For the last few decades, GGN has created landscapes that explore and abstract the basic elements of the space under the open sky we as humans inhabit. Not afraid to use geometry or other orders emanating from our brains, GGN uses these devices to unearth and accentuate the contours and character of the land, while introducing elements that connect these spaces to the places we have built for inhabitation or work. I know few other design firms that are better able to expose and explore what it means to shape the land, and to thus unearth beauty that exhilarates and astonishes, than GGN.

– Aaron Betsky, Architectural Critic and Dean of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture
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Re: Nomination of GGN Firm of the Year

Dear Trustees,

The ASLA’s Firm Award is one of the highest awards in our profession and thus it is with great pleasure that I nominate the firm of GGN led by Kathryn Gustafson, Jennifer Guthrie, and Shannon Nichol. As landscape architect Martha Schwartz has written:

GGN is one of the very best landscape firms (if not the best) in the world. They are true leaders in the profession as they combine their love of natural systems, with the most sophisticated planting palettes of any firm in the world. They understand the needs of people in environments that range from rural to urban while keeping the highest standards of artistry. They produce work that becomes icons for cities and raises the bar for our profession. I cannot say enough about the capabilities and talents of this firm. They deserve this accolade and will continue to lead the profession for many years to come.

As a collaborative firm deeply committed to the creation of landscapes that are beautiful, responsible, functional, and innovative, GGN has produced a body of work that defines the best of our profession. The recognition of their peers is evident in this description by landscape architect James Burnett:

For 18 years Gustafson Guthrie Nichol has continued to produce inspirational landscapes that transcend beauty and function. Their many award-winning designs are consistently cited as some of the most significant works of landscape in the profession. Their work is simple, elegant and exquisitely detailed. They have attracted a strong following of great clients who commission GGN to create incredible, timeless gardens.

Jennifer Guthrie, Shannon Nichol, and Kathryn Gustafson founded GGN in 1999, as a firm in which design would always come first and complex problems would be tackled with bravery, humor, humility, and curiosity. This founding vision continues to distinguish GGN as does their commitment to a work environment that cultivates a diverse collective of designers both strong and generous. One senses this partnering on a project, or simply walking into their office space where sunlight pours through large windows onto large desks and work appears a joyful pursuit.

GGN’s founding partners were first connected by a series of projects in which they shared their intensity of interest and dedication to beautiful design. They discovered in these early collaborations, despite differences in backgrounds and ages, a remarkable trust in the depth of each other’s integrity and commitment to conceptual and technical rigor. This meeting of the minds and souls was a rare opportunity and they were quick to build on these early successes to create a firm in which trust is a core value and where each partner, and for that matter every member of the firm, gives priority to the quality of the project before ego, ease, or convenience. This work ethos has not only built an outstanding firm but is much appreciated by
collaborators and clients. As Robert Kogod noted at the 2011 Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt National Design Awards Presentation:

Having personally worked with the firm, I can attest to their spirit of inquiry, their creativity, their standards of excellence and professionalism, and their willingness to make room for the client in the process. All of this is being done with a great abundance of joy and exuberance.

Early on the partners realized three quick, successional projects that remain some of GGN’s most recognized landscapes – the Seattle Civic Center, the Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, and the Lurie Garden. These projects not only launched the young firm, but revealed the extraordinary power of beautiful landscapes as civic spaces and the role of the garden in the city. In each of these projects the young firm drew on Kathryn’s mottos of “the sky is ours,” and “whoever draws it first, owns it,” requiring the designer to jump in, dig deep, and take responsibility for the design, from its conception to its final details.

In the following decade, the GGN leaders stewarded the growth of the firm focused on exquisite design, artful landforms, and elegant use of plants. The firm completed design projects for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, an outstanding model of a functional, responsible, and beautiful urban landscape; the Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard, where the use of the water scrim re-imagines the inner courtyard; and the Lower Rainier Vista landscape, for which they elegantly restored an Olmsted landscape while integrating a 21st century public transportation node. Their leadership on the Pike-Pine Corridor in Seattle and the University of Washington’s West Campus student life district has served as a model of how landscape architects are rethinking the role of responsible and beautiful design in our urban landscapes. The CityCenter in DC and most recently the design for the National Museum of African American History and Culture are redefining the role of landscape architects as partners with architects and civic leaders.

GGN’s practice is on the cutting-edge of design and the partners, alongside their team, have long served as leaders in our profession. The firm has been recognized for their design prowess with countless awards including the prestigious Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award, ASLA National Awards of Excellence for their work at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, the Lurie Garden at Millennium Park in Chicago, and the Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion O. McCaw Hall, the ASLA National Honor Award for their design, Unified Ground: Union Square, for the National Mall Competition, and many notable designations from the AIA and ASLA, among others. I was honored in 2010 to nominate them for the University of Washington Landscape Architecture Department Award.

In the past 18 years, as the firm has grown to 45 people, it has built its success on the core values of collaboration, innovation, and a firm commitment to both function and beauty. This collaborative character continues to inspire the best in each member of the firm as well as in their many colleagues, partners, and clients. As a teacher and mentor for the next generation, I have drawn on the wisdom and creativity of GGN for just these reasons.

With the tremendous talent and brawn of the whole GGN office, they have demonstrated the best that our profession offers. I am honored to nominate GGN for the 2017 ASLA Firm Award.

Sincerely,

Thaisa Way
Professor, Landscape Architecture/ Architecture/ History
University of Washington, Seattle
2 Achievements

National Firm Awards
National Design Award, Landscape Architecture, Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt, 2011

National Project Awards
Best of Design Award for Public Landscape, Lower Rainier Vista & Pedestrian Land Bridge, The Architect’s Newspaper, 2016
ASLA Award of Excellence, General Design, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, 2014
ASLA Honor Award, Analysis and Planning, Unified Ground: Union Square National Mall Competition, 2014
EDRA Great Places Planning Award, Pike-Pine Renaissance Streetscape Design Vision, 2014
EDRA Great Places Planning Award, Unified Ground: Union Square National Mall Competition, 2013
Tucker Design Award, North End Parks, Building Stone Institute, 2012
EDRA Great Places Finalist, Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard, 2012
Tucker Design Award, Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard, Building Stone Institute, 2010
ASLA Award of Excellence, General Design, The Lurie Garden at Millennium Park, 2008
Tucker Design Award, Seattle City Hall Plaza and Civic Center Campus, Building Stone Institute, 2008
Green Good Design Award, Seattle City Hall Plaza and Civic Center Campus, Chicago Athenaeum, 2009
ASLA Award of Excellence, General Design, Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion O. McCaw Hall, 2005
Tucker Design Award, Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion O. McCaw Hall, Building Stone Institute, 2004

Regional Project Awards
WASLA Honor Award, Lower Rainier Vista, 2016
ASCE Outstanding Achievement Award, Lower Rainier Vista, 2016
ACEC Washington State Special Judges Gold Award for Complexity, Lower Rainier Vista, 2016
WASLA Merit Award, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, 2014
WASLA Merit Award, West Campus Streetscape, 2014
AIA Washington Civic Design Award, West Campus Streetscape, 2013
AIA NW & Pacific Region Citation Award, West Campus Streetscape, 2013
SCUP Honor Award, West Campus Streetscape, 2013
WASLA Merit Award, University of Washington School of Medicine, 2012
WASLA Merit Award, Works in Progress, Vancouver Community Connector, 2012
AIA Northwest Educational Merit Award, University of Washington School of Medicine, 2011
BSLA Honor Award, North End Parks with Crosby/Schlessinger/Smallridge, 2011
Boston Preservation Alliance Achievement Award, North End Parks, 2011
University of Washington Landscape Architecture Department Award, 2010
WASLA Special Mention, North End Parks, 2010
WASLA Merit Award, Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard, 2008
AIA Washington Council Honor Award, Seattle City Hall Plaza and Civic Center Campus, 2006
Seattle Design Commission Commended Project, Fire Station 10 & Emergency Operations Center, 2006
AIA Seattle, Seattle Civic Design Honor Award, Seattle City Hall Plaza and Civic Center Campus, 2005
WASLA Honor Award, The Lurie Garden at Millennium Park, 2005
AIA Seattle Honor Award, Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion O. McCaw Hall, 2004
WASLA Honor Award, Seattle City Hall Plaza and Civic Center Campus, 2003
WASLA Merit Award, Kreielsheimer Promenade at Marion O. McCaw Hall, 2003

Selected Firm Engagement
University of Washington College of Built Environments, Mentorship Program and Reviewers, 2000 - Present
ASLA and WASLA Annual Meeting Education Sessions, Presenters and Panelists, 2001 - Present
GGN Internship Program, 2002 - Present
CEO Roundtable, 2005 - Present
Seattle Design Festival, Design In Public, AIA Seattle, Sponsor, 2011 - Present
Out/in/Front Exhibit, University of Washington Department of Landscape Architecture, 2011-Present
University of Virginia School of Architecture Dean Advisory Board, Rodrigo Abela, 2014-Present
University of Washington Drawing Studios, Founding Sponsor, 2016 - Present
The Lurie Garden Apprenticeship Program, Founding Sponsor, 2017
LAF Board of Directors President, Jennifer Guthrie, 2017
LAF Board of Directors, Jennifer Guthrie, 2012 - 2016
LAF Summit on Landscape Architecture and the Future, 2016
Olmsted Scholar Undergraduates Jury Chair, Jennifer Guthrie, 2016

ASLA Education Committee, Shannon Nichol, 2013 - 2016
Cooper Hewitt High School Design Summit, Rodrigo Abela, 2011 and 2016
Glimcher Distinguished Visiting Professors, Knowlton School, OSU, Shannon Nichol and Jennifer Guthrie, 2015
Banvard Gallery: The City Beautiful Exhibit, 2015
UW College of Built Environments, Professional Advisory Committee, Grant Stewart, 2010 - 2015
Oxbow Native Plant Nursery Tour for Landscape Architects, Shannon Nichol, 2014
ASLA Awards Committee, Shannon Nichol, 2013 - 2014
Mayor’s Institute on City Design, Jennifer Guthrie, 2013
Seattle Design Festival, Founding Board Member, Shannon Nichol, 2010 - 2012
Seattle Center: The Next Fifty Sustainable Futures Committee, Shannon Nichol, 2011
AIA Seattle New Edge | New Blood Exhibit, Curator, Shannon Nichol, 2010
Improv/Improve, AIA Seattle Honor Awards, Co-Chair, Shannon Nichol, 2009
Design in Public Advisory Committee, Shannon Nichol, 2009
ASLA Student Award Juror, Shannon Nichol, 2007
Chicago Botanic Garden Exhibition, 2006
Museum of Modern Art: Groundswell Exhibition, 2005
Seattle Architectural Foundation, Ideas in Form / 7 and 8, Exhibitions, 2004 - 2005
Knowlton School of Architecture Gallery Exhibit, 2005
AIA Diversity Round Table, Seattle, WA, Jennifer Guthrie, 2003
Chicago Cultural Center: Constructed Ground Exhibition, 2001
GGN – Firm award? No contest. This recognition is way, way overdue. We are all followers of GGN. They are influencers, extraordinaire.

– Gary R Hilderbrand FASLA FAAR, Principal, Reed Hilderbrand
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Biographies
Jennifer Guthrie FASLA, PLA
Founding Principal, GGN

Jennifer Guthrie is a founding partner of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol. Her design leadership merges a guiding, experiential vision with innovative and precise detailing. Manipulating light, texture, and the experience of three-dimensional space, Jennifer’s projects have been widely cited for their careful attention to human scale and for their thoughtfully crafted, yet sensible, application of materials.

Jennifer’s professional interests are diverse. Not only does she lead the design for several of GGN’s urban landscapes, she also oversees the management of GGN’s highly complex projects and is responsible for the financial arm of the practice. Jennifer’s clients have included the Smithsonian Institution, the Nu Skin Corporation, and the Department of State, as well as major universities and developers.

Jennifer is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, President of the Landscape Architectural Foundation Board and serves on the CEO Roundtable. She has served as a professional mentor for WASLA/UW, a peer reviewer for the 2013 United States General Services Administration, a panelist for the Mayor’s Institute on City Design and the Chicago Architecture Foundation, and a juror for the ASLA Professional Awards. She has lectured at OTIS College of Art and Design, Society for College and University Planning Regional Conference, University of Manitoba, British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects, and the Seattle Art Museum, among other venues.

Shannon Nichol FASLA, PLA, LEED AP, Hon AIA
Founding Principal, GGN

Shannon Nichol is a founding partner of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol. Her designs, including Millennium Park’s Lurie Garden, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, and Boston’s North End Parks, are widely recognized for being deeply embedded in their neighborhoods and natural contexts. Shannon’s work incorporates complex functions into simple frameworks and refined landforms.

Shannon is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects (Seattle). She has served on advisory committees for universities and non-profits, including the ASLA Education Committee, the Seattle Design Festival Steering Committee, the Seattle Center Next Fifty Sustainable Futures Committee, Editorial Committee of Arcade Journal, and the AIA Improv/Improve Seattle Honor Awards, to name but a few. She frequently serves on juries, including the ASLA Professional Awards, ASLA Student Awards, and other local and national competitions. Shannon has lectured at universities and communities across the Americas, including Forum Monterrey in Mexico, Louisiana State University, Washington State University, Kansas State University, and University of Georgia, most recently providing the keynote address at both LABash and the Banff Session. Shannon has also recently participated in the Creativity Seminar at Harvard GSD, and served as the Glimcher Distinguished Visiting Professor with Jennifer Guthrie at the Knowlton School.
Selected Projects

National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC
CityCenterDC, Washington, DC
Civic Park at Hemisfair, San Antonio, TX
Unified Ground: Union Square - National Mall, DC
Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard, Washington, DC
Venice Biennale: Towards Paradise, Venice, Italy
The Lurie Garden at Millennium Park, Chicago, IL
Seattle City Hall and Civic Campus, Seattle, WA
United States Embassy, Ankara, Turkey
Athens Chancery Major Rehabilitation at the American Embassy, Athens, Greece
Kreielheimer Promenade, McCaw Hall, Seattle, WA
Seattle Center Theatre District, Seattle, WA
Barangaroo South, Sydney, Australia
Yakima Central Plaza, Yakima, WA

Kathryn Gustafson FASLA, PLA, HonAIA, HonRDI
Founding Principal, GGN

Kathryn Gustafson brings over 30 years of distinguished practice to her partnerships in two offices, Gustafson Guthrie Nichol in Seattle and Gustafson Porter + Bowman in London. Her diverse span of works are known as ground-breaking, contemporary designs that incorporate the sculptural, sensual qualities that are fundamental to the human experience of landscape.

Kathryn is an honorary fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architecture, an honorary Royal Designer for Industry member, a medalist of the French Academy of Architecture, and a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She is the recipient of the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture, the Obayashi Prize, the ASLA Design Medal, the Chrysler Design Award, and London’s Jane Drew Prize.

Kathryn recently served on a panel for the LAF Summit on Landscape Architecture and the Future. She has lectured at the Gardner Museum, Boston, University of Toronto, International Skyrise Greenery Conference Singapore, Valencia School of Architecture, Institute of Landscape Architecture, Hanover, Germany, International Federation of Landscape Architects, Cape Town, Museum of Modern Art, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Smithsonian Gardens, University of California at Berkeley, University of Hong Kong, Nordisk Kongress, Oslo, Norway, École Spéciale d’Architecture Paris, EURAU’08 Symposium, Madrid, Spain, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Conference, and other organizations worldwide.

Rodrigo Abela ASLA, PLA, LEED AP BD+C
Principal, GGN

Rodrigo Abela, the principal in charge of GGN’s Washington, DC studio, is currently responsible for handling the majority of GGN’s east-coast projects. His award-winning work is recognized for its striking clarity in form, materials, and purpose. Rodrigo’s design work has been focused in urban centers around the country at a variety of scales and is informed both with a thoughtful incorporation of the human experience and clear understanding of the fabrication and construction process.

Rodrigo’s design talent and leadership distinguish many of GGN’s projects. Drawing on his background in engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture, he thrives in navigating the design process of complex urban sites, as well as the collaborative process of working with fabricators and contractors during construction.

Rodrigo holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Cornell University and a Master of Architecture and a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Virginia. He currently serves on the UVA School of Architecture Dean’s Advisory Board. Rodrigo has lectured at the Rhode Island School of Design and the San Diego Museum of Art, and participated in the Cooper Hewitt High School Design Summit.
Selected Projects

Pike-Pine Renaissance Streetscape Design Vision
Seattle, WA
Seattle Streetcar: City Center Connector, Seattle, WA
Connecting Downtown Cleveland, Cleveland, OH
Civic Park at Hemisfair, San Antonio, TX
Cleveland Convention Center & Global Center for Health Innovation, Cleveland, OH
University of Washington Life Sciences, Seattle, WA
Gardens in the Forest, Seattle, WA
Barangaroo South, Sydney, Australia
Connecting Downtown Cleveland, Cleveland, OH

Grant Stewart ASLA, PLA
Principal, GGN

With professional experience from around the world, Grant Stewart brings a diverse design and management portfolio to GGN. His extensive experience in urban design, commercial development, and master planning allows him to provide leadership on many of GGN’s most comprehensive and complex projects. His role of Managing Principal is strengthened by his steady involvement with internal and external business management responsibilities.

In his project work, Grant strives to provide unique design solutions while maintaining a focus on delivering quality, cost effective, and buildable landscapes. He is fluent in all phases of the design and management process, and he works comfortably with clients and consultants to coordinate projects from concept through construction.

Grant’s engagement at the University of Washington, College of Built Environments has included serving on the Professional Advisory Committee, participating as a guest lecturer for the Professional Practice program, and participating in the mentorship program. He was a key note speaker at Atmos 8 Water + in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He is also the Past Chapter President of the ASLA Tennessee East Chapter.

Selected Projects

Long Beach Civic Center, Long Beach, CA
Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, Seattle, WA
Hemisfair Civic Park, San Antonio, TX
Cleveland Convention Center & Global Center for Health Innovation, Cleveland, OH
University of Washington Life Sciences, Seattle, WA
Gardens in the Forest, Seattle, WA
Barangaroo South, Sydney, Australia
Connecting Downtown Cleveland, Cleveland, OH

Keith McPeters RA
Principal, GGN

Keith McPeters brings to GGN a wide range of interests and skills through his diverse design background in architecture and landscape architecture. His project work in public landscapes, urban designs, and campus master plans emphasizes the connections within a site between its natural and cultural history. With experience in the design and construction of complex projects integrating architecture and landscape, Keith contributes to a range of GGN projects from conceptual design through construction, working with cross-disciplinary teams to engage environmental sustainability and infrastructure issues within urban contexts.

Prior to joining GGN, Keith worked in architecture and landscape architecture most notably as an Associate with OLIN in Philadelphia and Senior Designer with Michael Graves Architects in Princeton, New Jersey. He has been a visiting design critic at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Virginia, the University of Washington, City College of New York, and Carnegie Mellon University.

Keith has presented at the Cultural Landscape Foundation’s Civic Horticulture Conference, participated in the LAND Studio Collaborative Design Workshop, served as a juror for the California Architecture Foundation and Arid Lands Institute’s William Turnbull Competition, and provided the keynote for the Oregon ASLA Symposium, and lectured at the University of Washington, University of Boulder, and Seattle Architecture Foundation.
Selected Projects

Tess Schiavone excels in collaborating with large project teams of landscape architects, architects, and engineers. She pushes projects forward with strong design clarity and simple, innovative solutions. She draws inspiration in her work by realizing the conceptual design through building study models, solving technical problems, and developing construction details.

At GGN, Tess leads the firm’s year-round and summer internship program and enjoys mentoring beginning designers and project managers. Broadening her desire to advocate for the profession and explore design exercises with youth, Tess teaches middle and high school students through Seattle’s ACE Mentor Program.

Since 2013, Tess has served as a reviewer for the University of Washington Architecture Thesis and Landscape Architecture Design Studio programs. In 2016, she presented at the annual ASLA conference in New Orleans, and at AIA Seattle’s Urban Design Forum. Tess served on the jury for the Marble Institute of America and Building Stone Institute’s 2016 Pinnacle Awards.

Bernie Alonzo, PLA, ASLA, LEED AP BD+C
Principal, GGN

Bringing over 20 years of experience managing large consultant teams and complex processes, Bernie Alonzo leads GGN’s most technically challenging projects. His skill set encompasses all aspects of sustainable project planning and design, including site selection, programming, the development of initial concepts and deliverables, budgeting, and the execution of documentation and construction administration.

Due to Bernie’s regional expertise in storm water management, he has been appointed to the Edison Subarea Clean Water District Advisory Board in Skagit County, WA, to combat near-range and long-term challenges caused by sea levels rise. Bernie has served as a Seattle Design Commissioner and liaison to the Public Art Advisory Committee. He has presented several times at the ASLA and WASLA conferences, and was a lecturer for several years for the LID/GSI Course at the University of Washington.

Selected Projects

Smith Cove Park, Seattle, WA
Seattle Streetcar: City Center Connector, Seattle, WA
West Campus Streetscape, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
Hemisfair Civic Park, San Antonio, TX
CityCenterDC, Washington, DC
600 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC
Pratt Fine Arts Center, Seattle, WA
Centennial Park Master Plan, Nashville, TN
University of Washington Mercer Court, Seattle, WA
900 New York Avenue, Washington, DC
The Nu Skin Innovation Center, Provo, UT
Theater Commons and Donnelly Gardens, Seattle, WA

Tess Schiavone RA, LEED AP
Principal, GGN

Selected Projects

Lower Rainier Vista, Seattle, WA
Seattle Streetcar: City Center Connector, Seattle, WA
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, Seattle, WA
Nu Skin Campus and Innovation Center, Provo, UT
Miramar Hotel, Santa Monica, CA
Yakima Central Plaza, Yakima, WA
Racker Square, Rackspace, San Antonio, TX
Blackadore Caye Restorative Islands, Belize
Athens Chancery Major Rehabilitation at the American Embassy, Athens, Greece
United States Embassy Compound, Ankara, Turkey
US New Embassy Compound, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo
United States Consular Compound, Nogales, Mexico
The New Burke, Seattle, WA
Gustafson Guthrie Nichol are gifted designers who draw on a sense of history and place in their work, and by doing so enlighten modern life. Their work engages the senses, brings joy to those who use and inhabit their spaces, and connects to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. They are masters of the subtle gesture that carries great impact, and their work connects with people on a personal and intuitive level. This results in spaces that are welcoming and comfortable, yet also fresh, engaging, and exciting to experience.

– Carl Krebs, FAIA, Partner, Davis Brody Bond Architects
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Project Photos