

March 15, 2004

Jot Carpenter Medal Nominations  
ASLA  
636 Eye Street  
Washington DC 20001-3736

**REF: Professor Marvin I. Adleman, Nominee for the 2004 Jot Carpenter Teaching Medal**

Dear Members of the Nominations Committee:

On the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Landscape Architecture at Cornell University, we would like to honor Marvin I. Adleman by nominating him for the 2004 Jot Carpenter Teaching Medal. Professor Adleman established the undergraduate and graduate accredited programs of landscape architecture at Cornell as we know them today. His thirty-two year career here represents nearly a third of the department's history and the teaching of three-quarters of all alumni/ae since 1904. History aside, this quiet, but passionately involved teacher is one of the most influential educators-- and advocates for professional education in Landscape Architecture--today. He remains an active academician and long-standing practitioner whose career beyond the classroom has combined practice and academic theory, whether as designer of CLARB exams or of his many significant and award winning projects in the Finger Lakes Region of New York State.

Marvin Adleman came to Cornell in 1972 and taught with another new faculty member, Jot Carpenter, in the newly (and provisionally) re-accredited landscape architecture program in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Although a department with a long and distinguished history, Landscape Architecture had suffered a decline in its faculty and course offerings by the 1960's. As Jot Carpenter left Cornell to begin his distinguished career of academic leadership at Ohio State, Marv went on to transform Cornell's program and his own career. He left behind his years of practice with Adleman, DuTot and Collins and, earlier, Hideo Sasaki to revitalize the historic program's strong professional design approach to the curriculum. As Program Coordinator from 1973 - 1985, he unified fragmented course offerings and hired a small but carefully selected group of assistant professors with strong professional design experience and extraordinary dedication to the mission of teaching. Within three years, the program had received full accreditation from the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board (LAAB), and recognition as an internationally competitive degree program. He set a direction for the program that integrated theory with practice within the context of an Ivy League University, a direction that remains a hallmark of the program today.

Professor Adleman's career has been dedicated to teaching. After thirty two years, he continues to have one of the greatest full time equivalent (FTE) teaching loads in our department, as well as a substantial advising role. He would not have it any other way. He always has 12-15 undergraduate advisees and 6 or more graduate students each year. His



studios have stressed excellence in design and strong habits of careful crafting and practice. His courses have taken students from conceptual design and consultation with clients and representatives of communities, through the realities of construction and grading issues, to skillful, well-designed, and realistic final projects. Cornell's students are well known to be both broadly educated and immediately employable, and this is due in no small measure to Professor Adleman's teaching and leadership in establishing the character of the curriculum. Perhaps this quote, pinned up prominently over his desk, best expresses his deceptively straightforward conviction about inquiry based education that is his legacy to us all:

*I hear and I forget  
I see and I remember  
I do and I understand.  
--Confucius*

His dedication to teaching extends beyond the classroom to the education of clients, current professionals, and communities. His publications and extension activities have focused on educating the general public in the issues that underlie well built landscapes. His book, co-authored with John Collins, *Livable Landscape Design*, has guided thousands of property owners on the issues that affect the design of their properties as a whole. He is currently working with his studio students on a new guide book, *The Rural Design Workbook*, based upon his classes' community design projects in the Southern Tier of New York State. (This is included in-part for your review). He teaches summer course for individuals to learn the design issues on their own properties. Again, the need for such education in the U.S. is profound. The course is highly acclaimed by alumni and is oversubscribed.

Each year for six years now, Professor Adleman has served a profoundly grateful group of professional students by offering an intensive site grading course in anticipation of the annual licensing exam. The letters of gratitude from this group are countless and the course is oversubscribed. There is no better instructor on the topic. Professor Adleman was recently recognized nationally and internationally for his dedication and unique teaching strategies in *Landscape Architecture Magazine* December 2003, "Making The Grade." (See article included here in.) Professor Adleman was also recognized for his lifetime teaching by the Honor Society of Sigma Lambda Alpha at the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture 2003 Annual Meeting in Charleston South Carolina. He established a program of Landscape Architecture at Cornell that is so deeply grounded in teaching excellence and one-on-one learning that Cornell has become one of the main generators of faculty for landscape architecture programs internationally, from Hong Kong to Harvard, from the University of New South Wales, Sydney to programs in almost every state.

Professor Adleman's contributions to professional education in landscape architecture have created a deep and enduring legacy both in the U.S. and internationally. His prominence was recognized some years ago when he was awarded Fellow status by the American Society of Landscape Architects. His students and colleagues would now like to recognize his distinguished academic career by nominating him for the Jot Carpenter Teaching Medal for 2004 on the occasion of over thirty years of teaching and before his retirement from Cornell.

In addition to representing my colleagues here at Cornell in making this nomination, I would like to close on a more personal note. I came to Cornell as an undergraduate in 1975, shortly after Marv had the program up and running. I never knew until years later that the program was other than well-established, although I remember Marv tapping me to start the undergraduate ASLA program, which is still thriving at Cornell. The program did not seem new

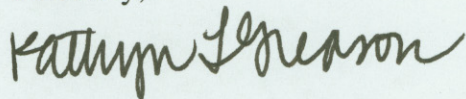


because excellent, timeless teaching can happen in any attic, roof or basement studio (I can say that as an alumna rather than as Chair). In doing design, I understood. I loved landscape architectural design history, so I went to the Middle East and dug for it, and understood-- I understood that I needed to create an interdisciplinary team of archaeologists and a supportive community. My Cornell degree had prepared me well. Many Cornellians, practitioners, and citizens have changed the landscape and their communities under Marv's instruction. He posted a second quote beside the one cited above.

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.* *--Margaret Mead*

Please join us in honoring this wonderful educator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn L. Gleason". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Kathryn L. Gleason, Chair