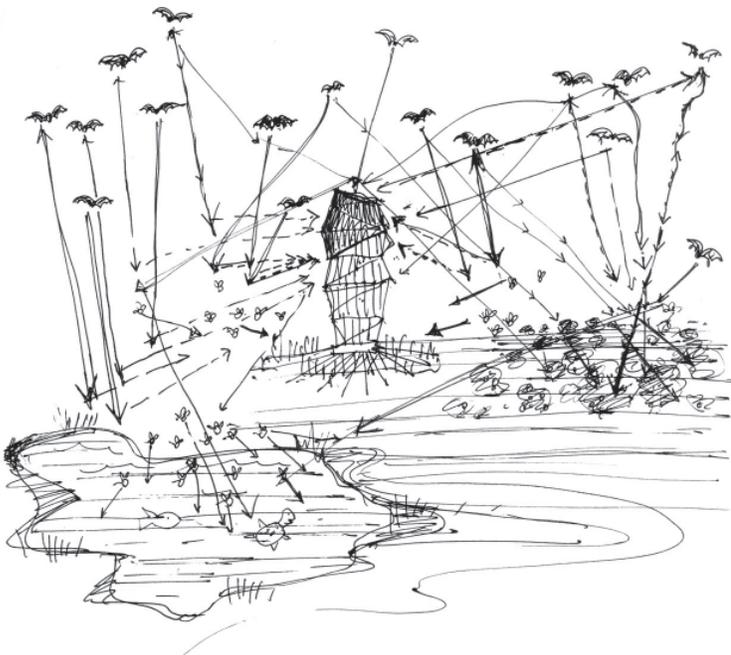
What's in a name? In the case of the Ecological Practices Research Group in the Department of Architecture, a lot more than you think. Indeed, many of today's popular "ecological" studies in academia are often perceived as "green building" or "sustainability." One would not be wrong in assuming that Buffalo School faculty and students have sustainable principles in mind. However, it is the difference in the approach that sets the Ecological Practices group apart from the ever-popular green initiatives. The approach I reference is something less tangible, far more metaphysical, and reaches outside the study of architecture.

Ecological Practices examines the environment - that which did, does and will exist - and the systems that have pivotal roles within it, like social ecology, landscape ecology and animal ecology, to name a few. The approach considers all of these applicable systems and uses them to establish roots, if you will, for comprehensive and everlasting design. Much of what drives design within Ecological Practices is grounded in how to address core architectural values in a perpetually changing environment. To understand the many forces involved and find solutions to these design problems, students must and deliberately look beyond the field of architecture.

Sean Burkholder, assistant professor of architecture and one of the newest faculty additions to Ecological Practices, believes in the need to design more thoughtfully to ensure full cooperation with what is available. For Burkholder, "design of the present and of the future must integrate the reality of constrained and hyper-managed resources. We no longer have the ability to strong-arm our designs into being." Comprehension of these resources and existing conditions is pivotal to the success of future designs. This concept is succinctly illustrated in Bat Tower, designed by Associate Professor Joyce Hwang. A housing unit for bats and sculpture that promotes public awareness of the often misunderstood mammal, Hwang's solution spans the biological, architectural, artistic and sociological disciplines.

The fall 2013 Ecological Practices studio, led by Hwang, considered a similar design approach. Through analysis of the behaviors and habitats of specific animals, from pheasants to coyotes to bats, students were challenged to define the needs of both humans and animals and spatially resolve the differences between them. For instance, how can a species of bird cohabitate with humans? In what manner can a human perceive the environment in the way a dog can? Through an analysis of the animal's biological conditions, students were able to document and diagram their behaviors and habitats and understand the systems of which they are a part.

BELOW  
Analysis of interrelated  
systems coalesce into  
both a habitat and an  
experience in Joyce  
Hwang's Bat Cloud.  
Sketch by Joyce Hwang



First-year graduate student Adam Schiffmacher finds that ecological design practices need to address more than aesthetics: "Analyzing the systems of a given design challenge can often lead to a more ecological approach." For his studio project, Schiffmacher designed a series of programmed spaces that would appeal to both humans and dogs through spatial and, based on the canine's keen sense of smell, olfactory dimensions. Undulating walkways, variable heights and "olfactory absorbers" such as wood, disperse aromas throughout the space, providing for an enhanced olfactory experience for both dog and human. In my own examination of cross-species interactions, I addressed the accession of ring-necked pheasants in Detroit. Specifically, I investigated the pheasant habitat conditions and life cycle and then attempted to design similar spatial conditions for humans to simultaneously experience.



ABOVE  
A human-scale spatial translation of the sequential pheasant habitat per its life cycle. Renderings by Madelyn McClellan

BELOW  
Hurricane resilient glass house, designed to provide habitat for Floridian flora and fauna. Rendering by Laura Garófalo

Another prime example of the Ecological Practices doctrine is GRoW House, a zero-energy home conceived through a series of studios for entry into the U.S. Department of Energy’s elite Solar Decathlon competition. Conceived by students under the direction of architecture faculty members Martha Bohm and Brad Wales, the GRoW House considers ecological systems and natural forces and flows. According to Bohm, the studio simultaneously addressed the seasons and climate and the ways in which humans interact with their environments to create a design that responds to “anticipated behaviors and ‘rituals of daily routine’” and takes cues from the natural environment. As a result, “the house’s architecture gives the user agency in the stewardship of these energetic flows,” such as nutrition, water and energy cycles; the occupant becomes an active participant in their environment.

The innovative application of ecological systems in design is also apparent in “Canopy House,” a recent project by Laura Garófalo, assistant professor of architecture. Designed for a coastal subtropical site, the stilt-house features a vegetative exterior shell that acts as a tree canopy, creating a community “that encourages vine growth and nesting for local birds, air-plants, lizards, and palmetto bugs.” The thick green shell also protects the fragile inner envelope from excessive sun and frequent wind storms. Garófalo’s consideration of local climatological conditions and flora generates a series of co-existent, co-reliant human, animal and vegetative habitats.

As we continue designing in an ever-evolving environment, it is the future designers, working in tandem with established systems, ecological or social, that will succeed in creating lasting architectural interventions.



# Buffalo Matters

## Doug Swift (MARCH '93): "Sometimes You Gotta Take a Risk"

by Bradshaw Hovey



ABOVE  
Doug Swift is a developer driven by something more than the simple "bottom line" — a desire to make the city better.  
Photo by Catherine Maier

It is the particular genius of the best of real estate developers to look at a property — a piece of land or a building or both — and see straight through what exists to what might become, to see a value that others cannot see and, in a sense, to see the future. It helps to be an architect, too.

Across a range of projects in Buffalo and working with a variety of partners, Doug Swift (MARCH '93) has demonstrated exactly this kind of vision: seeing an old warehouse becoming a luxury condominium (City Centre), a 1912 industrial building becoming a successful commercial space (The Root Building), a 19th century commercial row becoming restaurants and offices (Genesee Gateway), and soon, an old industrial site and grain elevator that can become an entertainment and events center (RiverWorks).

Swift remembers the day fellow-developer Howard Zemsky walked into his office in the Root Building on Chippewa Street and asked him and his partners, "what do you guys think about the Graphic Controls building?"

"Well, it's big," Swift replied.

He knew what Zemsky was getting at. Could a building like the former Graphic Controls headquarters, a mile from downtown, be successfully redeveloped for another use? He knew from his work to convert the Root Building to new uses that the general answer was "yes."

But the scale! There's a huge difference between redeveloping a 60,000-square-foot building and doing a 600,000-square-foot building. And if Chippewa Street in the 1990s was a place to be pioneered, the Hydraulics neighborhood in the first decade of the century was totally off the beaten path.

Of course, it's now known more commonly as Larkinville, but the success of the project was by no means foreordained. Zemsky, Swift and their partners in CityView Properties, Bill Jones and Joe Petrella, imagined "Class C" tenants but got "Class A." They aimed initially at "back office" but hit "cutting edge" and reinvigorated a whole neighborhood in the process.

People thought they were crazy, of course. They did no market study. They just set to work. They put in a small park at the corner of van Rensselaer and Exchange streets and started installing the replacement windows. There was no master plan. Indeed, the vision for the building was developed along the way. But they moved forward and people took notice.

"Sometimes," Swift said, "you just gotta take a risk."



ABOVE  
 With support from Robert Kresse  
 and the Margaret L. Wendt  
 Foundation, Swift completed  
 the adaptive reuse of an old  
 commercial block on Genesee  
 Street started two decades ago by  
 attorney Willard Genrich.  
 Photo by Catherine Maier

He likes to think that the Larkinville project has changed the environment for development in Buffalo. It was not so long ago, he said, that a developer wanted to have all their tenants in place and arrange for every available dollar of subsidy before investing their own money in the physical project. Everyone is a little more adventurous now.

Swift's own fundamental interests and motivations were set in place early, around the family dinner table.

He was a fifth or sixth grader when his father, Harlan J. Swift, led the project that would transform the very core of downtown Buffalo. He was president of Erie County Savings Bank (later Empire of America Federal Savings Bank, subsequently absorbed by M&T Bank) and a founder of the Greater Buffalo Development Foundation. As such he was deeply committed to the preservation and prosperity of downtown Buffalo. But how he chose to pursue that goal makes us shudder today.

The bank's great Richardsonian Romanesque headquarters, which had represented financial probity in Buffalo since 1893, was demolished. Shelton Square, which *Buffalo Evening News* writer Ellen Taussig called at the time "perhaps the primary valve in the heart of downtown Buffalo," was sold to a private company. The connection between Niagara Street and Main Street was severed and Main Place Tower, Main Place Mall and subsequently the Rath County Office Building displaced the public street.

/  
BELOW  
With partners Earl Ketry of Pearl Street Grill & Brewery and Jon Williams of Ontario Specialty Contracting, Swift is leading the adaptive reuse of the GLF Elevator on the Buffalo River as an entertainment and events center complete with a brewery, beer garden, hockey rinks and concert venue. Rendering courtesy of Doug Swift

Like a lot of Buffalonians, Swift looks back on those events as an urban tragedy. But he also appreciates that his father and his colleagues lived in a different world. In the 1960s, the modernization of downtown Buffalo was understood to be an urgent and inevitable necessity. The Main Place project – an office tower, enclosed retail mall and underground parking – was understood as a progressive move at the time.

As they discussed it in later years, father and son disagreed. But what they shared was a commitment to the core of the city and a determination to use their skills and their resources to make the city a better place.

His path to the development business was indirect. After school in Buffalo – Elmwood Franklin School and Nichols School – he went to San Francisco State University for a degree in theater set design. It was good skill but the wrong profession. The results were too impermanent.

In the mid-1980s, he took a turn buying and renovating townhouses on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, where he also enrolled in the architecture program at the Catholic University of America. Later, he lived in Connecticut and made architectural models. Not his mission. Around the time his father passed away in 1985, he spent time back in his home town and fell in love with Buffalo again. In 1989, he returned to work for an MArch at UB.

Swift was part of the first studio under the auspices of the Urban Design Project in 1990. He credits Robert Shibley, founding director of the Urban Design Project, with “waking me up to the path I took.”



The focus of the studio was the 500 Block of Main Street – a whack of small commercial buildings vacant or with low performing retail uses on the ground floor and usually nothing more than storage up above. One of the questions was how to make the upper stories of these buildings more usable.

The answer Swift came up with, and which he pursued in his master’s thesis, was to connect the spaces, passageways, elevators and mechanical systems across multiple buildings to make them operate as one, even as they continued to appear as separate buildings from the outside.

Swift’s first project after graduate school, along with Jones and Petrella, was the conversion of the Nemmer Furniture Building, an eight-story former furniture warehouse on Main Street near Chippewa Street, into City Centre, a 12-story residential condominium building.

**“It wasn’t necessarily that successful,” Swift said of the business end of the deal, “but we got it done.”**

After that was the Root Building, which Swift initially envisioned as a residential project to connect City Centre with other new downtown housing developments like the single-family homes at Georgia and Prospect streets. They struggled to get financing for the project but ultimately they were lucky they didn’t. In the interim Chippewa Street became not the spine of a new neighborhood but a full bore party zone where few would want to make a home. Instead, they attracted the culinary arts programs of Emerson Vocational High School, and today it’s a successful commercial building.

Then came the Larkin at Exchange project and after that a call from Robert Kresse, head of the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation. Kresse asked Swift to meet him at a strip of long-vacant 19th century commercial buildings on Genesee Street between Ellicott and Oak streets (once memorialized in a great Charles Burchfield painting).

“It became Bob Shibley’s mission to do something with this block,” Swift said. As a private profit-making opportunity, the numbers wouldn’t work. But if Swift would be the developer, Wendt would be the banker, and “it would be their gift to the city.”

Willard Genrich, an attorney and sometime developer, had owned most of the buildings for the better part of 20 years. He caught a lot of flak for not moving the project to completion. Swift is not so harsh in his judgment.

“He did classic preservation,” Swift said. “Without him putting on roofs and shoring up walls, this block wouldn’t be here. And he put more money into it than he probably got out of it.”

For Swift, the other irony of the Genesee Gateway is that what he prescribed in his thesis for the 500 block of Main Street came to fruition in the “Charley Baker Block,” a group of individual buildings interconnected in a way that made them function as one.

Next on Swift’s agenda is RiverWorks, which will create an events, entertainment and recreation center – complete with a brewery, beer garden, hockey rinks and concert venue – in the former GLF Elevator along the Buffalo River. Working with new partners Jon Williams, president of Ontario Specialty Contracting and original owner of the site, and Earl Ketry, founder of Pearl Street Grill & Brewery and the Pan American Grill, this project, like the others, looks far beyond what is there now to see what might be instead.

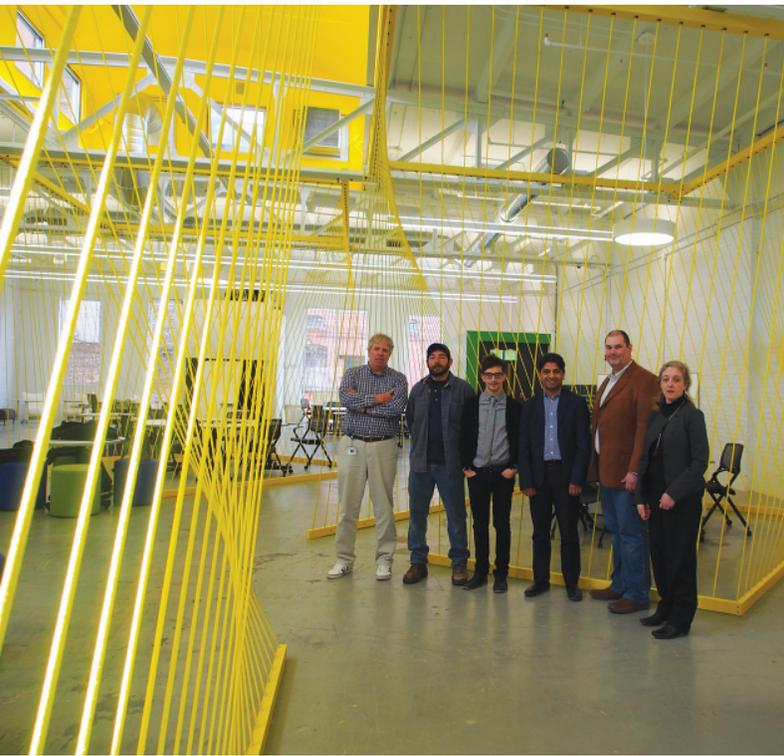
Like many “boomerangs,” Swift came back to his hometown after sampling what the wider world had to offer. “I’m addicted to Buffalo and it’s a dangerous disease,” he says. But he also wants to leave his mark. It’s not much more complicated than wanting to make things better, to improve the environment, to foster the life of the city, to build the economy “and let that be the driver rather than the bottom line.”

**“I’m addicted to Buffalo and it’s a dangerous disease,”**



# Buffalo School Helps Rethink the Future Workplace on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus

by Rachel Teaman



A team of Buffalo School faculty members, students and alumni is behind the design and development of a new co-working space for budding entrepreneurs on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

Dubbed “DIG” – or “design innovation garage” – the converted 90-year-old warehouse and loading dock in downtown Buffalo is designed to bring creative individuals together to gather, share ideas and, ultimately, foster new enterprises.

The project dates back to summer 2012, when Omar Khan, associate professor and chair of architecture at the Buffalo School, along with Matthew Enstice and Patrick Whalen, president and chief operational officer, respectively, of Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Inc., got together to imagine possibilities for a vacant industrial building on Ellicott Street, in the former Trico complex.

Whalen wanted to build on the success of the adjoining Thomas R. Beecher Jr. Innovation Center, where 55 enterprises, from medical technology manufacturers to advertising agencies, collaborate and share resources. Khan immediately saw the potential of the site to fill a void in workspaces for Buffalo’s design-oriented community.

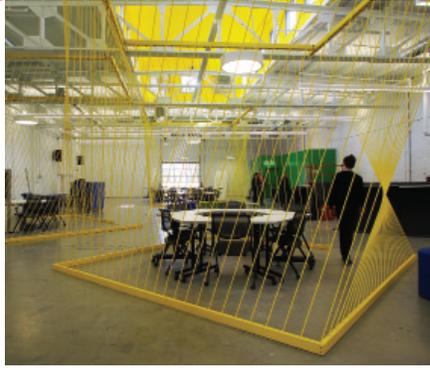
ABOVE /  
The Buffalo School was represented across the DIG project team, including (from left to right) BNMC’s Mark McGovern (MUP ’06); alumni Jon Spielman (MArch ’04, BPS ’02) and Joseph Swerdlin (Architecture BS ’13); Omar Khan, associate professor and chair of architecture; Timothy Rider (BPS ’96) of Trautman Associates; and Laura Garófalo, assistant professor of architecture.

“We’re constantly losing our graduates to other regions,” said Khan. “Oftentimes they want to linger in Buffalo after graduation to work on an idea they have developed in school, but don’t have the proper support to move it forward. What was needed was a different type of work environment where the sharing and mentoring of ideas could be supported. Buffalo is full of creative and experienced people that could benefit from such an incubator, but it lacked the proper workspace to support it.”

The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus was an ideal location for such a project. With nine anchor health care and life sciences institutions and dozens of supporting enterprises, the 120-acre campus has become a hub of entrepreneurship. Business start-ups of all kinds are flocking to the campus to feed off the creative buzz.

Whalen says architecture and design have played a major role in fostering the campus’ culture of collaboration, citing the recently completed Gates Vascular Institute/Clinical Translational Research Center and the University at Buffalo’s new medical school, currently under construction, as prime examples.

To promote the generation of new ideas, DIG’s design would need to foster interaction and “purposeful collisions” among a potentially eclectic mix of tenants, said Whalen.



Khan, working with Laura Garófalo, assistant professor of architecture, responded with a simple, elegant concept: an open plan with a flexible method of separating space without any cubicles, corner offices or separation walls. “Serendipitous and curated interactions are what we wanted the space to produce. That requires a removal of any hierarchy or physical boundaries within the space. So, our challenge was to pair the openness needed for networking and collaborating with the order required for focused working,” said Khan, who would serve as design architect with Garófalo through their practice, Liminal Projects.

The space is partitioned only by three “breaks,” or discrete workspaces for more formal meetings. Encircled by a series of floor-to-ceiling length bungee cords, these spaces are more transparent than they are dividing. “We developed a geometric design using bungee cords that creates separate work spaces yet maintains the spatial and visual flows of the entire space,” said Khan.



The bright yellow bungee cord enclosures are also designed to encourage movement, he added. Each bungee cord is angled along a track producing what is termed a ruled surface, resulting in a sense of undulation, even though the strands are all perfectly straight.

Buffalo School alumnus Jon Spielman (MArch '04, BPS '02) fabricated and installed the bungees, which can be unhooked from the ceiling to create an entirely open floor plan for events or large meetings. “It’s genius,” said Whalen, referring to the bungee cord design application. “This place is architecturally different and that gets people talking.”

A series of five architecture students have been involved in the project since design work began in late 2012, assembling drawings and attending weekly project meetings during the construction phase. They include John Geisler and Michael Kirschner on the initial proposal, and Kathryn Hobert, Joseph Swerdlin and Philip Gusmano on project design and execution.



DIG’s design accentuates the bright, open feel of the high-ceilinged space, with a central wall removed, blocked out skylights restored and the garage door replaced with glass. Trautman Associates, as executive architect for DIG, oversaw these types of structural and building system components, and coordinated the collaborative design team. Timothy Rider (BPS '96), principal of Trautman, served as project manager for the firm’s effort on DIG.

Whalen says DIG’s diverse mix of tenants, combined with volunteer mentors and a wandering entrepreneurial “curator” to facilitate networking, is a recipe for innovation. DIG is also connected to the Innovation Center, allowing occupants – and ideas – to migrate easily between the spaces.

To help retain young talent in the region, BNMC will reserve a number of DIG slots for college students and recent graduates. Whalen is also reaching out to area high schools and underserved communities to identify future entrepreneurs. “We need the energy that young people bring,” he said.

**DIG is intended as a space for the community, with Whalen already setting up entrepreneurial events and Khan interested in holding studio reviews and lectures in the space.**



This principle of design for interaction extends to the streets of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus as well. The BNMC master plan, originally conceived with the help of the school’s Urban Design Project and recently aligned with UB’s downtown campus plan, emphasizes density, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, public green spaces and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

Right outside DIG are the beginnings of Ellicott Park, a five-block, linear green space running along the campus spine. And just up the street, DIG tenants can park their bikes in a dry bicycle storage facility, while enjoying free membership to GoBike Buffalo and Buffalo CarShare. “We want people outside, walking and engaging with one another,” said Whalen.

DIG and its occupants will soon add another dimension to the campus’ increasingly lively street life. An indoor-outdoor patio and café are slated for the project’s second phase.

ABOVE  
To promote interaction among its occupants while still allowing for focused work, DIG offers an open floor plan subtly divided by three geometric bungee cord enclosures. Photos (1,2,4) by Laura Garófalo and (3) by Catherine Maier

# Student Profile

## William Becker (MArch/MUP '17) Brings Enthusiasm and Discipline to Dual Degree Study

**by Catherine Maier (Architecture BS '15)**

William Becker, a dual Master of Architecture and Master of Urban Planning candidate, balances a full schedule of courses while working under Associate Professor Samina Raja in the school's nationally recognized "Food Lab." He's also the first recipient of the Buffalo School's Faculty and Staff Student Scholarship.

Planning and architecture students alike can learn a lot from William Becker; his enthusiasm, courage and time management skills are pivotal lessons for every young designer.

Becker did not start out in the field of design when he entered the University at Buffalo – he was a pharmacy major. However, Becker always felt a certain draw to the realm of architecture and planning. He took a chance, switched majors and charted the course to a bachelor's in environmental design with a minor in architecture.

Becker attributes much of his success to the guidance of his professors at the Buffalo School. One such professor was Kathryn Foster, former associate professor of urban and regional planning and director of the UB Regional Institute. After hearing an inspiring lecture by Foster in one of his planning courses, Becker took the risk and approached her. The connection would soon lead to an internship at the Regional Institute and a valuable mentor relationship.

/  
BELOW  
William Becker at work in  
his fall 2013 graduate  
architecture studio.  
Photo by Jose Pesantez-Rojas



“She gave me a lot of good advice, not to be afraid to take risks and take on challenges,” said Becker. “Observing her energy and motivation was inspiring. When I saw her teach her class with such enthusiasm, it wasn’t just what she said, it was who she was.”

Beth Tauke, the Buffalo School’s associate dean for academic affairs and an associate professor of architecture, recently spoke about the scrappy spirit of Buffalo School students:

“I would call our students ‘can do students’ — meaning, pose a challenge and they can do it,” said Tauke.

**“They have this kind of scrappy spirit, which is really about ‘don’t tell me I can’t do something.’”**

Becker embodies this spirit and then some. A clear example of this is his introduction to Raja’s Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab. Becker first met Raja, an internationally regarded expert on food systems planning, in his senior research class last spring. He knew right away he wanted to work with her and the Food Lab. When he asked to meet with her, Raja jokingly offered 7 a.m. as the only open slot on her schedule. But the next morning Becker was there in the pre-dawn darkness, waiting for her outside her office door.

At the Food Lab Becker is part of “Growing Food Connections,” a federally-funded research, planning and outreach initiative to strengthen community food systems across the United States. Along with being on the team that put together the Growing Food Connections website, [growingfoodconnections.org](http://growingfoodconnections.org), Becker also works on the “Communities of Innovation” component of the project. He conducts telephone interviews and background research on communities that have demonstrated innovative food policy work.

In his work Becker emphasizes the need for collaboration, casting away the old planning protocol of forcing a solution onto a community. Indeed, his own path at the Buffalo School encompasses his philosophical approach to the design fields as collaborative endeavors. Becker speaks highly about the dual major and the importance for study across the disciplines. Quoting a common refrain of Dean Robert G. Shibley, Becker says, “We’re better together.”

**Becker admits the MArch/MUP is a challenging program. He offers this advice: pursue an architecture minor during undergraduate study. With a background in the core design courses Becker was able to enter the MArch with advanced standing.**

Still, logging 20 hours a week at the Food Lab on top of his academic course load, one might ask how he does it. Becker describes his balance by referring to a recent construction technology drawing assignment: “I just wanted to finish it, but I had to set limits. I can’t stay up all night when I have work in the morning. So I took a broad pass at it. I drew the bones of the axon and put the rest of the detail in later. You have to know your limits and take it in strides.”

Besides drive and humility, a key ingredient in Becker’s success is courage and a certain amount of gumption. While he acknowledges much of his success is due to the help of key members in the Buffalo School, Becker proves it takes a strong individual to pursue the help he or she needs:

**“A lot of students don’t realize how supportive the staff is here. Don’t be afraid to reach out to people,” offers Becker.**  
**“It can lead to some great things.”**

# Honor Roll

## CannonDesign and the Buffalo School: A Partnership Built to Last



by Megan Basnak (MArch '13) and Rachel Teaman

CannonDesign, an international design firm with a global network of offices, was founded in 1945 by two brothers, Will Jr. and Don Cannon, one an architect, the other an engineer. Driven by a passion to compete against the best in the profession, from the firm's origins in Niagara Falls they crafted a vision that set the stage for expansive growth over the next 65 years. Today, CannonDesign is active across all of North America, in Asia, India and the Middle East, and is ranked in World Architecture's 2014 Global survey as the 18th largest architecture and engineering firm in the world.

Yet the global firm's connection to Buffalo, the University at Buffalo and the School of Architecture and Planning remains one of its most important conduits for talent, knowledge and innovative practice opportunities.



To explore the many dimensions of this partnership, the Buffalo School recently visited CannonDesign's operations in Buffalo for a discussion with three members of its leadership team, including two Buffalo School graduates – Principal Michael Mistriner (BPS '86), Senior Vice President Keith Alf (BPS '90), and Chan Byun, the region's design principal.

CannonDesign's role as a top employer of Buffalo School graduates is perhaps the most measurable indicator of connectivity across the two organizations. Firm-wide, CannonDesign's staff includes dozens of Buffalo School alumni, from the school's earliest graduates to those with newly minted degrees. Many hold senior leadership positions. There are 18 Buffalo School alumni in the firm's Buffalo office alone. Executives of the firm say the school's graduates are among the best: "Our relationship with the school is more than necessary – we depend upon it. Their top talent is on par with any of the top architecture schools," said Byun.



The feeling goes both ways. "As a global firm with a hand in nearly every dimension of architectural practice, CannonDesign serves as an ideal laboratory for our students and a forum for pioneering practice for our graduates," said Dean Robert G. Shibley. "They remain one of our most important connections to the profession and practice of architecture."

For decades, the firm has directly invested in this relationship through support of the Buffalo School architecture program. In 1989, the firm joined former UB president Steven Sample and Kathryn Brunkow Sample in endowing the Fred Wallace Brunkow Fellowship to produce the school's annual journal of student work, *Intersight*. Then in 2001, the firm initiated the CannonDesign Scholarship to support the recruitment of top graduate students through an annual tuition stipend and apprenticeship. To date, 31 students – including three who remain with the firm today – have benefitted from the program.

Its hallmark is the summer internship, offering unparalleled opportunities for practice-based learning and mentoring. CannonDesign scholars have the option to rotate across the firm's service lines, from interior design, to engineering, to construction management. They work directly on active projects, developing proposals for design competitions or building models, for instance. Each intern is also assigned one or more mentors based on their interests. "If they want to have the CFO as a mentor, that can happen," said Alf. Adds Mistriner: "We would much rather grow someone than hire someone."

ABOVE TOP  
Michael Mistriner (BPS '86),  
principal, CannonDesign, Buffalo

ABOVE MIDDLE  
Keith Alf (BPS '90), senior vice  
president, CannonDesign, Buffalo

ABOVE BOTTOM  
Chan Byun, design principal,  
CannonDesign, Buffalo



Former CannonDesign Scholar Nick Cameron (MArch '04, BPS '01), now a vice president in the firm's Chicago office, points to that as the differentiator in both his academic and professional career. With his mother battling terminal cancer at the time, Cameron said the scholarship allowed him to focus on his research, while individuals like Buffalo School faculty member Harry Warren, then design principal for CannonDesign, and Beth Tauke, associate professor of architecture, encouraged him to stick with it.

"I have been lucky in my professional journey to have been mentored by incredible individuals at both UB and CannonDesign. This is what differentiates both organizations."

Buffalo School interns contribute at a high level, according to firm leaders – so much so that CannonDesign has expanded its internship program beyond the CannonDesign Scholarship. "UB's architecture program is grounded. Its graduates and interns are doers. They are into delivering things rather than talking about it. That's an asset," said Byun, adding that students often introduce new technical skills or exploratory design methods to the firm.



Buffalo School graduates are also on the forefront of CannonDesign's global impact, particularly in the hyper-developing cities of Shanghai and Mumbai, where CannonDesign has offices. Sitting on the front lines of this global movement is Principal Michael Tunkey (BPS '00), who started the firm's Shanghai office in 2005 and will be returning to Buffalo later this year.

The monumental task of building the firm's China operation involved navigating a complex new market and bridging differences in language, culture and business practices. Tunkey says a passion for design formed in Buffalo, and one piece of advice from his mentor, CannonDesign Co-Chairman and CEO Gary Miller, to always "follow the firm's vision and core values and the rest will work itself out," ultimately made it possible. "I was literally on a plane to Guangzhou two days after my [Harvard Graduate School of Design] graduation ceremony," he said, referring to the whirlwind adventure.

"I've never taken a long break and never particularly wanted to. UB was where I found that passion. I'm incredibly thankful for that."

Looking ahead, Tunkey says China's shift away from purely economic-driven growth to sustainable, human-oriented growth will have dramatic implications for the industry: "We're just at the very, very beginning of this shift, but I believe we've reached a tipping point and will see massive change in Chinese society's expectations."

Indeed, as globalization accelerates change in the profession, fluid dialogue between the academic and practice realm takes on increased importance — a trend that's readily apparent at CannonDesign and the Buffalo School.

Mark R. Mendell, co-chairman of CannonDesign played a direct role in this arena. He is a founding member of the Buffalo School Dean's Council, an advisory group of leading professionals formed in 2013.

"Over the years UB has been a prime recruiting ground for us because a number of our top performers are alums. I attribute this to the exceptional quality of the students they attract, to the school's faculty and especially its innovative leadership."

ABOVE TOP  
Nick Cameron (MArch '04, BPS '01), vice president, Chicago, and a recipient of the CannonDesign Scholarship

ABOVE MIDDLE  
Michael Tunkey (BPS '00), principal, Shanghai

ABOVE BOTTOM  
Mark Mendell, co-chairman of CannonDesign and founding member of the Buffalo School Dean's Council



Added Mendell: “Personally it’s been gratifying to work in support of Dean Shibley as a member of his Dean’s Council because it is such a powerful mechanism to connect the academy and the profession – something many other schools of architecture can learn from the Buffalo School!”

This academic-practice exchange is pervasive, extending from the classroom to community. For instance, CannonDesign associates are frequent lecturers and visiting critics, and several serve as adjunct faculty. The firm is also a frequent sponsor of the school’s public lecture series, most recently co-hosting a conversation among UB faculty and students and Buffalo practitioners on public interest design, practiced by the firm through its Open Hand Studio.

**“Our collaborations with CannonDesign continue to enrich our students’ educational experience. The department is able to tap into the office for teachers, critics and perhaps most importantly employers,”**

said Omar Khan, associate professor and chair of architecture at the Buffalo School. “This is a great resource for the school to have in its backyard. I am also encouraged by the dedication of our alumni at the firm to keep the pipeline of dialogue and mentorship open with their regular participation in our reviews and lectures.”



The two organizations are also deeply entwined around a commitment to research-based design. As former director of research for CannonDesign, Principal Peter Hourihan (MARCH ’71) led the firm’s efforts to integrate evidence-based inquiry into all aspects of design, from a building’s water and energy systems to workplace design for enhancing productivity and collaborative interaction.

Hourihan says the roots of his multi-disciplinary and investigative design ethos were established in Buffalo in 1969, when he enrolled in the first graduate class of the “School of Architecture and Environmental Design.”

**“What still resonates with me is the spirit of research through practice and engagement and the school’s learning-through-doing model. It’s still a valid way to build professionals,”**

said Hourihan, who works out of the firm’s Boston office. He joined CannonDesign in 1974 after the firm acquired Building Sciences Inc., a research and consulting practice co-founded by Hourihan and four other Buffalo School graduates.



A recent example of this research-based design at work is the firm’s partnership with the Buffalo School’s Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA Center) on the design of Greiner Hall, an award-winning residential complex that opened in 2012 on UB’s North Campus. Engaging faculty and students through a design studio, the collaboration applied the latest practices in universal design to create a simple, intuitive space that can accommodate everyone, regardless of ability. Post-occupancy studies on Greiner Hall will further the IDeA Center’s research on universal design standards for public buildings.

**Together with the latest research on green design and learning landscapes, the design approach created a model for campus living and a new design standard for the UB campus.**

Among the LEED Gold Certified building’s features are electrical outlets high enough to be accessible to wheelchair users, floor tiling made from recycled soda bottles and man-made ponds that capture rainwater.

ABOVE TOP  
Elisabeth Ann Perreault (MArch ’03), vice president, Buffalo, and the first recipient of the CannonDesign Scholarship. As a frequent lecturer and visiting critic at the Buffalo School, she seeks to “drive the design conversation and the profession of architecture forward.”

ABOVE MIDDLE  
Luke A. Johnson (MArch ’10, Architecture BS ’05), associate, Buffalo, and a recipient of the CannonDesign Scholarship. Johnson is active in CannonDesign’s community initiatives, including the Architecture + Education, a program of the Buffalo Architecture Foundation that places UB architecture students and area practitioners in the city’s public schools to expose grade-schoolers to design education.

ABOVE BOTTOM  
Peter Hourihan (MArch ’71), principal, Boston

“The foundation has been laid, so now it’s just a matter of putting our seatbelts on and watching it go.”



ABOVE  
CannonDesign’s award-winning design for UB’s Greiner Hall features evidence-based best practices in universal design, incorporated through a design collaboration with the Buffalo School’s Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access. Photo courtesy of CannonDesign

BELOW  
The Gates Vascular Institute/Clinical Translational Research Center by CannonDesign has served as a model of design for interaction and builds on a series of plans laid out for the region with the help of UB and the Buffalo School. Photo courtesy of CannonDesign

Greiner Hall’s design is also noteworthy in its response to UB’s campus plan. Working closely with UB’s facilities team, including Shibley as UB’s campus architect, CannonDesign laid out Greiner Hall’s ground floor to encourage students to cut through it, thereby seamlessly connecting the campus’ residential village to its academic core. “The building reaches an arm out to the campus and integrates it in new ways,” said Alf, project manager for the Greiner Hall effort.

The firm is also creating new connections – and designing world-class architecture – on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus in downtown Buffalo. Its facility for Kaleida Health’s Gates Vascular Institute (GVI) and UB’s Clinical Translational Research Center (CTRC) has catalyzed development on the campus and spurred a new culture of design for collaboration. Named by the AIA last year as the most innovative health facility in the country, the building brings together patients, surgeons, researchers and professionals in one “vertical campus.” A two-floor “collaborative core” connects GVI’s clinical care below with UB’s medical research team above.

Mistriner says the facility is part of a broader plan for the medical campus – and the region – that UB and the Buffalo School has helped to establish, and that has set the stage for a renaissance in Buffalo Niagara. “The foundation has been laid, so now it’s just a matter of putting our seatbelts on and watching it go.”

Indeed, firm leaders say the greatest rewards for their work come when they see the connections across their work and their contributions to place-making in this region and around the globe. Says Mistriner: “If the community prospers, we all prosper.”

As the Buffalo School grows future architects to embrace such community-building and a passion for design inquiry, this point of connection is likely to bring these organizations together for years to come.



# Welcome from Beverly “Bonnie” Foit-Albert (MArch ’75) Inaugural Chair, John Eberhard Society



Bonnie Foit-Albert (front row, right) with John Eberhard (front row, left) at a recent gathering of the school’s first graduates and founding faculty members. As an alumnus, advocate, supporter and former faculty member, Foit-Albert has a long and diverse connection to the Buffalo School. She joined the “School of Architecture and Environmental Design” in 1969, engaging students in the study of architecture through the Buffalo “lab” for the next three decades. Foit-Albert is founding CEO of Foit-Albert Associates, an award-winning architecture and engineering practice in Buffalo.

## Dear Alumni, Friends and Corporate Partners,

I write to you today as a proud graduate and founding faculty member of the School of Architecture and Planning. I was fortunate to meet John Eberhard, the first dean of the “School of Architecture and Environmental Design,” in 1968, at a computer graphics conference in Boston. I was so impressed by this engaging, intellectual and dynamic individual that I soon found myself on the teaching faculty in 1969 as John embarked on his innovative formation of a revolutionary experiment in design education.

It is in the spirit of my great friend that I ask you to join me as a member in the John Eberhard Society. It is a great honor for me personally to serve as chair of this leadership group of Buffalo School supporters; I can attest to the wonderful things the John Eberhard Society and its members have done for the school. We proudly list the members of the society and are grateful not only for their support but their efforts to welcome others who align with the mission of the school. They have made an investment in our school that means so much.

The contributions have funded scholarships for our best and brightest students, propelled the research capabilities of our faculty, and financed vital educational and technological improvements in the school. Today more than ever, our world needs the kind of leaders that graduate from the School of Architecture and Planning.

Your support will help shape and guide students  
– and our society – for generations to come. And  
that’s a legacy worth giving for.

As I look back, my life has been enhanced (and entranced) by my experiences at the Buffalo School. Today, I am honored to invite you to join me as a member in the John Eberhard Society. To learn more about the John Eberhard Society, see the current members and make a gift, please visit: [giving.buffalo.edu/eberhard.html](https://giving.buffalo.edu/eberhard.html). Please also feel free to contact our Office of Development at 716-829-3973.

Warmest Regards,  
Bonnie Foit-Albert (MArch ’75)  
Chair, John Eberhard Society

## John Eberhard Society

**The School of Architecture and Planning would like to thank each and every member of the John Eberhard Society for their leadership support.**

The John Eberhard Society, named for our school's first dean, John P. Eberhard, is an elite group of alumni, friends and corporate supporters that share the school's vision and commitment to high-quality instruction, innovation in research, and community service. Support of our annual fund in an amount of \$1,000 or more annually ensures our success in funding both what is necessary and what is possible. Our sincerest thanks and gratitude to these supporters from your development team at the School of Architecture and Planning.

### Alumni

Miss Mari L. Cecil, MArch '86, BPS '84  
 Mr. William M. E. Clarkson and Mrs. Elisabeth Hudnut Clarkson, MA '73  
 Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Dickinson MArch '85  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter T. Flynn, MArch '73  
 Dr. Bonnie Foit-Albert MArch '75  
 Mr. and Mrs. Peter M. Hourihan, MA '71  
 Mr. Iradj Moini, MArch '98, BPS '83  
 Mr. Alexander Scott Morris MArch '94, BPS '91 and Mrs. Katherine Johnson  
 Mr. Paul B. Schmidt, BA '76  
 Mr. and Ms. Douglas G. Swift, MArch '93  
 Mr. John C. Warobick, MArch '99, BPS '99  
 Dr. Cheryl A. Wendelken, BA '80  
 Mr. Edward Scott Willis MUP '98 and Mrs. Tricia I. Kerney-Willis MUP '98

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 Dr. Sam Cole and Dr. Victoria M. Razak  
 Mr. John P. Eberhard and Mrs. Lois S. Eberhard, MSW '71  
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# Alumni News

## Buffalo in Philadelphia Kickoff Convenes Alumni Across the Eras

by Rachel Teaman

The Buffalo in Philadelphia program kicked off on March 19 with a gathering of alumni and friends eager to reconnect, share memories and consider the Buffalo School community's collective work in rebuilding cities and regions.

Co-hosts Gary Jastrzab (BA '76) and Kelly Ganczarz (MUP '10), both leaders in Philadelphia's development community, welcomed fellow Buffalo School graduates from across the eras to the first in a series of new alumni engagements for the Buffalo School.

The "Buffalo in..." program seeks to connect alumni with the Buffalo School and its story of impact through the innovative practice of architecture and planning: "We're here to learn from the work you're doing in the field so that it's part of our legacy going forward," said Dean Robert G. Shibley. "We're just getting started with these conversations, and we aim to keep going."

Set in the Center for Architecture in the heart of downtown Philadelphia, the program featured a keynote address by Alan Greenberger, the city's deputy mayor for economic development and director of commerce.

The tone of the evening was one of optimism and energy around the rebirth of cities, including Buffalo and Philadelphia.

Greenberger discussed Philadelphia's own resurgence over the past decade. Referring to the city's "changing narrative," he spoke of the "unkind" years for cities between the 1960s and 1990s; it was a time of urban disinvestment and abandonment. "Today we're reclaiming and reanimating our public spaces and waterfront, and turning our streets into living rooms," he said, adding that the city's population is rising due to an influx of young adults.

"This is the moment for cities in America," said Greenberger.

Indeed, it was hard not to draw parallels between Philadelphia and Buffalo in their transformations. Shibley noted that Buffalo's renaissance, including a development surge downtown and on the city's waterfront, is the result of three decades of tireless planning and consensus-building in the community. "We were a city on the ropes that had to rethink who it was," he said.



**The "Buffalo in..." program features lectures, networking events, a mentoring program, and opportunities for recruitment of our best and brightest students.**

For more information, contact us at [ap-alumni@buffalo.edu](mailto:ap-alumni@buffalo.edu).



ABOVE  
Buffalo School alumni discuss  
how the new trajectory for cities  
and regions is playing out in  
Buffalo and Philadelphia with Alan  
Greenberger (left front) and Dean  
Robert Shibley (right front).

In the case of both cities, the stage has been set by creative planning. Philadelphia recently developed a new zoning code and launched a citywide comprehensive planning effort, both for the first time in 50 years. These planning efforts, overseen by Greenberger and Jastrzab as executive director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, were honored with the American Planning Association's 2013 National Planning Excellence Award for a Best Practice.

In Buffalo, the city's comprehensive plan and compendium plans for its waterfront, downtown and Frederick Law Olmsted park and parkway system are guiding renewed interest in the region's urban core. Developed under the leadership of Shibley through the Buffalo School's Urban Design Project, many of these plans were produced in the school's studios and by its students. "This is your legacy," said Shibley, who will receive the American Institute of Architect's 2014 Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture in recognition of his contributions to public architecture and urban design in Buffalo.

That legacy of impact continues today in Philadelphia, with this group of Buffalo School graduates at work as architects, urban and transportation planners, community activists, real estate associates and business development specialists.

To carry this dialogue forward in Philadelphia and beyond, our alumni hosts encouraged others to get involved in the “Buffalo in...” program.

“Connecting with alumni opens the potential to meet people both professionally and personally that can add value to your UB experience as well as your professional network,”

said Ganczarz, business development director for Floss Barber Inc., a national interior design firm based in Philadelphia.

Added Jastrzab, who also serves on the UB Alumni Association Board of Directors: “This is a great opportunity for UB and Buffalo School alumni to reconnect with their academic and professional roots and to contribute to the continued success and prestige of the university.”

Asked why he chose to get involved in the “Buffalo in...” program, Jastrzab said: “The Buffalo School and the University at Buffalo played an immensely important role in my personal and professional development. I almost can’t imagine not wanting to maintain a connection to such a significant influence in my life.”

### **Meet Our Hosts:**

**Kelly Ganczarz (MUP '10) and Gary Jastrzab (BA '76)**

We asked Kelly and Gary to reflect on their time at the Buffalo School, the work they’re doing in Philadelphia and why they chose to take leadership roles with the Buffalo in Philadelphia program.

**[Read the Q&A at ap.buffalo.edu/alumni-perspectives](http://ap.buffalo.edu/alumni-perspectives)**

/  
BELOW  
Kelly Ganczarz and Gary  
Jastrzab with Dean Robert  
Shibley at the Buffalo in  
Philadelphia kickoff event.



## Class Notes

1970s / **Michael Haggans (MARCH '72)** is currently researching the facility implications of the digital transformation of higher education as a visiting professor at the Center for 21st Century Universities and Georgia Institute of Technology. Haggans is also writing at [campusmatters.net](http://campusmatters.net).

1980s / **Michael Elia (BPS '84)** is an associate principal at NTD Architecture in the San Dimas office, Los Angeles. Elia acted as proctor for the State of California's Supplemental Exam for architectural licensing for two years until that exam was changed to a computer administered test. He also serves as an NCARB IDP supervisor and is an active member of the AIA Pasadena and Foothill chapters.

**Sema Soygeniş (MARCH '86)** is dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Design at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul, Turkey, where they are offering a new summer program on the architectural and urban culture of the Ottoman Capitals.

**David Galbo (MARCH '89, BPS '84)** has for the past 22 years served as principal of Galbo Architects, a boutique architectural practice specializing in accessibility, low-income and special needs housing. Galbo was recently appointed associate director of architecture at the Paralyzed Veterans of America in Washington, DC. He resides in both Washington and Buffalo with his wife, Kate Wolf, and daughter, Catherine, who is just learning to drive.

1990s / **Victoria Opperman (MARCH '90)** owns Opperman + Others| Residential Design and Consulting. Her design-build business focuses on deep green remodels. One of her projects, Seward Park Deep Green Remodel, will be on the NW Green Home Tour (Built Green certified). She also co-founded two award-winning nonprofits – Sustainable Ballard and SCALLOPS (Sustainable Communities All Over Puget Sound).

**Eva-Maria Neuhaus (MARCH '91)** works across Germany for English-speaking clients in the fields of project management and architecture, with an office close to Frankfurt. She is a member of the Women in Real Estate, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the Chamber for Architects.

**Mitchell Joachim (BPS '94)** is co-founder of Terreform ONE and an associate professor in practice at New York University. He is a TED senior fellow and has been awarded fellowships with Moshe Safdie and Martin Society for Sustainability, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He holds a PhD from MIT, a Master of Architecture in Urban Design from Harvard University and a Master of Architecture from Columbia University.

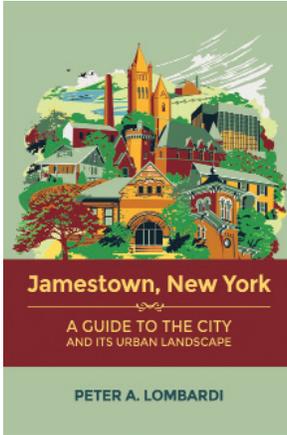
**Randy Lamm (MUP '94)** is a project manager for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, where he leads planning studies and environmental clearance for light-rail projects and Transportation System Asset Management (State of Good Repair).

**Christopher Payne (MARCH '95)** is a project architect at Sullivan Goulette & Wilson, Ltd., in Chicago. Recently, he designed and curated an exhibition of relics and artifacts at a Catholic Shrine in Chicago. Additionally, he participated on the design team that oversaw the restoration of the shrine and has given numerous lectures on the project.

**Susan Thering (BPS '95)** participated as an instructor in the Buffalo School's "Sustainable Futures" study abroad program in Costa Rica last summer. She is the executive director for the Madison, Wi.-based Design Coalition Institute, which focuses on environmental justice and sustainable futures.

**Kevin Trout – (BPS '98)** joined the practice of Scott + Partners Architecture in Burlington, Vermont, where he works on commercial, health care and multi-family residential projects as a licensed architect and member of the AIA.

2000s / **David Zielinski (MARCH '00, BPS '95)** is a project architect with CannonDesign. He works out of the firm's Buffalo office, where he focuses on the health care industry.



**Peter Lombardi (BAED '04)** is the deputy director of the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation, a not-for-profit in Jamestown, New York, dedicated to downtown and neighborhood revitalization. He also serves as chairman of the recently formed Chautauqua County Land Bank Corporation. In June 2014, SUNY Press will publish *Jamestown, New York: A Guide to the City and its Urban Landscape*, in which Lombardi provides a summary of the city's development history and a survey of its built environment.

**Christina Akers-Dicenzo (MUP '05) and Ellary Mori (MUP '08)** were appointed on the board of directors of Buffalo's Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), a civil-rights organization whose mission is to promote diversity and to ensure equal opportunity in housing.

**Robert J. Hoppe III (MARCH '05, ARCHITECTURE BS '03)** recently completed the Architect Registration Exams and currently works for Bergmann Associates in its Jacksonville, Florida, office.

**Dale White Jr. (BAED '05)** is a development project manager with Jonathan Rose Companies in New York City. Currently he manages Paseo Verde, a LEED ND Platinum development of 120 residential units for low- and moderate-income families and 30,000 square feet of retail and community space in Philadelphia. He also manages Third and Valley in South Orange Village, New Jersey, a transit-oriented development consisting of 220 residential units and commercial space.

**Benjamin Bidell (MUP '06, BAED '03)** is enrolled in the PhD program in geography at the University at Buffalo. Bidell is concentrating on the use of geographic information systems for urban and regional analysis with a focus on scenario modeling. He currently works as senior planner in the Niagara County Department of Economic Development. Bidell married in June 2013.

**Keith Short (ARCHITECTURE BS '08)** works for Schaefer Design Hawaii in Honolulu designing and building custom homes.

**Andrew Weiss (BAED '08)** worked in interior design for two years and then completed a Masters in Regional Planning from the University at Albany, SUNY, in 2012. He is now an assistant campus planner at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

ABOVE  
*Jamestown, New York: A Guide to the City and its Urban Landscape*, by Peter Lombardi (BAED '04) will be published in June 2014 by SUNY Press.

BELOW  
Jason Wilson (BAED '09) founded BuffaLove Development in 2012 with his fiancée, Bernice Radle (right). The micro-scale preservation and development enterprise focuses on distressed neighborhoods in Buffalo.



**Jason Wilson (BAED '09)** was recently featured in the *New York Times* for his micro-scale preservation efforts in Buffalo. Wilson founded BuffaLove Development in 2012 with his fiancée, Bernice Radle, to invest in Buffalo's distressed neighborhoods. Wilson is also the director of operations at Preservation Studios, where he assists property owners, developers and municipalities with urban design and historic preservation services.

**Joshua Gardner (MARCH '10, ARCHITECTURE BS '08)** has been appointed as an architectural designer at Foit-Albert Associates, Architecture, Engineering, and Surveying.



2010s / **Kimberley (Moore) LaVare (MUP '10)** is currently working in Albany for the State University Construction Fund as an MWBE program analyst in Administrative Services (Pre-Construction and Design). She married in November 2013 to fellow UB alumnus Joe LaVare.

**Michael Buckley (Architecture BS '12)** is pursuing his Master of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He also recently interned during the summer of 2013 at Atkin Olshin Schade Architects in Philadelphia.

**Eric Ennis (BAED '13)** is pursuing a Master's of Public Administration at Syracuse University. He continues to develop his research on the revival of Syracuse's OnTrack Passenger Rail System, initiated during his studies in Buffalo with Daniel B. Hess, associate professor of urban and regional planning. Recently he has begun to promote the public transit initiative through speaking engagements across upstate New York.

**Danielle Krug (Architecture BS '13)** started at SEI Design Group in February 2013 as an architectural designer. She is working on capital improvement projects for districts in the greater Rochester area. Krug continues to work on her NCARB IDP hours in preparation for the ARE examinations.

**Joseph Swerdlin (Architecture BS '13)** interned at Storefront for Art and Architecture and assisted with future developments at the Morpholio Project in New York City. He currently works as an intern with Liminal Projects (Omar Khan + Laura Garófalo) and Ants of the Prairie (Joyce Hwang), and provides research assistance to Ludovico Centis, the Buffalo School's 2013-14 Peter Reyner Banham Fellow. Swerdlin also works as a research intern with CLOG, an architecture journal printed in New York City.



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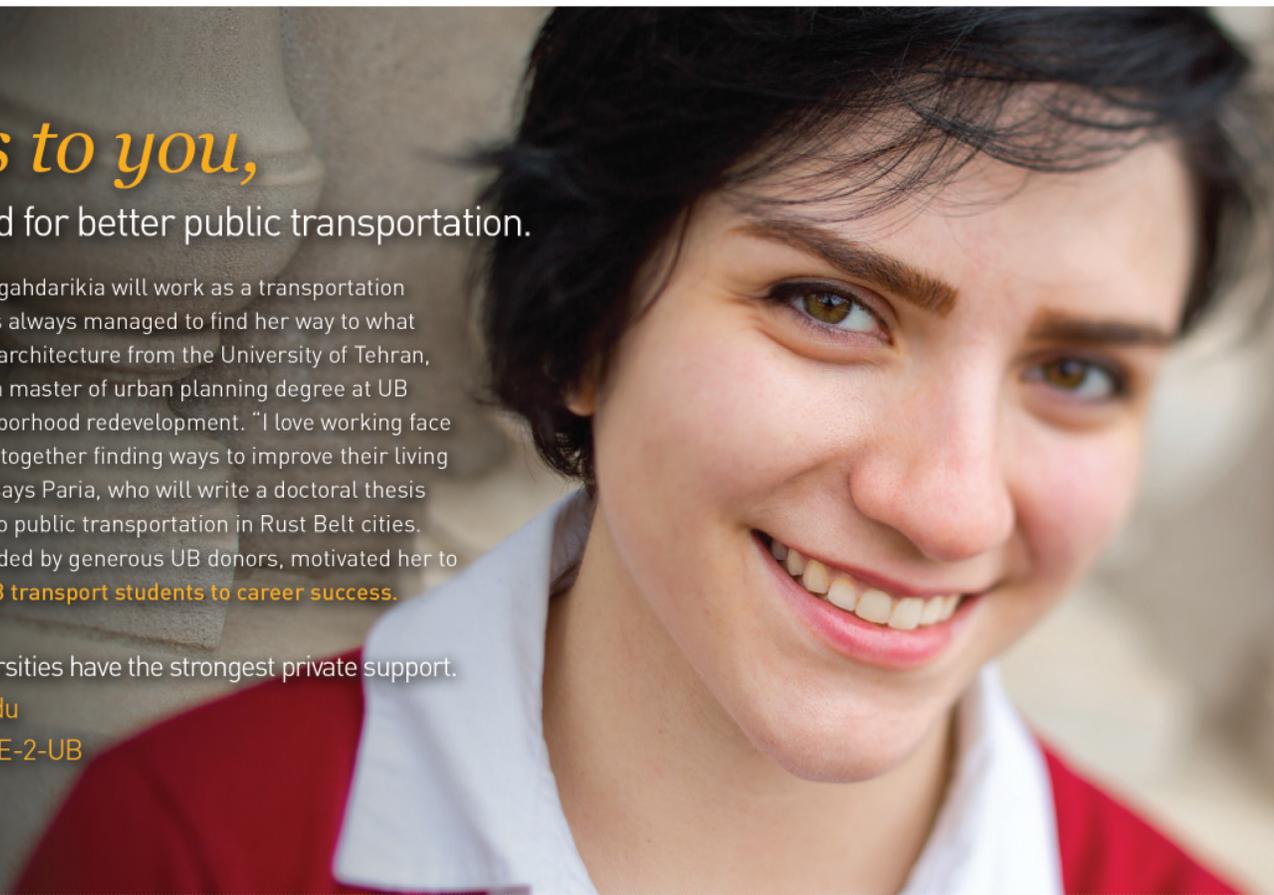


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*Thanks to you,*  
I'll take the lead for better public transportation.

It's fitting that Paria Negahdarikia will work as a transportation planner someday; she's always managed to find her way to what she loves. With a BA in architecture from the University of Tehran, she decided to pursue a master of urban planning degree at UB while working on neighborhood redevelopment. "I love working face to face with people and together finding ways to improve their living environment directly," says Paria, who will write a doctoral thesis on equity accessibility to public transportation in Rust Belt cities. Her scholarships, provided by generous UB donors, motivated her to work harder. **Gifts to UB transport students to career success.**

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