BAS & College of Design launch a new partnership in design
J. Carey Smith, founder and president of Big Ass Solutions, has an interesting (and direct) point of view when it comes to what makes a good designer. “We are interested in both the design side and the engineering side, both the form and the function. A lot of design schools, at least what we see, is form and very little function. Being able to meld that Mars and Venus is a big deal, and you don’t see it very often.”

And because of this, he sees the opportunity for a partnership with the College of Design at the University of Kentucky as a direct route to investing in the type of designer his company needs.

“It’s difficult to bring the two – the left brain and the right brain – together. That’s rare, but if what Mitzi [Dean Vernon] tries to do is join those two things, well, you’re trying to find what I would consider genius,” he says. “People in that strata are going to be naturally attracted to a program that’s capable of doing just that.”

Developing the skills that spawn future genius comes when those at the helm see the potential in playing outside the rule book. “What I find interesting with UK is Mitzi has the opportunity now, it’s a blank slate that she can drive more on bringing those two disciplines together.”

His company may be best known for its high-tech fans, but Smith understands that he doesn’t stand alone in the marketplace. So what sets his company apart? “Our drive is not just the function, the creation of new products, but it’s very important to us to ensure that from an aesthetic perspective, that it’s as good as it can be. I wouldn’t characterize what we do as art, though I would love to, but it’s important to at least approach it.”

Kentucky may not be the mecca for art and design, but with companies like Big Ass Solutions firmly planted in Lexington, the college is primed to draw the type of student who has that dual design mentality. “There’s opportunity here in Lexington. To convince very bright people that they don’t have to wind up in Palo Alto or Menlo Park or Chicago, that’s not where they have to be. They can come here because we can offer them interesting work.”

In fact, many students have already tested the BAS waters through internships with the company. From research and development to prototyping, student interns get to experience the gamut of the design process. “I would have loved to get an internship where someone said just go for it,” says Smith. “It’s always better if you can bring in a younger group and expose them to a lot of different things in a very open environment. If you expose them and encourage that, you can find that percent that is exceptional.”

For Dean Vernon, this is precisely the role of studio culture. “I’ve been thinking about Big Ass Solutions since arriving in Lexington and developing our new product design program,” says Vernon. “This new partnership is the spark we need to launch this program.”

The College of Design with Big Ass Solutions is a new beginning.
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**Left:** The College of Design’s faculty and staff met at the Wild Turkey Distillery in Lawrenceburg for a retreat last January. Photo by GLINT Studios.
Wherever you’re from. Wherever you’re going. Wherever you’ve landed. Make your way back to the College of Design.

Our alumni have been around the world and back, blazing trails and taking names. From Europe’s metropolitan cities to the hills of Appalachia, our graduates are leaving their mark. Now we want to hear your success stories directly from the source. The College of Design is revitalizing its alumni network and we want you to be an active participant.

Visit [uky.edu/design](http://uky.edu/design) and let us know where you are. Or contact

**Lori Matthews**  
*Director of Philanthropy + Alumni Relations*  
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859.323.5290
38°84 is more than a logotype or mark. While it symbolizes this moment forward for the College of Design at the University of Kentucky, it is also a specific place. The beautiful feature of coordinates is that they make every point in space real. These representations point to tangible topography – elevation, texture, color and history. 38°N, 84°W is Lexington, which sits inside a diverse Kentucky landscape of limestone with water that cuts through it producing the industries of the Commonwealth – from ruralscape to urban space.

We forge a mark on the landscape, making meaning of the material found there. As the Norwegian author and architect, Christian Norberg-Schulz, explains, places change with time, but the spirit lives on. Design makes that happen; we leave an idea in our mark.

Instead of Lexington and Kentucky being a second- or third-tier part of the conversation, we are moving it to the top. In the College of Design, we propose a revised vision about what it means to be in Kentucky and to study design within this landscape. Welcome to the inauguration of a new identity for the college: icon, web, social media presence and printed collateral, including this first issue of 38°84, the new College of Design biannual publication.

Since becoming dean of the college last fall, I’ve had the privilege of meeting distinguished alumni, practice and industry partners, and other friends of the college. I look forward to expanding my network and yours. Our College of Design has been home to pioneers of the design industry, who have served as faculty and active supporters of our programs. Our history is rich...but untold. This new magazine will change that; it will become the narrative voice for the college. Rethink Lexington, Kentucky, the core of the college’s new signature: 38°84° the power of place.

Mitzi R. Vernon, Dean
So, where did 38°84 come from?

Geographically, the latitude and longitude of the University of Kentucky is 38.0406° N, 84.5037° W. We trimmed that down to keep things simple, but the essence is the same: we are here to celebrate the Bluegrass Region and the impact our college, our university, our city and our state has upon the world. Our design students are taking what they learn here and translating it into projects that can have a global impact. We start at 38°84, but it won't stop here.

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The University of Kentucky is committed to a policy of providing opportunities to people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

Are you interested in writing for 38°84?
Do you have a way with words as well as design? Are you forever ensconced in the endeavors taking place at the College of Design? Whether you would like to be a contributing writer or have news to share, we want to hear from you. Please contact Julie Wilson, Director of Communications, at julie.wilson@uky.edu and share your ideas with us. Help us strengthen our ties with our alumni as well as our community by keeping us informed of the amazing work and achievements happening in your world.
When I first took the position of Director of Communications here at the College of Design last fall, my first inclination was to make an about-face from the steps of Pence Hall and head over to the Grehan Building, where I spent four years as I earned my bachelor’s in journalism from UK (a long time ago, don’t ask).

How would my experience as an editor and writer translate to the design world? Well, it didn’t take me long to realize where these paths converge. The tools of the well-versed designer are similar to those of the journalist: the ability to edit and retool (no matter how many times it takes); communication skills to recognize and convey what the recipient needs, be they reader or client; and the powers of observation, sometimes the most critical when words just aren’t enough.

In my past life, I was the publisher of a magazine that covered the indigenous underpinnings of Kentucky. Less basketball and bourbon, and more of the unique stories where you had to really dig to find the true gems. And that’s what we’re doing here with 38°84. The magazine’s tagline – STORIES OF DESIGN + PLACE – filters this idea into a tidy package yet as you turn the pages, we hope you’ll see that the world of design at the college is more than just stunning renderings and pedagogy. We’re here to tell the stories that bridge students to alumni and to the community at large: how design impacts the world on a higher plane and why it is a significant factor in the discussion of the future.

We’ve grappled with a few heavy topics in this inaugural issue to give you an idea of the larger conversation we want to have about design and its reach: how we need to erase the taboo of mental illness (page 72), making the argument of inherent gender inequality in the industry (page 28), and the college’s response to the university mission of promoting diversity (page 38).

We’ve also pulled back the curtain so you can see behind the scenes of how the college is evolving to ensure its continual relevance.

A new dean. A new brand. A new vision. 38º84 is a two-way medium: for telling your stories and hearing your voice. Because this is the first edition, we would now like to invite you to the conversation. Talk with us and contribute to the magazine of your college.

Julie Wilson
julie.wilson@uky.edu
SCHOOLED IN ARCHITECTURE

Its history at UK sets the stage for a seismic impact on the future of the industry

In the 1920s, around the same time talking movies were invented, the University of Kentucky’s College of Architecture was creating its own voice with the start of an architectural program in the College of Engineering.
Fast forward nearly 40 years, with architecture coming into its own as Professor Charles P. Graves transforms the architectural track into a bona fide professional degree. This was a pivotal moment in the College of Architecture, as its foundation was formed with an ethos of critical thinking and solution-based teaching versus simple mechanics.

“We put a real focus on teaching architectural design coupled with in-depth history and theory,” explained David Biagi, professor and former director of the School of Architecture in the College of Design.

And this has been the lineage of the School of Architecture, which merged with the School of Interiors and the Historic Preservation Program to become the College of Design in 2002.

At the university level, students have been granted the best of both worlds: the tools of the trade to implement their ideas, and the artistic outlook to invent those ideas.

“There is a chance to dream, to think big,” said Clyde Carpenter, a 52-year faculty veteran of UK’s College of Architecture.

As a professor of architecture and former chair of the Department of Preservation, Carpenter has been on the scene through most of the developments at the college. From its expeditious accreditation under Graves’ leadership in its early days – UK remains the only professionally accredited school in the state – to the succession of renowned faculty who have called UK home.

Biagi explains that engaging faculty with extensive credentials gives the School of Architecture a leading edge when it comes to preparing students for the future. And he’s not the only one with this mindset.

“Wallis Miller and Andrew Manson are considered two of the most outstanding architectural historians in the country,” said Carpenter. “Wallis could be teaching at Yale or Harvard.”

But instead, she chooses UK, one reason being the freedom it affords her to pursue additional career exploration, including her former post as Visiting Scholar at the Royal Technical Institute in Stockholm, Sweden.

Then there are faculty members who bring with them a portfolio of real-world experience that bridges academia with utilitarian tools for life after school. Gregory Luhan is the Associate Dean for Administration and Professor in the Department of Historic Preservation and the School of Architecture. Yet he also brings with him experience from some of the leading offices in the profession: Edward Larrabee Barnes, Eisenman Architects, Gwathmey Siegel, and Agrest & Gandelsonas Architects.

“There is a strong connection from the real world to the classroom,” said Carpenter.

And sometimes the lines between the two are nebulous. Such is the case with the Houseboat to Energy Efficient Housing (HBEER) project in 2010.

“Our students are comfortable receiving a problem,” said Biagi, “then projecting a solution that is neither right nor wrong but they know the steps to get there and the confidence that’s required.”

The city of Somerset, in southeast Kentucky, attracts a large following of outdoor sport enthusiasts, thanks to its location near Lake Cumberland. However, with the economic collapse in 2007, one of Somerset’s main employment industries – houseboat manufacturing – was about to sink.

The houseboat industry called upon the School of Architecture to help, and the result was the development of a brand-new industry, modular housing, which used the factories formerly slated for houseboats. Not only did the concept become an economic boost to the community, but the retooled factories are now equipped to create energy-efficient, affordable housing (and jobs).

While this was strictly a Kentucky-based issue, the resulting solution can have a global impact. And that’s the driver for many of the projects that transpire in studio.

Architecture’s history as a service profession has evolved over time, but at its core still lies the directive to stay steps ahead of issues that will reveal themselves in the future. This also allows the College of Design another opportunity to serve the land grant institution, supporting local projects that have global impact.
It’s all about the limestone.

Part of Florida’s claim to citrus fame is its soil and unyielding sunshine. For Kentucky, its limestone-rich hills set the stage for a pristinely pure water source. The Bluegrass state rests upon an ancient limestone aquifer, which offers a naturally crisp water, providing minerals while eliminating the impurities.
In fact, according to the Kentucky Geological Survey from the University of Kentucky, more than 50 percent of the surface rocks in Kentucky are limestones. And, by now, you’re probably wondering what this has to do with anything related to Kentucky’s bespoke goods. Well, limestone is the nucleus, serving as the provenance for Kentucky’s most famous exports: horses and bourbon.

Our Indelible Equine Industry

The state’s limestone-filtered water fuels Kentucky’s legendary racehorses, giving them strong bones thanks to the ample supply of calcium in the water (milk is not the only thing that does a body good). With more than 75% of Kentucky Derby winners having been bred in the state and many that spend their post-racing lives on luxe farms in the Bluegrass, Kentucky is at the helm of the equine industry.

The industry’s annual economic impact of $4 million proves there’s something in the water that makes Kentucky the “Horse Capital of the World.”

The Bastion of Bourbon

Although it has never been out of favor, bourbon has flourished in popularity over the past decade, thanks in part to the trickle-down effect of “Mad Men” and the cocktail renaissance brought to fruition by today’s craft bartenders.

Thanks to a Congressional proclamation, what constitutes actual bourbon is clear in the eyes of the law, which was passed in 1964: it must be at least 51 percent corn, be distilled in new charred white oak barrels, and be aged at least two years.

You’ll note that nowhere in that statement is it required that bourbon be made only in Kentucky. But it just so happens that Kentucky’s geography gives its bourbon a propensity for greatness.

“The dissolution of limestone over geologic time has shaped much of Kentucky’s iconic landscape, from Mammoth Cave to the gently rolling fields of the inner Bluegrass,” says Alan E. Fryar, an associate professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Kentucky. “The water flowing through this limestone emerges at springs that drew early settlers and led them to distill bourbon, our native spirit.”

These early settlers started making bourbon in the area in the late 1700s, yet even today, many of Kentucky’s distilleries are still working with those same springs or a branch from this aquifer to make their bourbon... which is why the majority of esteemed bourbons come from the Bluegrass State.

Lexington: Birthed by Limestone

In fact, if it weren’t for the appeal of limestone, Lexington may have never become a central spoke in the hub of Kentucky. Lexington was founded in 1775, along the historic waterway of Town Branch of Elkhorn Creek. The year-round fertile soil and artesian springs made the area ripe for the launch of a vibrant city, and by 1825, Lexington was known as “Athens of the West” thanks to its free public library, the University of Kentucky and its refined architecture.

Today, Town Branch resurfaces as a pivotal point in the life of Lexington. The Town Branch Commons is the downtown portion of the Town Branch Trail, an 8-mile linear park founded in 1998 by architect and former College of Design instructor Van Meter Pettit as a means of re-focusing the civic social life of the urban community along the Town Branch of Elkhorn Creek.

This $100 million project proposes to transform the core of Lexington to better serve bicyclists, pedestrians and social urban spaces. Following the winning schematic designs of Kate Orff, Director of Columbia’s Graduate Urban Design Program and founder of Scape Landscape Architects, the Commons will create a linear thread of “performative landscape” that manages stormwater, reestablishes native landscape and celebrates the Karst Hydrology of the inner Bluegrass Region. To date, the Trail/Commons system has raised more than $23 million in public funds out of a total estimated cost of $95 million, most of which will come from private sources. Two miles of the greenway corridor have been completed with several additional miles in design set to begin construction in 2016.

Town Branch Trails will filter into the already popular Legacy Trail, making an even larger impact on the urban structure, making it a safer and more user-friendly city for cyclists, runners and pedestrians.

These elements of Kentucky are just a few examples that illustrate the College of Design’s new tagline “38°84° the power of place.” The region’s geographical coordinates – 38°84° – pinpoint an area unlike any other, the starting point of not only an unparalleled educational experience but from a vantage point with a vision all its own. 0
“Well, I am glad to have made it in time,” Phineas sighed with relief. “Now to collect my prize.”
This story begins with two graduate students and a fly. Alexander Culler, Danny Travis and Phineas...the latter being more than just your everyday Musca domestica Linnaeus. He is the epic hero of The Complete Beautifully Banal, published in 2015, by Travis and Culler, the latter being a 2012 architecture graduate from the UK College of Design.

The graphic novel is the story of Phineas the fly and his journey to find his way back home. And Culler and Travis came up with the idea during graduate school. Graduate school for architecture.

But before you question these methods, let’s take a look at the steps leading up to this literary venture.

In 2015, Culler and Travis met while working on an architectural technology project at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). Their assignment earned them a B from their professor, but the real achievement was discovering that their unique skill sets matched up nicely to form a dynamic duo.

Then came the Blank Space Fairy Tales competition, which invites architects, designers, writers, artists, engineers and all other manner of creative types to submit an original architectural fairy tale. The only requirements for each entry are a text narrative and five images; how you choose to convey your theme through these mediums is up to you.

Culler and Travis chose the graphic novel route, and out of more than 1,200 participants from 65 countries, they came in 2nd place. With CAD drawings and a whimsical storyline, the tale of Phineas and his not-so-fantastic plights to escape a closed office building came to life. It’s a mundane circumstance told in the most extraordinary way.

There may be more than six degrees of separation from architecture school to graphic novelist, but if you think about it from Culler’s perspective, the end result is the same: to communicate. “The crux of architecture’s responsibility is to communicate information,” explained Culler. “The skill sets we learn in school set us up in a position to apply those to graphic novels.”
And exactly how is that? “The flow, the composition of the story... we work at a lot of different scales, which is a very architectural concept, so we're finding ways in narrative to pinpoint [the story] in a curated way,” said Culler.

But don’t expect Culler to swap his architectural scales for strictly pen and paper. He graduated this past spring with his master’s degree in architecture from UIC. And now, he's on his way to a new position at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM) in Chicago.

“Now as I am able to work in the profession, ultimately there will be a shift of focus from academic to practical pursuits,” he admits. “But communication of ideas will remain important.”

With his new career comes new responsibilities, though Culler is well prepared. “Some of what I'll do is competitions at the office, and with that comes the responsibility to work quickly but communicate effectively.”

And for Culler, the art of the story is what will set him apart. “Storytelling is really the first impression that can be made,” he said. “If it's the public or a developer on a project, the effectiveness of the story to resonate is the best way to produce.”

To learn more about the Blank Space Fairy Tales competition, visit blankspaceproject.com.

For an overview of The Complete Beautifully Banal novel or to purchase your own copy, visit archhero.com/beautifullybanal.
A college is only as good as the students it produces. Here we give you a glimpse into the intensive study and work that students experience in their design studios. The following images are from architecture and interiors studios in 2015-16.

**Student Work**

The final studio project explored the use of courtyards and connective spatial voids within the architectural construct of a cubic garden house. The image is of a 1/2" scale model constructed by Jason Grout during the Fall 2016 semester for the introductory 151 studio.

**Student: Jason Grout**  
Faculty: Jordan Hines

---

**Fall 2015 Integrated Architectural Solutions Design Studio ARC 750:** This team project advanced an innovative design solution to expand the College of Design. The compound form unravels around an interior vessel of occupied spaces, and is clad with a high-performance layer of solar protection over a glazed curtainwall with apertures. The site manipulation yields outdoor learning areas and a mock-up fabrication yard by carving into the gently rolling landscape while situating the building’s form. This studio was sponsored by The UK Student Sustainability Council.

**Students: Hyo Jae Lee & Aaron Fritsch**  
Faculty: Michael Jacobs & Bruce Swetnam

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As a culmination of the Interiors program, the fourth-year studio experience encourages students to examine personal interests aligned with the phases of design. In response, Megan Conrad’s project “Revitalizing the Appalachian Trail: using design to support the physical and psychological needs of hikers and promote the formation of communities along the Appalachian Trail,” conceptualizes individual treehouses for hikers alongside a main building that includes a ranger station, retail space, nurse station, dining, phone rooms, as well as a common area with climbing wall and book swap.

**Student: Megan Conrad**  
Faculty: Helen Turner

---

Led by Assistant Professor/Co-PI Martin Summers and Senior Research Engineer-CAER Michael Wilson, architecture students Owen Duross and Thompson Burry developed “Point of Departure: Place Making and Identity Via Integrated, Didactic & Sustainable Transit Shelters,” a high-performance transit shelter that earned them a 2015 Sustainability Challenge Grant from the University of Kentucky.

**Students: Owen Duross & Thompson Burry**  
Faculty: Martin Summers

---


**Student: Megan Haley**  
Faculty: Ebrahim Poustinchi

---

Haley Jo Robinson explores digital fabrication in this design for a panel based on lyrics by the music duo, TWENTY øNE PILOTøS. The first-year design studio in the School of Interiors provides opportunities for students to explore the inter-related nature of hand and digital making, abstracting ideas from cultural products, and thinking big while working at human scale.

**Student: Haley Jo Robinson**  
Faculty: Patrick Lee Lucas & Lindsey Fay
Clines sisters use their design experience for social change

By Julie Wilson
The dawn of a dream come true doesn't always actualize with confetti and champagne toasts. Sometimes it looks like this: computer keyboard on your lap, lying in bed with your sister next to you, brainstorming about your future and its uncertain path.

Vision begets realization, and for Colleen and Maggie Clines – sisters and graduates of the University of Kentucky – the procurement of their company, Anchal Project, came about in that very way. “We were both figuring out Anchal, is this a real thing?” said Colleen. “We were just two kids in our bed, launching a collection. Then we were like ‘I guess we’re doing this!’”

Driven by altruism and not financial gain, Anchal Project is a 501c3 in Louisville that marries design and social change to offer employment opportunities to women in Kolkata, India, whose main source of income often comes from prostitution.

For two young ladies from Louisville who attended school in Lexington, the pathway to India may not seem obvious, but the trajectory makes sense when you learn more about the people and ideas they encountered along the way.
School Days

Colleen, who graduated from the Department of Landscape Architecture in 2008, explains the natural overlap between design and social consciousness. “It’s more about the understanding of urban systems, looking at huge networks and issues, all of these things overlap in [complexity],” she said. “All of these things can be applied to social systems.”

The ultimate push for her came during graduate school at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). In conjunction with her landscape architecture studio, Colleen took a seminar class called Design for Development. “This class is where I learned that our background in design could be applied to do socially good things,” she explained. “That was my aha moment of pulling this all together.”

As a graduate of the School of Architecture in 2011, Maggie sees a clear connection between her degree and her work as creative director with Anchal Project. “We hustle,” she said with a chuckle. “[An] element I think has contributed to the success of this company is the work ethic instilled in design school. We’re pulling all-nighters just like in school, but you’re used to it. We [aren’t] afraid of the work that goes into it.”

The core of her tenacity stems from problem-solving as an undergrad. “You’re not worried about failure because you’re used to prototyping stuff along the way: here’s an issue, what am I going to do to solve it?,” she explained. “Then we test it out, it doesn’t work, so we try this other thing.”

Some things, however, are remarkably different.

“The design language that you acquire during school is so drastically different than sitting down with business advisors or potential investors,” said Maggie, “so you have to quickly adapt.”

Below: Maggie (left) and Colleen Clines examine the growth of their plant beds, located in the Portland neighborhood of Louisville. The flowers and plants will be processed to create the natural dyes for the fabrics used in their Anchal Project collections.

Photos from India courtesy of Maggie Clines.
“We’re pulling all-nighters just like in school, but you’re used to it. We [aren’t] afraid of the work that goes into it.”

—Maggie Clines
Maggie Clines helped the women of the Anchal Project learn aspects of the color wheel through a paint-by-number exercise. Now the artisans use their own keen eye for color to choose shades for the collections.
The Road to India

And this quick adaptation has come in handy in their relationships with the artisans in India, as they are a critical cog in the current and future success of Anchal Project (see sidebar).

Six years ago, Colleen took her first trip to India with her RISD studio, and from that moment on, the idea for Anchal Project was born. “It’s been pretty amazing to watch the artisans grow over time and blossom into strong, confident women,” she said.

The female artisans behind Anchal Project cut, sew and dye materials to create brilliant textiles: from quilts and pillows to fashionable accessories like purses and scarves. Impressive considering these women had no prior experience in product design ... or little else. “They couldn’t write their name before,” explained Colleen. “Many are illiterate; they don’t get past 4th or 5th grade.”

Alas, the process did not happen overnight – for the sisters nor the artisans. The first obvious barrier? Language. But compassion translates across all cultures. “You may not share the same language, but you can share a couple words and smiles,” said Maggie.

Luckily, both parties shared a common practice in the love of color. “Their eye for saris!” exclaimed the ladies in near unison. It’s common knowledge that vivid pigment is a strong element within Indian culture, so now it was just a matter of harnessing that eye for color.

To start, Maggie spent time teaching the artisans about the color wheel. “These women had never held paintbrushes before, so we did a paint-by-number with them,” she said.

This has allowed the project participants to develop their own style. “We can’t design every quilt, so we teach them colors that please the United States eye,” explained Colleen. “The stuff we get now is stunning; it’s so impressive their eye for matching these pieces together.”
And for those who may not have the eye for color, Colleen and Maggie have created another opportunity for these women to participate by physically making the natural dye for the pieces in the Anchal Project collections.

This embodies the soul of what design thinking means to the sisters. “The local women we’re going to be working with, the programs are designed around them, so it’s not that we’re coming up with a solution and projecting it on them,” said Maggie.

Colleen explained further: “Whenever we’re back in India, we’re always looking to communicate with the artisans: how have your needs changed? What can we do to provide different services? That’s how we’re introducing our new natural dye, to be able to supply additional skills. Not everyone wants to sew a quilt, so what else can we do?”

So far, this entrepreneurial philosophy has allowed them to train 150 women and employ 80 of them full-time. That may be a small percentage of Kolkata’s nearly 5 million people, but the mission is to provide a long-term solution for the city’s women looking to get out of the sex trade.

“We could be hiring hundreds of women. There is a dramatic need in this city because it’s such a hub for prostitution,” explained Colleen. “But we want to do this holistically and employ with full-time status because otherwise you’re not combating anything. You make one blanket a year, that’s not helping anyone.”

It’s the ripple effect: long-term effects from one, small initial action. And so far it’s working. Colleen noted that some of the women have left their cooperative and found their own jobs, even one who opened her own dress shop.

“Once we started seeing the impact and befriending the women we were working with in India, it was like there’s no turning back,” Maggie said.

Because there’s no turning back on family. “We have this word ‘didi,’ which means ‘sister’ in Indian,” explained Maggie. “We affectionately call each other didi in this office. They call us didi when we’re [in India]. It’s just incredible how it spreads.”
The Millennial Movement

For older generations, this mode of conducting business may seem either naïve or unsustainable. This is what sets millennials apart.

Anchal Project has captured the zeitgeist of this generation: businesses that put people over profit. “I think that’s the nature of where the design field is going,” said Maggie. “It’s more collaborative, and you’re trying to address bigger problems.”

True, but the philosophy didn’t necessarily stem from an ardent desire to benefit humanity. Perhaps it came right down to the harsh reality of a slow economic climate, which was alive and (un)well in 2008 when Colleen graduated from RISD.

“I can’t do what I thought I could do with this design degree, so how could I figure it out?” explained Maggie of the rise in graduates-turned-entrepreneurs. “There was so much innovation in that moment. People were just like ‘Well, if it doesn’t exist then I’ll make it myself.’”

Even before Maggie graduated, she realized she was fine with this approach. She was a student in Gary Rohrbacher’s studio and noticed a shift in her focus – at the same time Colleen was starting Anchal Project. “I had a conversation with Gary one day and he asked ‘Do you even want to be an architect anymore?’ and I said I don’t think so.”

The idea of design with a human-centric focus is what drove Maggie to turn away from her plans of getting her master’s degree in architecture, then moving to New York to start her career.

Now that the sisters have realized their business model is sustainable, they are expanding their vision to revolutionize the textile industry by replicating their social enterprise in other countries.
From India to Louisville

But first Colleen and Maggie are starting in Louisville, their hometown.

As if they needed another project, the sisters entered a local design project two years ago created by Metro Louisville – an initiative by Mayor Greg Fischer to beautify/utilize vacant lots in the burgeoning neighborhood of Portland.

Their pitch? To use the lots for growing natural dye gardens. They won, and with that honor came a $15K grant to implement the project. Similarly to what they’re doing in India, they are growing plants and flowers that can be used to create natural dyes on these plots. This will eventually turn into training opportunities for women in the area in need.

“So again, we are addressing women’s empowerment and the textile industry, trying to combat the huge environmental damages,” explained Colleen.

The ripples continue.

About Anchal Project

To keep this circle of prosperity going, Anchal Project relies on donors and sales to fill the pipeline. To view their collections and learn more about the nonprofit, visit anchalproject.org.

Above: A one-time collection with Urban Outfitters of Indian-crafted designs helped Anchal Project reach a new market and elevate awareness of the brand.
THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM IS FEMALE

The rise to the top of the architecture profession can be steep
Maybe Harriet, but even in 2016, they make up less than 20% of the licensed architects in the United States, according to Architect’s Journal.

The male dominance in the field of architecture isn’t a new phenomenon; in 1908, German architect Karl Scheffler wrote “women would become irritable hermaphroditic creatures” if they were allowed to pursue a career in the profession.

That didn’t exactly lay the welcome mat out for women.

Despite the increase in female enrollment in university architecture programs – accounting for about 50% of students according to the “Equity in Architecture Survey” developed by the Missing 32% Project formed within the American Institute of Architects San Francisco chapter in 2011 – these architects working in the field continue to hover around the 15-18% mark.

So why the discrepancy? And why are we talking about this now?

It’s not news, but...

Earlier this spring, The New York Times wrote a feature titled “I Am Not the Decorator: Female Architects Speak Out.” This piece was prompted by the unexpected death of architect Zaha Hadid on March 31, 2016. Hadid, who didn’t ask to take on the role of the Gloria Steinham of female architects, eventually became the archetype female architect, having won the Pritzker Prize in 2004.

The College of Design posted the article on its Facebook page, which prompted further discussion, making it evident that gender inequality in the field of architecture is still a hot-button issue.

Examples of female architects whose work was readily dismissed are legendary – Natalie de Blois of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; Denise Scott Brown, whose work was herded into the roster of her husband and architectural partner, Robert Venturi.

But what about today? Hadid winning the coveted award. The increase in enrollment of female students in architecture programs. Why is it still such a big deal?

“In my opinion, there isn’t anything necessarily profound about being a woman in this profession. We’re as good or as bad as anyone else. It’s just that some people have not understood that equality yet,” explained Kay F. Edge, associate professor of architecture at Virginia Tech. “In fact, some people are quite deficient in that understanding.”

So if that’s the case, are there women out there ready to help the next generation make that understanding abundantly clear?

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**Left:** American architect Eleanore Pettersen reviewing blueprints in her design office. She was the first licensed female architect in New Jersey to open her own firm.

Photo courtesy of Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech.
Maternal Mentors

“I knew that even as a freshman going into the architecture program that I’m entering a male-dominated profession,” said Myra Vaughn, Principal at MG2. “[But] it was not discussed. I think each of us as women in the program had our own struggles, and we knew we had an uphill battle to work through.”

Vaughn, who graduated from the UK College of Design in 2001, says hindsight now makes it obvious that mentorship is key to preparing the next generation of female architects. “Looking back, I think that’s exactly when collaborative mentorship needs to happen,” said Vaughn.

Needs to begin, anyway. As she continued on her architectural trajectory, Vaughn found herself flying solo. “As I started to advance in my career on the management/leadership track, the path that I was on became more and more narrow,” she said. “The path went from smooth to full of friction.”

If you thought the profession itself was low on female influence, the leaders in the industry are even more scarce.

“When you move into a management position, to be successful in those roles, you have to have certain characteristics that are often stigmatized. To say a man is aggressive versus a woman, unfortunately to this day, it still has a very different connotation,” explained Vaughn.

Sarah Heller, a 1999 College of Design graduate, found navigating the profession was less about dominating and more about domineering. Right after college, Heller moved to Berlin for her first internship. “I was sexually harassed by my project manager who kept trying to get me to sleep with him,” she explained. “Any time I would get upset and stand up for myself, it only made things worse.”

After putting up with this behavior for nearly a year, Heller finally had enough. “Finally it came to a head, and it was just ugly,” she said. “The project manager ended up getting fired, and I just ended up leaving. It was such a stir that I didn’t want to be there anymore.”

A mentor would’ve been a huge help for Heller, and eventually that’s exactly what she found in her future employer Polly Osborne. After her traumatic Berlin experience, Heller moved to Los Angeles and worked at four different firms, one of them being Polly Osborne Architects. “She was a single-woman practice, and she was a great mentor,” said Heller. “She would give me great advice when I got ready to go on the job site, how to work with contractors and really how to not take shit from anybody.”

This counsel definitely came in handy as Heller made her way to other firms in LA. “We found out that some of the men were making more than the women doing the exact same position with the exact same experience,” Heller explained. “When a few of us asked the office manager about it, he said it’s about how you negotiate. It was kind of justified in some weird way.”

It’s true, the pay scale difference is a concern. According to the National Architectural Accrediting Board, women receive $4,000 less than men from the get-go, even though everyone ostensibly has the same experience. Checking in one year later and that gender discrepancy escalates to $9,000. “I got better at asking for more, but it was a series of hard knocks,” said Heller.

Shannon Newberry, who graduated this past spring, did her thesis on contemporary architecture and the objectification of the female gender. Interestingly, Newberry found a kind of reverse mentor in her own mother.

“Part of the reason I went into architecture is because my mother wanted to be an architect when she was young but was discouraged by her father,” said Newberry. “He told her that she would do nothing her entire life but be a draftsman for a man, no matter how talented she was.” Having spent countless hours scrolling through statistics and highlighting facts, Newberry knows the data. It’s all right there in black and white.
“The sad reality is that her father was probably right,” admitted Newberry. “Even with 40% of current students being female, less than 1% of firm directors are women.”

This bitter truth was essentially the driver behind Newberry’s senior thesis. “In a field that is supposed to design for everyone, what happens when most of the designers are men? What if his ideas on gender roles influence societal perception of the female gender?” asked Newberry.

For these questions, she reached out to a couple of her professors – Wallis Miller and David Biagi – as well as outside the college to Gender Women’s Studies classes. Her conclusion? “One thing my thesis did teach me is that things are getting better,” said Newberry. “The incredible thing about the field is that it is full of people who like to rethink the status quo, and people with this mindset are drivers for change.”

Above: Pettersen, who studied architecture at Cooper Union in the early 1940s, worked at Taliesin with Frank Lloyd Wright. Photo courtesy Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech.
Maternal Instincts

“I never saw myself as anything but equal,” said Mindy Levine-Archer, a 1996 graduate from the UK College of Design. “I felt equal at the table and always carried that with me.”

Of course it was evident to Levine-Archer, even in school, that there were less women in architecture, but it wasn’t a dilemma for her. Maybe because she grew up with two brothers? “I don’t know if that had anything to do with it,” she said. “I just never felt I had to react or think differently because I was a minority in the room.”

Except when it came to motherhood.

If there’s one thing that can quickly incite debate, it’s the roles of the sexes when it comes to parenting. Some women used it as their ticket out. “For a lot of my girlfriends, once they decided to start families, they used that as the reason [to not come back to architecture],” said Heller. “They said ‘I’m much happier being a mom.’”

But for Levine-Archer, she was more than a little annoyed by the assumptions that were made by some of her co-workers. “I remember a particular conversation with someone at my firm,” she explained. “He was asking me questions about how I was going to balance being a mom and work. I asked ‘Would you be asking the same question to my husband if he was sitting across from you?’”

Levine-Archer has two kids and returning to work was never a question for her. “Kids are kids. They have moms and dads, and it’s 50/50 roles in my house,” she explained. “We both work and we’re both raising them. It’s not my responsibility more than it is his.”

In fact, Levine-Archer grew up in a town where a lot of the women were stay-at-home mothers. Instead, she takes great pleasure in exposing her children to the projects she works on. “I drive around the city and they can say ‘My mom designed that.’ I show them that you can do anything you want to do as long as you’re willing to put in the work.”

And while the statistics show that’s not entirely true for women in architecture, these ladies and others are chipping away at the glass ceiling that is now completely out of style.

Interested in exploring the topic further? Here are some additional resources:

“Where are the Women Architects?” by Despina Stratigakos

Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation: bwaf.org

International Archive of Women in Architecture: https://spec.lib.vt.edu/IAWA/guide.html

The Missing 32% Project: eqxdesign.com


Right: Han Schröeder, seen here studying a model, was a Dutch architect and educator who grew up in the iconic Rietveld-Schröeder house in the Netherlands. She opened her own design office in 1954 as one of two registered female architects among 3,000 registered male architects.

Photo courtesy of Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech.
Hands-on learning takes on new meaning for Architecture Graduate Student Jennifer Harris

By Julie Wilson
In a world driven by speech and sound, the obstacles for someone who is deaf are obvious. But this has never stopped Jennifer Harris, a first-year graduate student in architecture, from pursuing her passion. Having felt the spark of design during a drafting class at the Kentucky School for the Deaf, Harris knew it might be a challenge to enter into the world of architecture as a hard-of-hearing person.

Challenge accepted.
With a father who was a math teacher and a mother who taught art, the significant impact of education enveloped Harris from birth. Having come to the University of Kentucky College of Design with one bachelor’s degree under her belt and well on her way to a second, it’s clear the message took root.

A native of Kentucky, Harris grew up in Danville, where the Kentucky School for the Deaf has made an impact on the community since the mid-1880s; it was the first state-supported school in the United States for the instruction of deaf children. It also happens to be the same school where her parents taught. “All of my family is deaf except my oldest brother,” explained Harris, who is the youngest of three children. Her father’s side of the family carries with it a genetic deafness, “but on my mother’s side that is not the case. As far as genetics go, there is no rhyme or reason,” said Harris.

So in a family where having a hearing disability isn’t an anomaly yet turning away from education is, Harris graduated high school and went on to Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.; this facility of higher learning is the world’s only university designed to be barrier-free for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Then, with an art history degree in tow, Harris came to UK ready to see if she could fan the flames of that aforementioned spark into a full-blown architecture degree. “That drafting class at the Kentucky School for the Deaf, that year really showed me how much I love things like that.”

And while love is grand, it does not an architect make. But skills do, and Professor Greg Luhan has found them in ample supply with Harris.

As he does at the beginning of each semester, Luhan goes around the room and has each student share their past experiences in the world of architecture. “I went to Jennifer and she had an interpreter in the classroom, and I saw this as a really great opportunity for us as a class to not only learn from the faculty but from a student as well,” he said.

Luhan’s confidence in her was evident when he gave impetus to Harris’s inclusion in his fall 2014 ARC354 Studio, which focused on the rebuilding of flood-ravaged West Liberty, a small town in Eastern Kentucky. When she was the solo signer in her class, she worked with others by writing notes or making gestures to her classmates. Whatever it took, Harris isn’t one to sit quietly to the side. “I always find a way to get my message across,” she said. “I’m assertive; I never sit back and just be passive.”

“It’s cool how we developed the signs but also reinvented ourselves through architecture by using the discussion.”
With the help from her interpreters, Harris has managed to leave her mark – both literally and figuratively. Along with sharing her intellectual capital, Harris parcelled out her sign language skills with her fellow students in order to better communicate. The team learned the American Sign Language alphabet and some simple communication signs. “I didn’t want to overwhelm them,” said Harris, “so I just showed them some good basic communication signs.”

Luhan’s studio published its work, titled “West Liberty: Revive. Rebuild. Reflect.,” and the provenance of those triple R action verbs came from the very signs they learned together. “We worked on signs for those so we would know which one we were focusing on,” said Harris.

Luhan explained that the logo for the project stemmed from those very signs. “I noticed that whenever we talked about concepts of studio, she was using these gestures that I thought were amazing,” said Luhan. “Water, reviving community, baptism – how do we capture that gesture as an icon that could be used for the branding of everyone’s project?” And they did (see photo).

Yet signing for the convenience of communication evolved into something unexpected. “It led to a lot more meaning about what those words meant in the logo, what we meant by ‘rebuilding,’” explained Harris. “It’s cool how we developed the signs but also reinvented ourselves through architecture by using the discussion.”

Cool, indeed.

With one more year of graduate school to go, Harris is envisioning what the future holds. “My dream is to move out West and work in an architecture firm,” she said. And while this is the dream for many soon-to-be grads, Harris hopes to place what some may see as a handicap in her “pro” column. “I know it’s very competitive, but I hope my perspective as a deaf person might help.” Instead of a barrier, Harris thinks she can use her frame of reference to introduce a new way of designing. “What type of design works best for deaf people, it’s something I want to pursue,” she explained. Think about it this way: if you’re constantly using your hands to sign while looking at another person, you’re bound to miss that step or not notice the pole just out of your peripheral. “We have to look around our surroundings to make sure no one gets hurt,” she said.

Luhan saw her impairment as a way to rethink his entire approach. “It became a strategy for rethinking our pedagogy about universal design,” he explained. Being deaf does give Harris a different perspective from other architects, but it’s not the sole driver for her future profession. “I do want to incorporate it into my career, but I don’t want it to be just about deaf people. I want it to be for everyone, able-bodied or with needs.”

As Luhan explains, “She has these design principles that she’s very well-versed in, and she’s putting together a very interactive toolkit that she can draw from, so there really are no barriers to her success.”

Ironically, when asked if people have any misconceptions about her ability to be an architect, Harris paused for a moment. “Ability... I haven’t really thought about it. I’m just going with the flow,” she said. “I have such a passion for what I do that I just stay focused. I love a good challenge.”

Above: “Revive. Rebuild. Reflect” tells the story of the West Liberty, Ky., project that Jennifer Harris took part in with her third-year studio in 2014. The icons on the cover were inspired by the signs Harris developed for these words.
DIVERSITY CHALLENGE
The year 2016 has been one of global discourse and divide on the issue of diverse voices. The University of Kentucky is responding with a new investment in creating an inclusive campus.  

*What does design have to say about that?*

Because we design for an interconnected world, we must actively seek diverse points of view ... it makes us better architects, designers, historians, thinkers and global citizens. There are no bad colors or bad materials, only bad context, and we strive to give every color its best light. Celebrating a diverse and abundant palette is how we live our days.

In that spirit, we launch our inaugural Diversity Challenge, a student competition, in the Fall 2016 issue of 38°84 with the prompt: *The Diversity of Line.*

Because this is our first challenge, line is a fundamental place to begin with all form. We see line in the natural world, which we reinterpret into our own work. We see line in the skylines and grids of urban environments. Rural fields have been modified by humans with their injection of fencing and rows of crops.

**Line is a place to begin this conversation.**

How can we use line to express diversity? Students can use a variety of media to interpret this mission:
- Pencil
- Paint
- Photography
- Video
- Sculpture
- Poetry/Prose
- Installations
- Music

**Prize money** = $2,000 issued at the discretion of the Honors & Awards Committee (first, second, third places and/or honorable mentions). We will release two diversity challenges each year, one per issue of 38°84.

For complete details, visit [uky.edu/design/diversity](http://uky.edu/design/diversity).
PRESERVATION PROVOCATEUR

The College of Design Seeks a New Approach to HP

By Julie Wilson
Yet that was nearly 20 years ago. What about its new incarnation?

The 2016 “Rethinking Historic Preservation” Symposium in April brought together a broad spectrum of viewpoints on where historic preservation has been and where it’s going. Speakers, including Richard Longstreth, Belinda Reeder, Cy Merkezas, Andrew Hurley and Nate Allbee, shared their personal take on how the culture of historic preservation is expanding and evolving along with society’s changing needs.

From these discussions, the College of Design is revisiting its stance: What is the future of the HP program? What should we be doing to build upon the newly charged momentum for urban preservation?

In an era where retro and vintage items are in vogue, now is the perfect time to capture that spirit of resurgence and funnel it into the HP program. If you ask Bingham, there’s a factor that could be the true keystone to keep the momentum of historic preservation on a roll.

“It’s sexy in that it’s a field in which you can make a difference,” said Bingham. “It can make you a hero or heroine from time to time.”

And therein lies the appeal. Students today are often drawn to a profession where they can leave a lasting impression, making a long-term difference in their communities. Historic preservation fills that niche, and Kentucky has quite a few pioneers in the field who have cleared the way for further advancements. In fact, with nearly 4,000 documented historic sites, Kentucky is fourth in the nation of total listings on the National Register of Historic Places.

Hence, what’s old is new again. And the following leaders in adaptive reuse are showing just how seductive preservation can be.

“Making it sexy, it’s really hard,” admitted Edith S. Bingham, laughing at the notion. Bingham, a Louisville resident and member of the Department of Historic Preservation’s advisory board, helped get the program started at the College of Design in 1999.
The Lure of History

Bingham grew up in Washington, D.C., under the watchful eye of history. Her father, who was an architect with an interest in colonial churches, would take her on his restoration trips.

This influence flourished during her junior year at Smith College when she studied in Florence, Italy. “I really became very interested in the use of older buildings and how compact and walkable it was,” she explained.

Bingham moved to Louisville in 1964, just before the National Preservation Act was ratified in ’66, and joined her father-in-law as he started the Preservation Alliance of Louisville in 1972. It began as a nonprofit coalition of neighborhood and civic organizations that promoted historic preservation. Their earliest work focused on Main Street in the River City.

And that focus on Louisville’s downtown continues today, which was the impetus for Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson to open 21c Museum Hotel on West Main Street in 2006. But even though more than 30 years had gone by since Bingham and other civic leaders started promoting the idea of preservation, the venture was still a risky one for Brown and Wilson to undertake.

“In Louisville, the first one was a very big risk for us,” admitted Wilson. “We took an empty building in a fairly vacant corner, and it’s been very successful.”

So much so that he shared his preservation story in the middle of the museum in the 21c Lexington location (now one of six total 21c venues) during its grand opening last February.
Wilson and Brown hadn’t planned on 21c being their preservation calling card to the world, but their intentions were clear. “My wife and I first started our interest in preservation by preserving farm land,” explained Wilson. “When you extrapolate that, if you save the farmland for farming, you need to stem suburban sprawl.”

With that as a guiding force, the couple’s focus shifted toward downtown development. “It’s important to every community to preserve the heart of the city,” said Wilson. “To do that you need to make your city centers more interesting to live in and play in.”

Together, Wilson and Brown have done just that. If anyone has figured out the equation to making preservation “sexy,” it’s these two. Because 21c is more than just a warm bed; the museum component of each location is just as big a draw as the modern aesthetic of its guest rooms.

“We used the contemporary art as a stimulus to entertain people, to draw [them in],” said Wilson. “We’re really getting people that sometimes traditional museums don’t get. They are coming in for other reasons yet they’re experiencing the art and architecture.”

“They are coming in for other reasons yet they’re experiencing the art and architecture.”

–Steve Wilson
This idea of resurrecting a building for a second life is also one of the forces driving today's preservation movement. So much so that the city of Springfield, Ky., purchased the old Robertson Building—a former dry goods supply store on its main street—without a plan for its future.

Cut to Holly Wiedemann and her company, AU Associates, which specializes in breathing new life into historical buildings. Now, the dry goods store has been transformed into Robertson Apartments and Commercial Space.

“This is one of the most important buildings on this whole main street,” said Wiedemann of the $1.5 million project.

As the county seat of Washington, which was the first county in Kentucky, Springfield knew what it had in the building and contacted Wiedemann to preserve its legacy.

But what’s in it for Wiedemann? “It’s like our 3-D calling card. ‘Oh, so that’s what you can do with an old building,’” she said, admitting that she has a “chronic affliction and that is falling in love with old buildings.”

And in its second act, many of the building’s original architectural features have been given new life. The turret—it’s been restored, its copper shiny and refurbished, and is now lit up at night in different colors (UK game days it’s blue, red for Valentine’s Day). “We always do something to ease these historic buildings into the community,” said Wiedemann.
**Booked for the Future**

Sometimes the impetus for preservation is for the engagement of the community rather than just saving a building.

One community in Lexington is seeing particularly rapid growth in its redevelopment. North Limestone has gone from being a relatively silent neighborhood to an active business/residential district.

However, this growth is not without its skeptics. Some define it as gentrification, others as preservation. And while that debate is still a live-wire subject, its controversial nature is part of the appeal for Crystal Wilkinson. She and her partner, Ronald Davis, opened Wild Fig Books & Coffee at 726 North Limestone in 2015, after closing their original location in the Meadowthorpe neighborhood.

“We knew we already had some customers in this area, and we thought that what was going on over here was kind of exciting, even kind of controversial, too,” said Wilkinson. “We wanted to be a part of it.”

Located in a turn-of-the-century house, the bookstore reflects the couple’s personal aesthetic. “We wanted somewhere that, for lack of a better term, really looks cool,” said Wilkinson. “We’ve always been attracted to refurb. I don’t think we ever saw ourselves in a brand-new, shiny building.”

They’ve given their neighbors a model, a new way of looking at older buildings.

“I don’t think we ever saw ourselves in a brand-new, shiny building.”

—Crystal Wilkinson
What’s New is Old Again

Jim Gray could not say the same.

In fact, not only could he see his family-run company, Gray Construction, in a new building, they had already broken ground when the idea of buying the former Wolf Wile department store building came into play.

“We were in the middle of the stream for the new project,” said Gray, explaining that his brother Stephen (now the president and CEO) was overseeing the construction of the new headquarters at the time. “You know the saying ‘Don’t switch horses in midstream?’ Well, Stephen was practically beside himself that we would even consider it.”

But there were two other people with skin in the preservation game who were encouraging Gray to do the midstream switch. David Mohney and Chuck Graves, two former deans of the College of Design, had Gray’s ear. “[They] had a big influence on our decision,” said Gray. “Chuck and David were just relentless, frantically badgering us to consider it.”

After much persuasion by the former deans and Gray’s mother – “Mr. Wile appealed to my mother, ‘Before I’m gone, I want someone in this building,” said Gray – they took a tour of the building, which had been sitting empty by that time for about five years.

“Immediately we saw great bones,” explained Gray. “We realized we could get 70,000-square-feet for the same cost of building new and getting 50,000.”

The company’s foresight happened at a time when Lexington’s downtown was not percolating with activity. “Twenty years ago, downtown was not what it is today,” Gray admitted. “It has become a much more vibrant and active urban space.”

He sees the new Town Branch Commons Corridor project as an extension of this growth. “I think we really have the opportunity through the Town Branch project to create this wonderful alignment with the rural landscape and active urban space,” said Gray. “Then what you have is a very robust quality of life, which leads to economic development and jobs.”

So in that respect, protecting the historic and its impact on Kentucky is a pathway to building a stronger future. And at the helm of that future lies the influence that a renewed Historic Preservation program can have.
NEW ONLINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM
As the Department of Historic Preservation continues to grow, one way they are attracting a broader market is through the new online graduate certificate, which began this fall.

The 12-credit certificate has been distilled to provide practitioners in a broad range of fields with an understanding of historic preservation that will enhance existing careers and open new doors for all those with an interest in the built environment.

“This new opportunity to offer the online certificate program gives Historic Preservation the chance to reach a brand-new audience,” said Allison Carll White, chair of the Department of Historic Preservation. “This field attracts a diverse population, but not everyone has the capability of attending classes on campus. Through the graduate certificate program, we are engaging both the student and professional markets by appealing to those around the world with a broad range of educational backgrounds.”

Two courses are required and two courses can be selected from the list of electives to serve the needs of people with a wide variety of backgrounds. One feature of the new certificate is Field Methods in Historic Preservation, an optional course that provides five-day, intensive hands-on experience using different types of preservation technology and producing professional reports.

Additional courses offered within the program address preservation law, urban revitalization and adaptive reuse.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, so the timing of this new program comes at a notable point in the continued exploration of preservation. For more details, contact Dr. Allison Carll White at hedcarll@uky.edu or visit uky.edu/design.
NARROWING THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE
A Conversation
with Interiors Alum
Edward A. Cave

The date was July 31, 1980, when the view from Edward Cave’s window changed from his childhood home in Paducah, Ky., to the aggressive grind of Atlanta’s business climate.

Of course there were a few steps in between growing up in western Kentucky to starting his interior design career in the ATL; his longest layover being at the University of Kentucky College of Design.

What triggered the journey was a matter of happenstance that actually turned out to be an a-ha moment for Cave. His parents were designing an addition to their house, and Cave watched in amazement as the architect rolled out the blueprints. The crispy edges rustling as they assumed their position on the living room coffee table, his excitement upping another level when he saw where his new bedroom would be. “I just thought that was the coolest profession,” said Cave. “This is what I want to do.”

He followed this career path as a freshman at UK, then switched gears to interior design his sophomore year.

“Back in the ’70s, life was very different than today,” Cave admitted. “But many things kept me engaged at school; I loved the graphic nature of what I was learning.”

For Cave, a lot of that engagement came at the feet of two new instructors during his third year: Bill Manhoff and David Ferguson. “They had stepped right out of the industry,” said Cave. “To have these two guys come to Lexington and be our teachers for the next two years was huge.”

While students are often drawn to different types of instruction, it was this hands-on element that kept Cave on task. Where some of his instructors took a more casual approach, it was Ferguson’s “tough love” slant that kept things interesting. “Other teachers I had, they would just say to try some other options, but with Ferguson, he’d go ‘No man, you’re just not getting it. Let me show you how to do this,’” explained Cave. “Having those two was probably the most important part of my education.”
Getting his diploma? Not as relevant for Cave (we’ll come back to that later). After six years of focusing on interiors, infused with some landscape architecture and graphic design, Cave felt his portfolio carried enough weight that he was ready for the real world.

A quick trip to Atlanta landed him five interviews and two offers, so his instincts were correct. Five years later, he started his own interiors business, Veenendaalcave Inc. In 2015, Veenendaalcave was the fifth largest commercial interior design firm in Atlanta, according to Atlanta Business Chronicle, with $12.86 million in annual design fees. Their client roster includes such companies as Comcast and Emory University.

In May 2015, 30 years later, he sold his company. Quite an accomplishment for a Kentucky kid with no college degree (OK, about that – Cave actually had more hours than he needed to graduate, so in 2011, he officially earned his degree after fulfilling all of the requirements).

It's this clear connection between academia and the business world that Cave says gave him a better understanding of what was in store. Unfortunately, this isn’t always the case for the new generation of graduates.

Admittedly, not all students who take their first steps into the working world react the same, but Cave has experienced his share of new graduates with a false sense of equivalency. “Students need to understand that when you come to work for a company, they are working for a business,” Cave explained. “While we’re in a creative industry at heart, we have to be profitable or the doors won’t stay open.”

This means that everything from filing to field work is a part of the development process, so new graduates: be prepared. He shares the story of an interview he had with a recent grad from New York.

“She was real Millennial, I mean real Millennial. I can get past a lot of that, but it’s funny.”

He asked her the standard question of why she wanted to leave her current company, though her response was in no way standard. “Well, you know, it seems all I do is pick up red lines and do field surveys. That’s all they have me doing.”

Stunned, Cave replied: “I can’t believe what I’m hearing you say. If you’re not doing those things, who is? You’re the most junior person on staff.”

Not that Cave has anything against Millennials; it’s just that they need to realize they are one of many generations in the work force, all of whom have to work as a team.

On any given day, when asked about his favorite project, Cave would always say “the one I’m working on now.” Only now, his current project is one focused on his retirement. After 30 years of being known as designer and business owner, Cave is taking on a new role as beachcomber. He and his wife are “test driving” life as residents of St. John in the Virgin Islands.

Now it’s time for the next generation to get behind the wheel.
More than 49% of students in the College of Design participated in an Education Abroad program in 2016. That’s more than double the second most active college at UK.

Education Abroad provides students with the chance to study, research and service-learn in countries around the world. Led by College of Design faculty, these programs give students a broader perspective about what their future holds.

Scholarships are available. If you are a student, parent or faculty member and want to learn more information on how to participate, visit [uky.edu/international/educationabroad](http://uky.edu/international/educationabroad).
COLLEGE OF DESIGN, REDUX
In fall 2015, Mitzi Vernon stepped onto the University of Kentucky campus to embark on her new role as dean of the College of Design. The opportunities that presented themselves at the college are what persuaded Vernon to leave her position at Virginia Tech, and she has spent nearly all of the past year strategically arranging all of the pieces to take the college to the next level of play.

Our resolution for 2016 is a re-imagined College of Design, infused with Kentucky’s indigenous spirit. The vision is bold: new programs, new partners, new identity, all built upon our history and its imprint on our unfolding story.

This fluid vision statement is an amalgam of pedagogical philosophy as well as the college’s role in being a more present community steward. This has helped guide the college’s first year under its new leadership with several results already in their infancy.

New Leadership

After 13 years of serving as the School of Architecture’s director, David Biagi has handed the reins over to Jeffrey Johnson, AIA. Johnson (read more about the school’s new director on page 58) joined the college from the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at Columbia University in July.

Another new face in the College of Design is Susan Eriksson, Ph.D., the Associate Dean for Research (ADR). Joining the college in January 2016, Dr. Eriksson’s role as ADR includes serving as liaison to UK’s VP for Research and representing the college at regular meetings with the Office of the Vice President for Research. She is also working with faculty to develop research portfolios that align with the strategic plan of the college. Eriksson will be assisting Dean Vernon in establishing a college-wide “design research” trajectory while advancing existing research and collaborative projects.

Eriksson’s role runs in tandem with one of the college’s strategic plans, which is to shape a contemporary definition of design research. The college’s faculty has always been active in research, but the goal is to engage more faculty and students in opportunities that will further their research experience.

Dr. Gregory A. Luhan, AIA, who has been with the College of Design since 1998, recently took on the role of Associate Dean for Administration (ADA). Luhan is currently assisting Dean Vernon in restructuring the college’s administration.
New Plans

Currently, the College of Design is home to three programs – architecture, interiors and historic preservation – with architecture dominating the college’s graduate constituency. However, there are several palpable connections either already in play or being developed for university approval, and the College of Design is the natural beacon of connectivity.

The college is actively engaging in new partnerships with Landscape Architecture, the College of Engineering and the College of Medicine. Related to these new partnerships are new developing programs in industrial/product/information design, urban design and building sciences. These efforts will support the plan to increase the graduate student body and explore new graduate degrees within the college, including online and hybrid opportunities.

Reaching across city limits, the college is in conversation with the mayor’s office in Louisville to develop a satellite studio. Plans are already moving forward for a 2017 launch.

New Outreach

In addition to 38°84, which will be published bi-annually, the College of Design recently launched its new website. With a more fluid navigation and a mission of connectivity, the website is the nucleus of information for the college, giving students, faculty, alumni, community partners and others a place to intermingle and leverage information for greater relationships.

After a noticeable vacancy, the College of Design has in place an active Director of Philanthropy + Alumni Relations with the new hire of Lori Matthews. Having come from a similar position at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Ky., Matthews is operating at full speed to re-engage the college’s esteemed alumni and raise awareness on an international level.

All of this in less than one year. The mission of the College of Design is ambitious yet viable, and we encourage you to become an active participant in what is sure to be a valiant future.
AN ARCHITECT WITH A CAPITAL

Jeffrey Johnson takes the reins as new School of Architecture director
When you’re a kid, hanging out with your father at his office is an adventure, like playing grown-ups, all the while knowing you get to return to backyard games of baseball or tag after the workday is over.

But if your dad is an engineer, and you spend your time at an empty drafting table next to his office filled with endless drafting supplies, it’s bound to leave an impression. This was certainly the case for Jeffrey Johnson, RA, AIA. “I was 11 or 12, and he’d try to explain to me what he was doing. He taught me how to use a triangle, the parallel bar,” Johnson explains. “For a kid, it’s a fun thing.”

This would evolve into exercises from his father, how to write text, the proper mechanics of lettering. “Pretty soon I was catching on that he just wanted me to keep doing this so I didn’t bother him,” he laughs, a hearty guffaw that is a trademark of those raised in the Midwest like Johnson, who grew up in Nappanee, a small town in Indiana.

Well, however you want to look at it, his father’s plan worked out for the good. Johnson, who received his Master of Architecture in 1992 and his Bachelor of Architecture in 1990 from Ball State University, joined the College of Design at the University of Kentucky on July 1 as the new Director of the School of Architecture.

Of course he had made a few other pit stops along the way, but let’s go back and explore some more of those earlier influences.
The Makings of an Architect

Because his father worked for manufactured housing companies, all of the work – from drawings to the production of physical structures – was completed in one location. “My father works on the drawing and then all of a sudden you see a mobile home pulling out the end of the factory,” explains Johnson, “for a young high school student, that’s pretty fascinating.”

That takes care of the mechanics of architecture. But the other side of Johnson’s brain was stimulated as well, again, with an example set by his father. “He also painted when he was younger, so I was really interested in art,” says Johnson.

So Johnson’s high school class schedule was a canvas of mixed media: college pre-requisites, art, basic electricity (yet another fascination). So there guidance counselor, deal with that! “So of course people are like, you’re good at art and this, well there you go, that equals an architect,” says Johnson, laughing as if there is a definitive equation out there to guarantee your proper career path. “I’m not sure I ever decided; it was just all those forces were kind of saying that’s what you should do.”

Admittedly, Johnson wasn’t well-versed in the philosophy behind architecture before entering college, having not grown up in larger cities where such structures of note were readily available. Instead, he was a maker, experienced in the assembly and production of the build.

“Maybe it’s the Lego or Erector Set mentality,” says Johnson. “It came more from recognizing it as a discipline of making and designing things, never a higher understanding of what architecture is.”

Then came college, and in walked the capital A in architecture.

“The focus on creativity, the history of architecture, how we locate ourselves within that,” he explains, “it totally widened my understanding of what architecture really is.”

Then from the making to the realization of the esoteric element of architecture comes the next step: the engagement with the community. “I do feel that’s a very important component to architecture,” says Johnson. “There’s a consciousness across the profession in all young students about trying to make a difference.”

He says the ’50s and ’60s elevated community engagement as a true pillar of architectural necessity, and it’s coming full circle today, especially here at the College of Design at the University of Kentucky. Having just started in July, his first meetings with faculty has made this very clear, having already learned of studio work being done in Appalachia and Paducah.

One item on his agenda is to help students learn the art of communication, which is a necessity not only as an architect but to further this idea of community. “It’s always been a necessary skill to communicate with potential clients, and we often fail at that,” says Johnson. “We have wonderful ideas but we’re sometimes incapable of communicating them. Teaching that is a necessary one.”

A: Johnson received the AIA NYC Urban Design Honor Award in 2015 for this work for the Beijing World Horticulture Exposition Competition.

B: Busan Opera House design by Johnson | SLAB Architecture.

C: The design for the engineering building at Weifang Science and Technology University in Weifang, Shandong, China.

D: Johnson | SLAB Architecture’s design for the Guggenheim Helsinki Design Competition in 2014.
In the Field

And what better way to help students engage with a community than to literally plant their feet on the ground to see it for themselves.

This is what Johnson did with his studio when he was the founding director of the Asia Megacities Lab at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at Columbia University.

Their focus? The Chinese countryside, whose impoverished economy was a byproduct of the economic advancement of the cities in 1979-80. Now, more than 30 years later, the Chinese countryside has been depleted of its resources: youth, labor force, inherent knowledge. So Johnson and his students’ focus was to revitalize the area.

This should all sound very familiar even if you’ve never set foot on the Asian continent. “You realize that these are not just issues in China,” explains Johnson. “They are global, they are U.S., even Kentucky issues.”

So he and his students looked at the village from all angles: using resources they have available (tea, bamboo), economic development (tourism, product sales), adaptive reuse of vacant buildings. This is part of what that “capital A” in architecture implies: more than just the building but the creative thinking behind it. “It’s part strategy, it’s part reframing the challenges, it’s part mining the opportunities that exist within,” he says.

The Master Plan

Well, there wasn’t one. Johnson fully admits he had no idea that his professional career would take him to New York and China, now to Kentucky. But he does attribute his study abroad opportunities in college with expanding his sight line. “Taking a trip to Europe when I was a student totally changed my outlook,” Johnson says. “Study abroad is really important so I know firsthand the value of that system.”

His Midwestern roots from Indiana, now firmly docked in Kentucky, have reinvigorated his enthusiasm for what this region offers. “The potential that exists within places like Indiana and Kentucky, not only for what’s already really unique about the places but also about the students from here,” he explains.

Johnson is ready to play the role of counselor and motivator for students and faculty in the School of Architecture. “These little decisions you make can have a huge impact,” he explains. “I am compelled in a way to provide the same opportunities I had and to help students and faculty find those opportunities, which you may not think are there but they are. I went through a similar way of getting to it.”
To keep the vibe light, I try to take my interviewees to a casual place outside the office. You know, the more relaxed they are, the more open they’ll be with their answers.

And since Jeffrey Johnson, the new Director of the School of Architecture at the College of Design, is still unpacking from his New York move, we haven’t had the chance to get acquainted, so this was the perfect opportunity.

Two iced coffees and an hour later, I had learned the entire evolution of Johnson’s career. Impressive! But what about the other stuff, the insightful anomalies that really show you inside someone’s personality?

What kind of music do you like? Not a hardball question but still, a long pause. Finally, he narrows it down to jazz. “I totally became obsessed with the history of jazz,” he explained, noting that it wasn’t until he moved to New York that he found this new passion. His bookends being Charlie Parker and Ornette Coleman, the ’50s and ’60s era of jazz.

What about languages, are you bilingual? Again, another slow pitch...and a pause. “I tried to learn Chinese,” he says with a wry grin. He took lessons, a 10-day immersive course, Rosetta Stone classes, you name it. (I’m seeing “obsessive” come into play again.) And while he can speak some Chinese, he’s not exactly fluent. “You say something in Chinese, then they respond to you in Chinese, then you say ‘Ummm, OK, I’m sorry. I guess I really don’t speak Chinese,’” he laughed.

Books, read any good books lately? “There are some slight obsessions,” he admitted. (There’s that word again.) He shares that when he was in New York, he went to a discussion about Andrea Palladio that a colleague had organized. “I know, he’s a huge figure in architectural history but I hadn’t thought about Palladio since I was required to when I was an undergrad.”

The spark was lit. Any books on Palladio that he could get his hands on became a part of his personal library. “All of a sudden I became completely obsessed with Palladio,” he said.

OK. I could see I wasn’t going to score anything like “Oh, and I have a collection of superhero lunchboxes,” so we started heading back to the college. Casual chit-chat ensued about the minutiae of moving, his two sons and his wife, Jill (also an architect and an instructor at the college), who were on their way to Kentucky that weekend, and how they maintain a healthy work/life balance.

And there it was, that gleaming beacon of his normalcy: “She can put the kids to bed and work a couple more hours. I just get tired at the end of the day and sit on the couch and flip through Netflix to find something to watch.”
Simpsonville, Ky., lies just 30 minutes east of Louisville. However, if you take US-60 instead of the interstate, it’s a bit like traveling through a time warp. Chain restaurants revert to mom-and-pop diners, gas stations still have people who pump fuel for you and many of the names on the metal mailboxes lining the highway haven’t changed for generations.
This is quintessential Kentucky, bucolic greenspace that enrobes the hillside like a lush brocade. And this is David Biagi’s stomping grounds. Biagi, professor and former director of the School of Architecture at the College of Design, designed and built his home on a piece of this pristine parcel as a way to embrace location, not detract from it.

This same notion spawned some of the most famous architectural homes in America. The Farnsworth House in Plano, Ill.? “It is so apparent that it should be situated on two horizontal planes,” explains Biagi, who also earned his bachelor’s in architecture from UK in ’82. “And Falling Water, it’s on a site where the elevation changes the design.”

So he took Kentucky’s rolling landscape and incorporated it into an element of his design. “I was looking at opportunities to, in a small space, make aware that just moving your head to the right or left, it changes your perception of the place where you’re located,” he says.

While Biagi’s home may first elicit thoughts of a modern structure outside of its natural environment, you’ll soon shake off that notion when you look deeper. “Architecture is a complex 3-D space, so you have to have an underlying ordering system, and this one is based on human body dimensions,” he explains.

And since his is not the only body in residence – he lives in this home on 60 acres with his wife Tricia, and his two children Sophia and Leo – an air of familiarity was imperative to the house. Of course what’s familial is subjective, but here’s Biagi’s take on it. “If you look at it you think that it’s not child-friendly,” he says, “but you realize it makes children very aware of their surroundings at a young age.”
For instance, it doesn’t take more than a second to notice there are no rails on the stairway. “Even though the edges are not physically railed off, they are spatially and visually cued to let you know,” he says.

What needs no introduction is the whip-crack of Kentucky’s thunderous springs, or even the most reticent of raindrops because they all appear in living color out the expansive windows that ensconce the home.

“We’re very aware of the elements at all times,” he says. “We know when it’s lightning, when a storm’s coming. In the winter it’s like a greenhouse, so we have to open the windows it gets so warm.”

The house may be a three-dimensional space, but its environment stimulates the five senses. “At night it’s like a bug disco,” he laughs, describing the entomological light show that greets them as they make their way up the drive to their house.

Yes, about that. Begrudgingly, Biagi has to douse your idyllic daydreams of pin-drop quiet if you plan to come for a visit. “We’ve had friends who came to stay and they would not stay overnight, they were creeped out by the bugs and birds and frogs,” he explains. “They think it’s quiet but it’s not. It’s just a different type of noise.”

And a different type of residence, one that wasn’t originally anticipated to be their forever home but rather a visual calling card for Biagi. “Tricia and I always joke, we live out in the middle of nowhere but our hearts really lie as high-rise condo owners.”

The vast windows around the house give the Biagi family a scenic view of their Simpsonville surroundings.
The Details

• Biagi returned to Kentucky after working in New York and having just been named one of the "40 under 40" by Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum in 1996.

• The original house was only a total of 14 feet wide.

• He used common materials, such as copper shingles, in uncommon ways (in his case, as siding materials) to save on cost.

• Even renowned architects have their hiccups, like when his crew didn’t match up the steel trusses by number, which meant a complete do-over.

• One thing he learned: "Buildings require maintenance and you can’t design maintaining out of a project."

“Architecture is a complex 3-D space, so you have to have an underlying ordering system, and this one is based on human body dimensions.”

– David Biagi
The faculty at the College of Design not only instill their knowledge in their students but continue developing their own portfolio of design and research projects. Here is a sampling of work by faculty members from the School of Architecture and the School of Interiors.

A  Working with faculty member Peyman Jahed of BFMJ, the envelope for this new recreation center by Michael Jacobs at Northern Kentucky University leverages an innovative chevron-shaped structural frame to solve the curvature issues of the fenestration.

B  Associate Professor Jason Scroggin presented his “Cloud Garden” installation at Aedes Network Campus Berlin in 2014.

C  Professor Clyde Carpenter stands in the center of his self-designed home in downtown Lexington.

D  The Resonance House, completed in 2006, was a project designed and fabricated in Professor Greg Luhan’s studio.
Darren Taylor, an instructor in the Historic Preservation Program, is creative director at Nomi Design, which developed the design for Lexington’s Pasta Garage.

“nMAC” is Assistant Professor Martin Summers’ PLUS-SUM Studio project, which exhibited at the ACCA International Ideas Competition in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Professor Mike McKay’s project, SOUNDMINGS, was selected as one of 10 Land Art projects in the Arte Laguna Prize, which he exhibited at the Arsenal in Venice.

Collection from AtFAB, Anne Filson and Gary Rohrbacher’s digital design and fabrication enterprise.

This design is part of Associate Professor Mark O’Bryan’s ongoing research combining hand-drawing with digital media, which encourages seeing and thinking in new ways.

Assistant Professor Lindsey Fay’s research utilizes post-occupancy evaluation to assess the design of healthcare spaces and their impact on care delivery.

“Massing by Sweeping: Motion Path as a Design Tool in Robotic Studies,” by Ebrahim Poustinchi, a lecturer in the School of Interiors.
THE GREAT SYNTHESIZER

A legacy of expertise and empathy bolster the memory of Ken Greene
by Julie Wilson

“I’ve often told my son-in-law, the best thing is that your father-in-law was Ken Greene. And the worst thing is that your father-in-law was Ken Greene.”

These words from Ken’s high school sweetheart, wife and now widow, Alice.

For Andrew H. Owens, AIA – a 2010 College of Design graduate with a master’s in architecture and an architect at Sherman Carter Barnhart Architects in Lexington, Ky. – the title of being Ken Greene’s son-in-law is like a solid-gold honor: both priceless and heavy.

That’s because Ken Greene, the man known for his exemplary skills in healthcare architecture and a temperament reminiscent of a true Southern gentleman, ended in tragedy.
Mental Health Care

For architects, well-made plans are essential to the trade, and Ken Greene had his in place. After approximately six years, in 2011, Ken would be finished with the University of Kentucky Albert B. Chandler Hospital project and he and Alice knew what was next for them: Ken, who was a partner at GBBN Architects in their Lexington office, was planning to go to the company’s Beijing office and teach for a month. Then he would come back, and he and Alice would become long-distance commuters: living in Pittsburgh, where Ken had just secured the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center project, from Sunday-Thursday. Then they would return to Lexington for long weekends to spend with their children Adam Greene and Katherine Greene-Owens, as well as their new grandson Gabriel. “It will be an adventure,” said Alice about their long-range plans.

During spring break, when Alice was teaching at Liberty Elementary School in Lexington, she and Ken took some time to plan their future. That was in April.

On May 14, 2011, Ken Greene was found dead at his office in Triangle Center. A day before his 53rd birthday, Ken committed suicide.

For his friends and former colleagues, Ken’s death was not just shocking but unfathomable. If reverence ran through the veins of Mother Theresa, it was as if Ken’s sheer presence walking through a room brought about the necessary calm to conciliate all parties. His friends say he was the embodiment of positivity.

“You're talking about literally the happiest person I've ever known,” said Darren Taylor, Associate AIA, creative director at Nomi Design in Lexington, Ky. “Not being a psychologist, I'm sure there are people who would erode that down, but that part of it is confusing to me.”

“There are some people you meet in life, who do certain things, and you say that maybe if I scratched the surface I might see something. I can’t. In my life, in the years I worked with him...nothing.”

Ken gave Darren his first job after college (well, technically during college) at GBBN, and worked together for about five years.

“We'll probably never understand it, and that's just what it's going to have to be,” said Darren.

Actually, after the flurry of disbelief and a desperate search for answers, the truth slowly rose to the top.

“Clinical depression that was undiagnosed is what killed him ultimately,” said Alice, explaining that it wasn’t until remembering clues in hindsight that the answer revealed itself.

“He wasn’t the person who dominated the room. He would listen and watch, then he’d come up with the ‘Aha!’ moment.”

–Dr. Michael Karpf
Personality for the Profession

Alice, better known as Mrs. G to Ken’s work family, explained that Ken had always been an introvert – “Ken was a very sensitive person, I call it fragile,” she said – but that seemed to be part of what made Ken so successful in his profession.

Everyone we interviewed for this piece – every, single person – mentioned his intuitive ability to listen to all voices in the room, from the boisterous leader to the worker lowest on the org chart. And it was this trait of his that propelled him to the top of his profession.

“He wasn’t the person who dominated the room. He would listen and watch, then he’d come up with the ‘Aha!’ moment,” said Michael Karpf, MD, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs at UK HealthCare, who oversaw the UK Hospital project with Ken. “[He was good] at taking a conversation and synthesizing it into a coordinated thought. And he did that in a low-key way.”

This was often easier said than done considering the massive scale of the projects Ken managed. Take the UK Hospital for example. The first stage: 1.2 million square feet and a $530 million price tag. And within that one stage lied dozens of layers, a house of cards that required each one to carry its own weight.

“Ken’s job was to take all this complicated stuff and distill it into digestible units,” explained Dr. Karpf.

This brought up the topic of what type of architect it takes to be able to control a project of this enormity.

“There are architects who make lists of thousands and thousands of small details, and that’s what Ken was,” said Dr. Karpf. “He was somebody who was meticulous at understanding the detail of what needed to be done.”

This knowledge for detail didn’t come without years of practice. In fact, Ken made sure he was in the trenches of healthcare to truly understand what medical professionals needed from their facilities.

“Early in his career, he began to focus more and more on healthcare,” said Sam Halley, founder of Omni Architects in Lexington.

Sam gave Ken his first job right out of college (Ken was a 1981 UK architecture graduate). Well, to be more transparent, Ken told Omni that he would work for free if he could just get some experience under his belt. “Sam Halley was just so impressed that he called [Ken] back and said they would pay him minimum wage,” said Alice with a smile. “The rest of that is history because he worked for Omni for 12 years.”

Ken started creating his niche in healthcare architecture early on, working on small rural and community hospitals in cities like Campbellsville, Morehead and Georgetown. And the more he did these projects, the more acclimated he became with this world.

“He’d get permission to sit in on surgeries and watch how the doctors and nurses worked, what was good, what was bad,” said Sam. “He was not on the perimeter but in the thick of it. He could discuss issues and had confidence that he understood what they were trying to achieve.”

Soon, Ken became known as the pied piper of healthcare architecture; wherever he went, the jobs followed. “When he left Omni, he had such a reputation that wherever he went, the hospital hired his firm: CMW, GBBN,” said Sam. “Wherever he went, that’s where the clients went.”
And they were wise to do so because Ken was meticulous with the details, even earning certification from the American College of Healthcare Architects in 2004.

“He was very in tune not only to the technical aspects of healthcare – how do things get placed, where do doctors need things – but it was about how a patient experiences it,” said Darren, who helped Ken with his submission for his ACHA certification. “His technical knowledge was like, wow. He would just say ‘No, that surgical mount light will need to be 18” off the table.’ He didn’t even have to look it up.”

But that had been Ken’s modus operandi since high school. Tinkering ran in his family. His father owned an appliance repair business, so his children were indoctrinated early. “His interest was really about how things were put together,” said Alice. “His dad, when each kid turned 16, he bought a different color Volkswagen Beetle. They would take those things apart and put them back together. That’s what convinced him his junior year in high school to be an architect.”

Some believe the architecture profession is narrowly divided into two categories: “artistic” and “practical.” Alice said that at least one professor at UK told Ken that he was in the latter category, despite Ken’s obvious talent in artistic drawing (the other major he was considering, though architecture eventually won out). Though never stated, it is sometimes implied that one pathway is better than the other.

Not so, says Jessica Hosfield, a College of Design graduate who worked with Ken at GBBN.

“There are a handful of architects in the world who do the big, grandiose buildings and they get published in magazines. That is beneficial to a lot of people, like a museum or concert hall,” Jessica explained. “But you think about it, [Ken] was actively improving the lives of thousands of people going through these hospitals.”

Form follows function personified.

“The great architects are the folks who strip away the pretty picture and understand what’s in the box. How does that box work right? And how is it efficient and effective?” explained Dr. Karpf.

For UK Hospital, that meant a new approach to healthcare. Incorporating several elements – landscaping, architecture, light, music and art – to inspire an empathetic environment. Dr. Karpf said that the goal for the hospital was to provide patients and families a place of solitude, so the building was designed more like a living room than a clinical building.

“We wanted a place where people could relax and catch their breath because we treat extremely ill patients and many come from a great distance,” said Dr. Karpf. “A lot of hospitals, you transport people from A to B. Not in this building. It’s the design architect and Ken who put all that together.”
Windshield Time

Ken had a knack for working well with others, and the common denominator in many of those encounters was food. Mostly candy, but really any snack would do.

Not quite a foodie in today’s terms, but Ken loved the sweets. “Spalding donuts were a big one. He would do the Ken Greene happy dance for those,” explained Darren, giving his best impersonation by grabbing his belt and doing a little do-si-do.

“All the reps would bring something in at Christmas time,” Darren said with a smile (cue the Ken happy dance again).

On road trips to site visits, Ken would be sure to stock up. But more than just to quench appetites, Ken used the snacks to break the ice with his colleagues. “We had a lot of windshield time and he would bring a lot of snacks,” said Todd Dunaway, AIA, EDAC, Principal at GBBN Architects in Pittsburgh. “It was his way to break down the barrier. He never exuded that ‘I am the principal in the firm and you are the employee.’”

Todd, who worked with Ken at the Lexington office of GBBN, also saw Ken use this same junk food seduction with many of their clients.

“If a meeting was going south, he would throw candy out there on the table. He’d say something like we all need a little time out,” explained Todd. “He’d say it in such a way in his Southern charm that everyone would take a break then get back on track. That little trick, I don’t know how it developed but the first time it happened with me, I wondered where this guy was going!”

Apparently Ken had learned to play to his strengths. An official “fit model” for Brooks Brothers, Ken had the metabolism to burn through his junk food habit, though he tried to hide it from Alice.

“He used to sneak Hostess cupcakes in the office without his wife knowing about it,” said Sam Halley. “He would say ‘Please don’t tell Alice that I have these.’”

Little did he know he needn’t worry. Alice knew all along. “I just said, ‘Hey man if you can get away with it, go for it.”

“The great architects are the folks who strip away the pretty picture and understand what’s in the box.”

–Dr. Michael Karpf
The Impact of a Man

There was little Alice didn’t know about Ken: his family life as well as his work life. “That was my whole life, GBBN architects, black tie events, AIA events,” said Alice.

But with Ken’s tragic death came a world of the unknown. “All of a sudden, now what do I do? This was not in the script,” she said. “Really it was a lot of Alice Greene, who are you? Because Alice Greene was the wife of Ken Greene.”

What followed were two and a half years of simple survival. Her role in the family was to keep everyone’s head above water, trying to bring some normalcy back to their lives. A large part of that was mental support, which a friend of hers (who has a degree in counseling) recommended. “Everybody needs it but especially with a suicide death,” said Alice.

After a brief term at GBBN’s Cincinnati office, Ken made his way back to the Bluegrass by way of CMW. He was there for a short time before being wooed back by GBBN, which opened a Lexington office to keep Ken (and Alice) happy. From CMW, Ken took with him two people who had become lifelong associates: Steve Greenwell and Joe Turley.

Joe and Ken had become so close, in fact, that Alice was comfortable in calling Joe “Ken’s daytime wife.” Which makes it that much more painful to learn that Joe was the one who found Ken’s body. (Mr. Turley politely declined to be interviewed for this article.) “Joe was like his brother,” Alice said. “I can’t think of a heavier load.”

But the legacy Ken leaves behind is of lasting significance, especially for generations of upcoming architects.

For Jessica and Greg Hosfield, it meant that having a strong family life and a successful career were both possible. “It was really good to see an architect who had a good family life,” said Jessica. “It was encouraging to us as newlyweds working at [GBBN] because that’s what we wanted: a good family life, a happy, healthy marriage, and also to be good architects. We still now don’t have a lot of role models for that. But Ken was the one who encouraged us.”

For others, Ken embodied not only what an architect was supposed to be, but a true gentleman. “I learned how to be a professional, how to treat people, how to be an architect, and what that means,” explained Darren. “Portraying him as the wonderful husband, architect and father he was...that’s exactly what the man was. And I miss him.”

For information on how to support the Ken Greene Architecture Scholarship Foundation, visit kengreenefoundation.com.

From left: Andrew H. Owens, Katherine Greene-Owens, Alice Greene, Adam Greene and grandson Gabriel.
The Richard N. Monohan Jr. Endowment Fund is awarded to students enrolled in the school of architecture who: a) demonstrate potential for academic excellence; b) demonstrate financial need to the satisfaction of the Dean and/or Selection Committee, as applicable.

The fund was created in memory of Richard N. Monahan Jr., by his parents Richard and Patricia Monohan, who want to bring awareness to the benefits of studying architecture through the education abroad program.

If you are interested in creating your own scholarship for the college, contact:

Lori Matthews
Director of Philanthropy + Alumni Relations
lori.matthews@uky.edu
859.323.5290
Honorable Mentions

Photo By GLINT Studios
Professor Rohrbacher Honored as University Research Professor

With the distinguished honor of being the first professor within the College of Design to receive this prestigious designation, Professor Gary Rohrbacher was recently selected as one of the 2016-17 University Research Professors. The University Research Professorships were established by the UK Board of Trustees in 1976 to recognize outstanding research achievement. Each awardee must be a scholar or creative artist with a distinguished record of achievement in his or her field.

A faculty member in the School of Architecture, Rohrbacher has pursued architecture equally in practice, research and teaching. As a practitioner, he focuses on the integration of design, theory and technology in his own design, research and strategy firm, Filson and Rohrbacher. Prior to founding his firm in 2007, he was Senior Designer on award-winning projects with Machado and Silvetti Associates; Skidmore, Owings and Merrill San Francisco and other firms. He has been recognized for his teaching excellence here at UK, at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, The University of Texas School of Architecture in Austin, and at the California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

Rohrbacher joined the University of Kentucky faculty in 2009. In 2010, collaborating with the Kentucky Research Consortium on Energy and Environment and the UK Center for Applied Energy Research, Rohrbacher founded the Atomic Cities Research Group, which focuses on hopeful and prosperous futures for the U.S. Department of Energy’s Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant site and environs, and the city of Paducah in western Kentucky. This research has been published in international peer-reviewed journals, and interactive site models were exhibited in the 2012 Rotterdam Architecture Biennial in the Netherlands.

In addition to his academic experience, Professor Gary Rohrbacher, AIA, co-founded the architecture practice of Filson and Rohrbacher with UK Associate Professor Anne Filson in 2007, and launched a line of downloadable furniture known as AtFAB in 2010. Widely recognized as a pioneer in distributed manufacturing, AtFAB has been downloaded worldwide, acquired by the Centre National Arts Plastiques in Paris, written about in The Economist and The Atlantic, and cited by the World Economic Forum subcommittee on Technology as an example of a top 10 emerging technology for 2015.
Wallis Miller Receives 2016 Great Teacher Award

One of six teachers selected for this distinguished honor, Wallis Miller – the Charles Parker Graves Endowed Associate Professor in Architecture – was honored earlier this spring with the 2016 Great Teacher Award, presented by the University of Kentucky Alumni Association.

The Great Teacher Award, started in 1961, is the longest-running UK award recognizing teaching. In order to receive the award, educators must first be nominated by a student. The UK Alumni Association Great Teacher Award Committee, in cooperation with the student organization Omicron Delta Kappa, then makes the final selections. Recipients receive an engraved plaque and monetary reward.
The University of Kentucky’s School of Interiors was recently ranked in “America’s Best Architecture & Design Schools” as one of the top five Interior Design schools in the South for its graduate program by DesignIntelligence. The “America’s Best Architecture & Design Schools” survey is conducted annually by DesignIntelligence on behalf of the Design Futures Council. The research ranks undergraduate and graduate programs from the perspective of leading practitioners.

“We could not be more honored to be included on this list with such esteemed regional programs in our field of interior design,” said Patrick Lee Lucas, director of the School of Interiors at the College of Design. “We provide a rich and rewarding experience for our graduate students, and to receive this acknowledgment of our efforts in engagement and design thinking is truly humbling.”

For more than 15 years, “America's Best Architecture & Design Schools” from DesignIntelligence has been the definitive school ranking in four key disciplines: architecture, landscape architecture, interior design and industrial design.

“For our School of Interiors to be ranked among the elite programs in the South is a true honor of distinction for us,” said Dean Mitzi Vernon. “This serves as an impetus to guide our efforts in advancing the college even further.”

The rankings were based on responses from 2,237 U.S. firms and organizations employing architecture, design, and landscape architecture professionals who participated in this year’s research.
“Who would’ve thought interior design students would be designing video games?” said Rebekah Radtke, assistant professor in the School of Interiors.

Soon enough, both she and several of her students would realize this when her spring 2016 studio worked on a video game project with Dr. Eduardo Santillan-Jimenez of the Center for Applied Energy Research.

Dr. Santillan-Jimenez started a program called Scientists in the Classroom, where scientists and engineers would visit grades K-12 to conduct hands-on STEM activities. Dr. Santillan-Jimenez specializes in biofuels, and since they aren’t necessarily classroom compatible, he came up with a type of board game to explain their ecological impact.

This led to Dr. Santillan-Jimenez earning a sustainability challenge grant to turn the analog version into a video game. This is where Radtke and her students came in to help strengthen the graphic component of the game.

Radtke’s studio, along with student Jessica Moore who worked on the game over the summer, helped with the “game play” component (how people interact with the game). Using the video game as a teaching tool has provided Dr. Santillan-Jimenez with a whole new educational model. “We keep hearing from teachers that science is not very popular as a teaching topic, even for teachers because they feel insecure in the material,” he said. “They appreciate having us scientists come out to engage students and teach content; they’re appreciative of us trying to develop tools that they can use.”

Radtke agreed, and is grateful to have been given the opportunity to take part in a project that hits close to home. “[With this video game] we are increasing energy literacy in a state with preconceived ideas so it’s harder to have conversations about these things,” she said. “If everyone has this knowledge from this game, it makes it more accessible.”

Right: Dr. Eduardo Santillan-Jimenez of the Center for Applied Energy Research shows a prototype of the new science video game to a group of students. Assistant Professor Rebekah Radtke’s studio helped with the graphic components of the game (above).
EVENTS

College Honors Ceremony
Wild Turkey Faculty/Staff Retreat
End of Year Show
Held in the Woodford Reserve Club at the Commonwealth Stadium, the College of Design Awards celebrated students, faculty, community and staff on their academic and professional achievements over the past academic year. More than 90 scholarship and student academic awards were presented, as well as the following honorary awards: Dwight Jackson, the Dean's Service Award; Holly Weidemann, Friend of the College; Janet Pike, Friend of the College; Ned Crankshaw, Friend of the College; Regina Summers, Staff Service Award; and David Biagi, Faculty Service Award.

Photos by Allison May
Faculty & Staff Retreat

Members of the College of Design’s faculty and staff met at the Wild Turkey Distillery in Lawrenceburg for a retreat last January. As the first official meeting with Dean Mitzi Vernon in her new position, the college came together for a time of strategic planning and thinking, resulting in many of the new branding and pedagogical endeavors in place today.

Photos by GLINT Studios
With their work lining the walls of Pence Hall, students culminated a year’s worth of design during the annual End of Year Show in May. Friends and family came to join in the celebration, reviewing work as a DJ spun tunes on the first floor.

Photos by Allison May

The College of Design End of Year Show
Translating our naturalistic world to a two-dimensional rendering seems counterintuitive, but it is exactly this—the sketch—that D. Eugene Egger has embraced as his medium for teaching students about visualizing the world around them.
Gene Egger is our first subject in the College of Design’s new video interview series. Look for the videos soon on the college website at uky.edu/design.

With this in mind, the College of Design at the University of Kentucky invited Egger – The Patrick and Nancy Lathrop Professor Emeritus at Virginia Tech School of Architecture + Design – to guide students on their own interpretive excursion in the Bluegrass Region. Guided by Egger, students went on two trips: one to downtown Midway and to the grounds of the Wild Turkey Distillery in Lawrenceburg.

While in Midway, Egger took a group of nearly 30 design students down its main street to put their sketching skills to the test. Mind you, he insists he wasn’t there to “teach” sketching. “I think I go into some other state when I’m sketching,” he explains. “That’s why I could never teach sketching; it’s that one-on-one relationship with yourself, to confront your limits and your failures.”

Yet he ensures us that these skills can be fully developed. “Most people don’t have the patience to go through that struggle with their own skill and their own perception,” he says. “That struggle to get yourself coordinated between your abilities and your perception is long-term and most people don’t put up with it. I can coach a situation but it’s a long-term experience.”

So practice makes perfect then? “Oh god yes,” he said, admitting even he doesn’t sketch every day.

One of his many pieces of sage advice starts with the place, the subject of the sketch. “You really shouldn’t spend too much time trying to find a subject,” says Egger. “You should just wander and get into the zone, find some view that really tantalizes your interest, then start.”

And what about when to stop? “I always kid students [who ask] when do you stop drawing – stand up and sketch, then when your arm starts to fall off, stop.”

Rather just an exercise in endurance, Egger’s sketching trips come as a journey to allow students a new perspective for visualizing their designs. “It always disturbed me that historians present architectural information as objects, the buildings are always isolated,” he says. “It always occurred to me that we have to deal with how we record their encounter with something. That perpetuated my interest in drawing fragments.”

These sketching ventures round out Egger’s overall philosophy behind design. “I have this naive notion that drawing the way I do helps students understand the concreteness of what they’re designing,” he says. “They see it as a physical thing, spatial and tangible.”

The college also sponsored Egger’s exhibit, “The Places of Place: Sketching the Encounter,” which ran through Oct. 3 at the Downtown Arts Center in Lexington. Images in the exhibit included experiential sketches from Virginia, Europe, Central America and more.

Left: During his visit, Gene Egger took a group of students to Midway, Ky., for an on-site study.

Right: A quick study by Egger on his tour of Midway’s Main Street Area. Lower right: “Europe – Italy, San Gimignano – Piazza del Duomo,” from Egger’s Europe travel and featured in his exhibit at the Downtown Arts Center in Lexington.
The Drawing of the Issue

Starting with this first issue, we will choose one student’s work to be featured in this Student Drawing competition section of the magazine. We are looking for drawings that are intellectually compelling, something that borders on art – whether that be a rendering, CAD drawing or a sketch from a journal. We will be sending out a reminder for the next issue’s competition, but in the meantime, we would like to congratulate Hannah Sellers on being selected as our first winner!

Student:
Hannah Sellers

Project Title:
The Love Hotel: Chicago

Semester:
Spring 2015

Professor:
Associate Professor Jason Scroggin

Studio Description:
Fuzzy Narratives: Architectonic Characters in the City

The Love Hotel serves as a means to investigate experience developed through the mashing up of fantastic worlds with built form. It is a container of diverse environments in which potential fictions become reality. As an urban object, it generates a physical dialogue with its context contributing to the narrative of Chicago. Its juxtapositions of materials, figures and fantasy within the public and private demands of a hotel enhance the spatial engagement between its inhabitants and the city.
93% | There’s a reason the College of Design has the highest student retention rate of all the colleges at UK.

On average, the University of Kentucky has an 83% retention of first-year to second-year students. But look at the College of Design, and that number jumps dramatically. Same goes for our six-year graduation rate: the University average is 61%. The College of Design average is 79%.

There are several reasons attributed to our success. Knowledgeable faculty, student advisor accessibility and technology skills are just a few of the examples given in the most recent Graduating Senior Survey. Yet this doesn’t tell our whole story. Peer-to-peer interaction, cross-disciplinary opportunities and real-world experiences also influence the student perspective, all of which are life skills that help to make the transition to the professional world that much smoother.

The place is Kentucky. The starting point is the College of Design.