

Christopher Ramirez

El Salvador | Master of Architecture and
Master of Community Planning

Farewell, RFK. Hello Affordability and Place

Chris Ramirez' thesis reimagines the fate of RFK stadium, a 190-acre, asphalt-laden site on the edge of the District of Columbia. Slated for demolition in 2021 with plans to redevelop the site into a series of sports facilities, Ramirez had a radically different idea. "I saw potential in the area and I was not satisfied with current solutions," he said. His proposed scheme offers a stunning gateway to the district from Prince George's County, meshing the monumental architecture and green space of the capitol city with a growing need for housing. Using a comprehensive site analysis, successful case studies and taking into consideration past and present planning efforts, the new master plan offers a vibrant D.C. community and renewed sense of place.

What's next: Ramirez hopes to continue to build his skills in urban design professionally as he works towards licensure.



Amy T. Duan

Pasadena, Maryland | Master of Architecture
and Master of Historic Preservation

*Chronic Inundation: Developing an Outdoor
Education Center for Threatened Communities*

Duan's joint Master of Architecture / Master of Historic Preservation final thesis imagines an outdoor education center for Cambridge, Maryland, one of the Eastern Shore's oldest cities, to help the fragile, historically rich communities along the Chesapeake Bay address the profound impacts of climate change. The project holds special significance for Duan, who calls the Eastern Shore home. Her hope is for the center—adapted from a 1903 historic school in Cambridge's historic district—to serve as a beacon for community partnerships and a place for residents to access resources and strategies. "This is an important topic because climate change impacts, like chronic inundation, are happening much closer to home than people realize," said Duan. "Maryland's Eastern Shore is a threatened region with many historic coastal communities at high risk but limited resources to address the issue."

What's next: Duan hopes to continue designing sustainable, community-centered solutions after graduation.



Amber Robbs

Sherman, Illinois | Master of Architecture with a Certificate in Historic Preservation

Sustainability Through Adaptation: Reimagining Existing Spaces with Mass Timber Construction

An inventive adaptive reuse project employing mass timber won Amber Robbs this year's thesis prize. Sited on a neglected 1919 U.S. Navy Industrial Building, Robbs' project makes the case for reimagining and reusing existing spaces, creating a warm, beautiful and sustainable space that will produce fewer greenhouse emissions during its lifecycle. "Mass timber is a construction method that has been growing in popularity but is not widely accepted yet," says Robbs. "It's a great alternative to steel and concrete construction that not only acts as a beautiful material but can aid in cutting down on the CO2 emissions that are caused by construction. We are consistently demoing perfectly good structures that already contain high amounts of embodied energies that could be repurposed and help to maintain the identity of the community it belongs to. Why keep demoing just to build new structures that could leave a negative impact on our climate when we have the resources to adapt sustainability?"

What's next: Robb is joining the design team at Gensler's Washington, D.C. office.

Sarah Ingerson

Baltimore, Maryland | Master of Real Estate Development and Master of Community Planning
Mariner's Court

Ingerson's capstone project is a holistic, mixed-income retirement community situated on the edge of Annapolis, Maryland. Mariner's Court offers a full continuum of care—from independent living options to skilled nursing beds—within one community, surrounded residents with engaging amenities like walking trails, restaurants and an in-house movie theatre.

What's next: Ingerson, who works for Urban Atlantic Development, hopes to put the skills she gleaned from the MRED and URSP programs to work on meaningful development projects in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. "I hope to continue working in this vein, revitalizing and building communities through innovative financing and design."





Matthew Harrop

**Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania |
Master of Real Estate Development and
Master of Business Administration**

Solomon's Crossing

Matthew Harrop's capstone project, Solomon's Crossing, combines modern and sleek design with ample connections to the natural beauty of the Eastern Shore to create a sought-after multi-family community. Situated within minutes of downtown Annapolis, resort-like amenities—such as a rooftop terrace, state-of-the-art fitness center, pool and proximity to shopping—emulate sophisticated urban living, while its surrounding natural features and forestry provide a quiet respite. "With the advent of Solomon's Crossing, sophisticated apartment living no longer stops at the Beltway," says Harrop.

What's next: Harrop plans to continue working as an Associate at RCLCO in Bethesda, Maryland, where he interned during his MBA/MRED pursuit.



Dan Lorenzana

Glen Burnie, Maryland | Master of Architecture

Here to Stay: The Disaster, Displacement, and the Biomimetic Response

In 2019, 17 separate typhoons hit the shores of the Philippines, collectively displacing millions of people and contributing the proliferation of unsafe structures and slums. It was this statistic—and his own personal experience as a child growing up in the Philippines—that inspired Lorenzana to investigate an urban and building design typology that is able to adapt to climate change using biomimicry as a design technique. Elevated housing emulates the height and resilience of native mangrove trees, with flex spaces—such as shops, markets and community services—rooted below.

“This exploration is hoped to be used as an established design criteria in the Philippines where typhoons are very prominent,” says Lorenzana. “I would like to give back and help my country, even if it's through architecture.”

What's next: With diploma in hand, Lorenzana's next aspiration is licensure—he plans to earn his LEED Green Associate by the end of the year.



Shanek Reid

Rockville, Maryland | Master of Architecture

Adaptable Housing: A Sustainable Architectural Solution to Informal Settlements in the Caribbean

Sited in the Jamaican slums of Trenchtown in Kingston, Reid's thesis explores how design and urban planning can be leveraged as tools for socio-economic growth. Reid uses a comparative analysis of historical and current housing models to propose an economically and socially sustainable redevelopment plan steeped in community-architect collaboration. While onsite conversations in Jamaica helped inform her design, Reid—whose family hails from the island—was initially drawn to the topic after researching slums in Baltimore. “[I discovered] that the very extent to which I had experienced these types of places in the islands could also be experienced while in any country around the world, whether on a small or large scale,” said Reid. “All of this prompted me to think about the extents of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, food deserts, racial inequalities and other environmental and social vulnerabilities, and the role that architecture can play in alleviating them.”

What's next: Reid hopes to apply this thoughtful design thinking approach to social and environmental design projects as well as pro-bono work within the community.



Deane Townsend

Salisbury, Maryland | Master of Architecture
*Sink or Swim: A Conversation on Life in an
Inundated Chesapeake Bay Watershed*

A native of the Eastern Shore, Townsend's thesis addresses sea level rise on the Eastern Shore of Maryland through resilient strategies that reinforce community connections. Centered around the historic Stepne Manor plantation in historic Chestertown, Maryland, Townsend meshes environment, history and art by creating a new model for community development.

What's next: Townsend will continue working for GMB Architects & Engineers, but is hoping the chance to see the world is in his future. "Hopefully I'll have some time to travel once this pandemic dissipates."



Taina Neugebauer Peters

Rockville, Maryland | Master of Architecture

A New Chapter: Refugee Housing...From Enclave to Hub

The hardship, disruption and culture shock that refugees face when settling in the United States was the inspiration for Taina Peter's thesis project. A new housing model, sited in California where there is a dearth of affordable housing, uses design to facilitate resettlement in the U.S., with spaces that facilitate orientation and education, connect refugees to the greater community and promote cultural diversity.

What's Next: Post graduation, Taina has been working at Transforming Architecture, a residential firm in Highland, Maryland, and says, "I hope to continue designing and exploring within the housing typology."

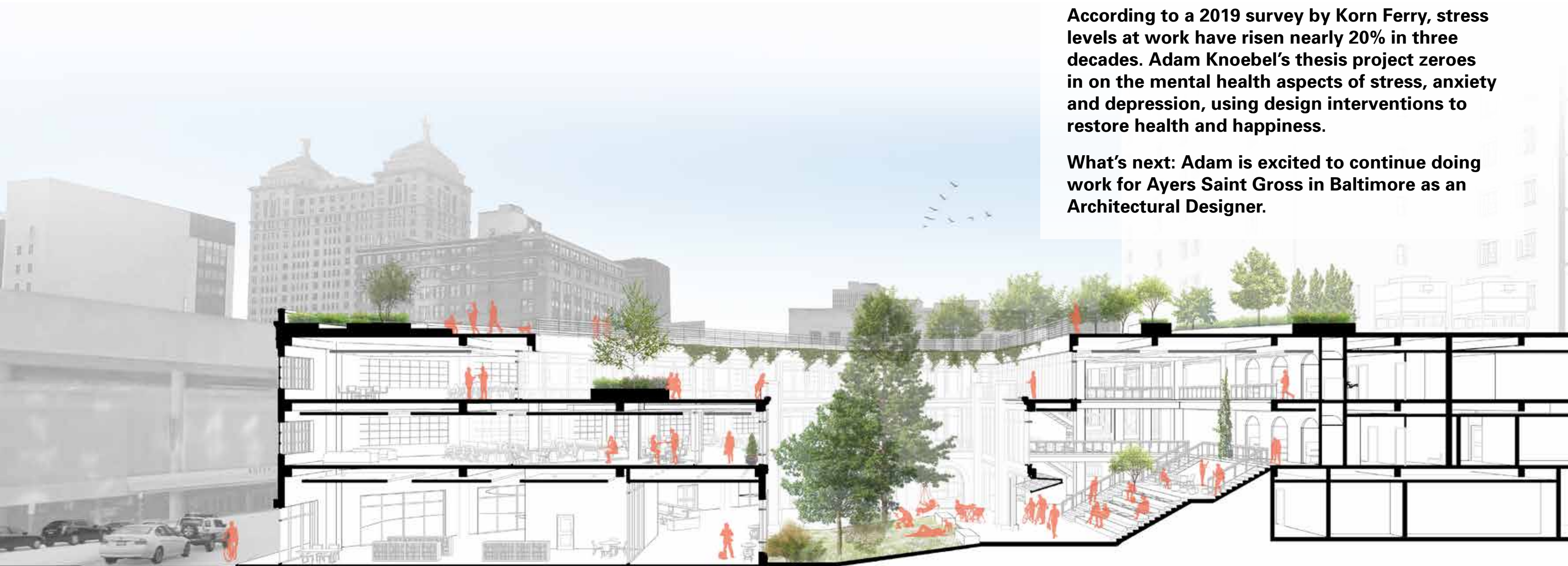
Adam Knoebel

Williamsport, Pennsylvania |
Master of Architecture

*Restoration Space: Designing for Improved
Workplace Culture and Health*

According to a 2019 survey by Korn Ferry, stress levels at work have risen nearly 20% in three decades. Adam Knoebel's thesis project zeroes in on the mental health aspects of stress, anxiety and depression, using design interventions to restore health and happiness.

What's next: Adam is excited to continue doing work for Ayers Saint Gross in Baltimore as an Architectural Designer.



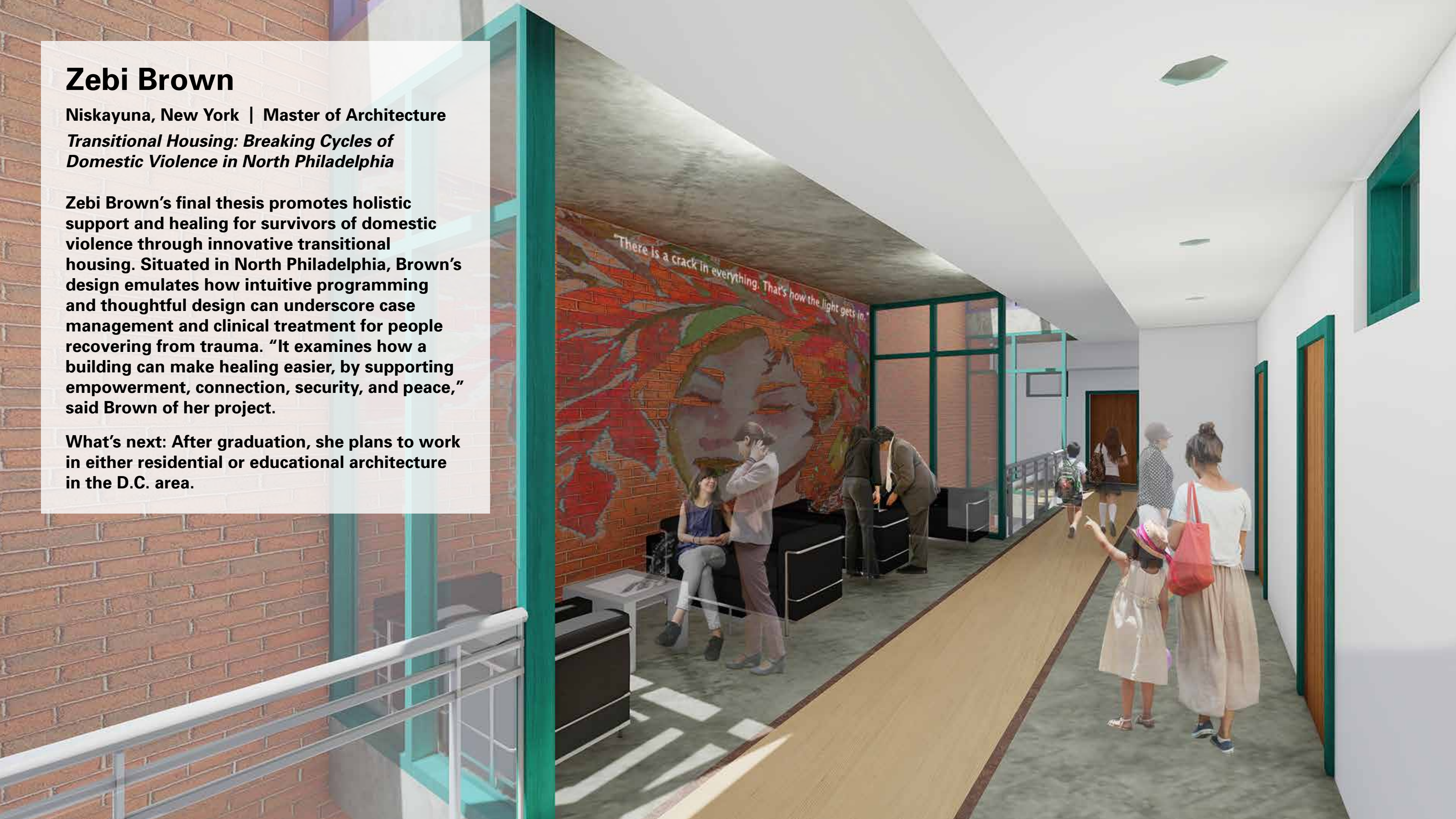
Zebi Brown

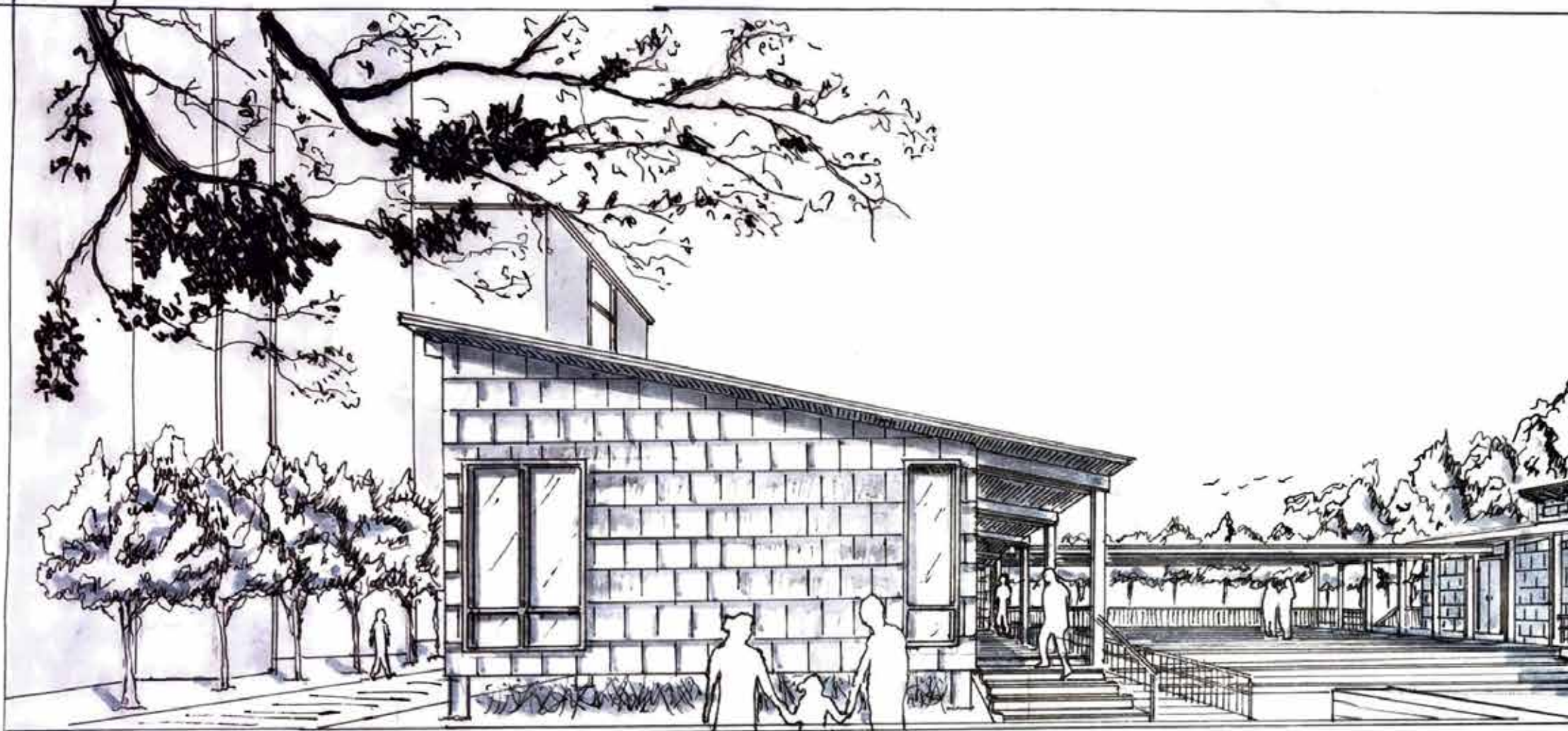
Niskayuna, New York | Master of Architecture

Transitional Housing: Breaking Cycles of Domestic Violence in North Philadelphia

Zebi Brown's final thesis promotes holistic support and healing for survivors of domestic violence through innovative transitional housing. Situated in North Philadelphia, Brown's design emulates how intuitive programming and thoughtful design can underscore case management and clinical treatment for people recovering from trauma. "It examines how a building can make healing easier, by supporting empowerment, connection, security, and peace," said Brown of her project.

What's next: After graduation, she plans to work in either residential or educational architecture in the D.C. area.



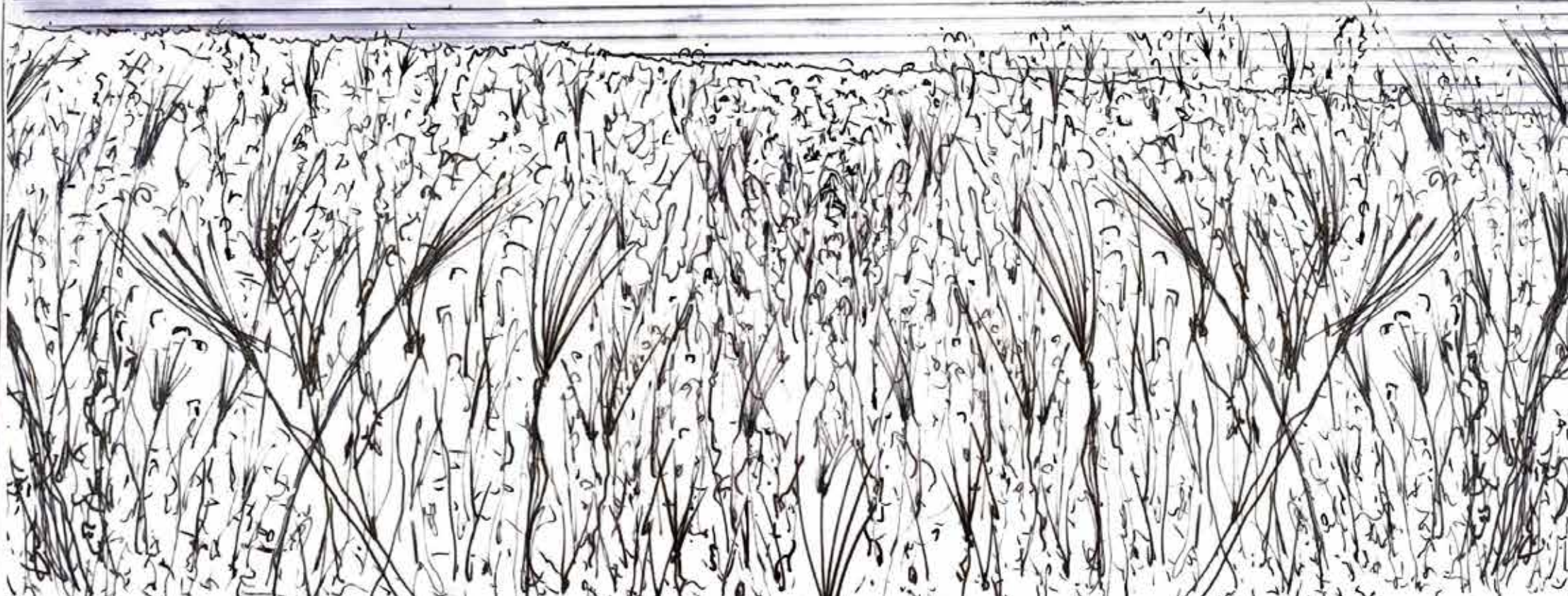


Collin James Andrew Haslup

Perry Hall, Maryland | Master of Architecture
*The Velvære Re-Imagining Health & Wellness
Within Post Industrial Urban Infrastructure*

In his thesis project, Collin Haslup strives to heal two things: citizen health, marred by the effects of industrial production; and the industrial sites themselves, giving them new life and purpose that better the environment. Inspired by the pro-health practices synonymous with Scandinavian countries, Haslup focuses on design interventions set to reverse the harmful, outdated industrial infrastructure of urban cities to promote overall quality of life. "I often find myself thinking about the health and wellness in the citizens of our country and how they define health and wellness for themselves. What does it mean to you to be healthy? I am intrigued by the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, who are at the top of world rankings in categories such as health consciousness, green living, and overall quality of life. Here in the United States, we currently lack in these categories ranking 19th, 15th, and 17th. For Americans living within an urban setting, the importance to sustain their own "velvære" which means "well-being" in Norwegian, is critical."

What's next: Haslup begins his new career in architecture with Design Collective this summer.





Kelsey Winters

Hagerston, Maryland | Master of Architecture

The Distribution of Care: A Modular Health Facility for the Treatment of Disease-Stricken Communities in Africa

As COVID-19 maintains a tight grip on the world's healthcare facilities, Kelsey Winters' innovative thesis project could not be timelier. Responding to the profound and disproportionate disease spread found in African countries, Winters' project envisions a quick-to-construct, modular health facility that can ease the burden of outbreaks on existing healthcare centers. "After reading *The Hot Zone* in high school, I developed an interest in epidemiology and knew that I wanted to incorporate the topic into my master's thesis," said Winters. Her design goes beyond a simple temporary treatment center by addressing the trauma, fear, isolation and death that can occur during an outbreak. "These centers are a checkpoint for healing during a traumatic event in a person's life. Architecture can change the way people feel at these centers, and it can induce change earlier through quicker construction techniques." Winters looks forward to building her experience and knowledge base through project work with an architecture firm in Baltimore.



Mansoor Ahmed

Lahore, Pakistan | Master of Architecture

Re-thinking Residence: How to Mass Produce Diversity?

In 2019, the United Nations estimated a housing backlog of nine million units in Pakistan, one of the world's fastest growing countries.

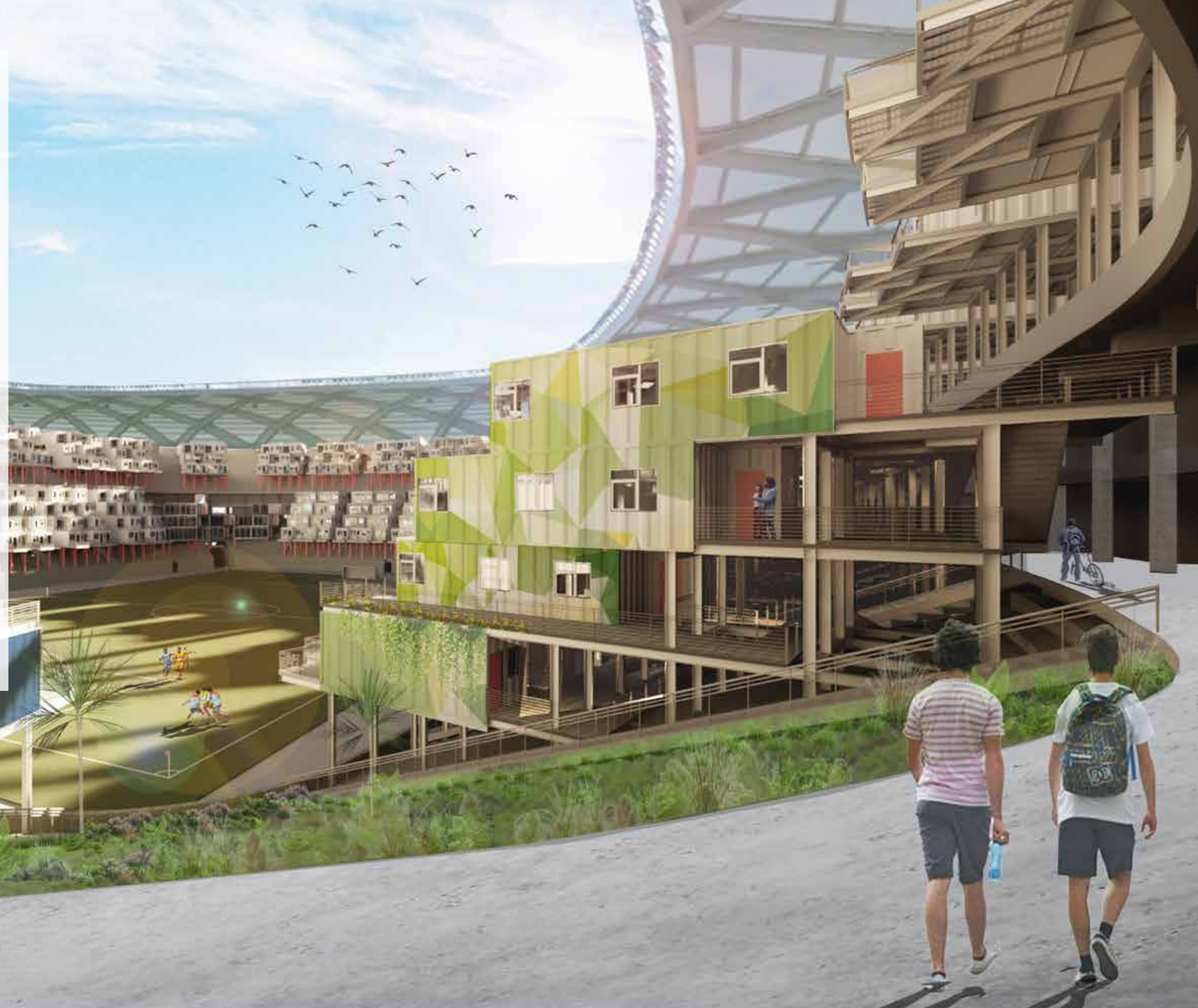
Mansoor Ahmed's thesis strives to solve Pakistan's significant housing shortage, accelerating its current production rate through the mass-production of customizable housing units. Through an optimized construction system, Ahmed's proposal finds balance between mass production and personalization: contextually responsive, energy-efficient, sustainable housing that gently blends into Pakistan's urban fabric housing. "This project addresses the current need of cities in Pakistan and has the potential to resolve the housing crisis, whilst safeguarding the environment and embodying the culture of each region within the country," says Ahmed, who hopes to explore his idea further after graduation.

Enzo Montecinos

Silver Spring, Maryland | Master of Architecture

[Stay]dium: Creating a Community in an Abandoned Stadium through Adaptive Reuse

Six years after the 2014 World Cup electrified Brazil, eight of the country's 12 stadiums constructed for the event stand empty, inviting crime and falling into disrepair. In Montecinos' thesis, he transforms one of these abandoned stadiums into a mixed-use, sustainable community asset that highlights Brazil's vibrant culture, love for soccer and enduring memory of the World Cup. "I was able to travel to Manaus, Brazil in 2019 to research one of the abandoned stadiums," said Montecinos. "I was committed to finding a solution that not only occupied the stadium for an extended period but created a community through amenities and programed spaces." Montecinos hopes that parts of his thesis can be replicated to existing and proposed arenas/stadiums.



Sara Baum

Hamilton, New Jersey |
Master of Historic Preservation

Historic Structure Assessment: Joseph A. Poffenberger House, Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, Maryland

Historic lodging programs have become a popular way for tourists to immerse themselves in American history by spending the night in places that witnessed it firsthand. Baum's final thesis offers a comprehensive historic assessment of the Joseph Poffenberger House, a historically significant farmstead within the Antietam National Battlefield, for the National Park Services' Cultural Resource Division as they look to revive area farmsteads for overnight visitors. While the property has had significant work completed to its exterior, understanding the condition, age and significance of historic interior features is integral to its restoration; Baum's report, which provides a room-by-room inventory, measurements and conditions, serves as the basis for a preservation plan and recommendations for future work.

What's next: Baum looks forward to applying her new master's degree just down the street from UMD. "I was fortunate enough to secure a job during these crazy times," she said, "and will start work as a Historic Preservation Specialist at Atlantic Refinishing and Restoration in Beltsville, Maryland."





Veronica Martin

Midland, Michigan |
Master of Historic Preservation

Preservation Success or Failure? A Comparative Analysis of Historic Bridge Marketing Programs in the United States

When a historic bridge is removed during a replacement project, what becomes of it? The answer depends on where the bridge is located. In her project, Veronica Martin conducts a deep dive into the varying bridge programs across the United States to determine how successful varying states are in preserving and rehabilitating historic bridges, which is a federal guideline required for project funding. Using a series of matrices, the report uncovers the strengths and weaknesses of bridge programs in Pennsylvania, Texas and Missouri, offering recommendations for bridge marketing programs to further their preservation goals.

What's next: Martin is currently completing an internship with the National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE), in cooperation with the National Park Service.

Photo caption: Thompson, Kris Lammi. "The Lenticular of Lazy Brook Park: Bridging the Gap between Idea and Execution." Pennsylvania Historic Preservation, October 26, 2018. <https://pahistoricpreservation.com/lenticular-bridge-lazy-brook-park/>.



Grace Davenport

Columbia, Maryland |
Master of Historic Preservation

Historic Structure Investigation: The Piper House, Antietam National Battlefield

If buildings could talk, the Piper House in Sharpsburg, Maryland, would have a lot to say. Situated in the center of Antietam National Battlefield, this 19th century home witnessed arguably the bloodiest battle of the Civil War. Grace Davenport's final project assesses the house's significance, both for its contribution to the battlefield's place on the National Register of Historic Places and as an example of a vernacular farmhouse in Washington County, Maryland. The report details the house's building chronology and historic construction methods while offering recommendations for its ongoing preservation.

What's next: Davenport is currently looking for job opportunities in historic preservation planning, heritage tourism, documentation and historic site management.



Karynne Campbell

Silver Spring, Maryland |
Master of Real Estate Development

*The Grove: A Sustainably-Oriented Mixed-Use
Marketplace in Annapolis*

Situated in the Loretta Heights neighborhood of Annapolis, Campbell's mixed-use development seeks to bridge the Eastern Shore's natural beauty with the vibrant and historic city environment of Maryland's capital. Linked to communal parks and other natural amenities, the Grove's town-center feel puts large and independently-owned retail at the fingertips of residents of all income-levels and family sizes.

What's next: Campbell, who will continue with a property management company after graduation, hopes to apply her new skills and new degree to eventually launch her own real estate company.

Jessica Kelley

Rockville, Maryland |
Master of Real Estate Development

Solomon's Forest

Kelley's capstone marries residential and retail in a mixed-use development called Solomon's Forest. The project offers four stories of residential units—203 in all—atop 50,000 square feet of retail space. The creative development maximizes amenities by taking advantage of its height, with an elevated interior courtyard for residents that sits over ground floor parking.

What's next: After graduation, Kelley will continue as a leasing representative with Konterra Realty LLC in Laurel, Maryland.

