



ASLA Diversity Summit 2018 Report

ASLA Center for Landscape Architecture, Washington, D.C.

June 22-24, 2018



2018 Diversity Summit Participants / EPNAC.com

Introduction

The American Society of Landscape Architects convened its sixth annual Diversity Summit with the goal of developing a deeper understanding of how landscape architecture can better represent the communities and people it serves. For the 2018 Diversity Summit, five professionals from the Diversity Super Summit were invited back, and nine new participants were selected from the Call for Letters of Interest to add valuable input to discussions and resource development.

On June 22-24, ASLA hosted the 2018 Diversity Summit at the ASLA Center for Landscape Architecture in Washington, D.C. The goals of the 2018 Diversity Summit were to review benchmarks prioritized from the 2017 Diversity Super Summit and to create opportunities for participants to research and workshop resources for ASLA's career discovery and diversity program. Throughout the weekend, participants offered ideas and suggestions for the development of two resources that can assist professionals in implementing diversity and inclusion practices into business strategies and help ASLA National and ASLA Chapters create programs to reach youth and communities.



Returning participants:

Camille Applewhite, Associate ASLA
Darneka Waters, Associate ASLA
Erica Mackenzie, ASLA
Meredith Leigh, Associate ASLA
Ujjiji Davis, Associate ASLA

New participants:

Briana Outlaw, Associate ASLA
Gloria Lau, ASLA
Masako Ikegami, ASLA
David Garce, ASLA
Gabriel Diaz Montemayor, ASLA
Gaylan Williams, ASLA
Jose de Jesus Leal
Patricia Algara
Juan Guzmán Palacios

Presenters & Observers:

Greg Miller, FASLA, ASLA 2018 President
Tom Balsley, FASLA
Signe Nielsen, FASLA
Richard Jones, ASLA
Rebecca Moden, CLARB

Facilitator:

Richard Alomar, ASLA

ASLA staff:

Susan Apollonio, Director Education & Marketing
Shawn Balon, ASLA, Manager, Career Discovery & Diversity
Kristopher Pritchard, Manager, Accreditation & Education
Kelli Bland, Manager, Meetings and Special Programs
Dan Li, Student ASLA, Intern, Education

Summary of Proceedings

Day One - Friday, June 22, 2018

Welcome, Introductions of Staff, Guests, Facilitator

Susan Apollonio, director, Education & Marketing, started the 2018 Diversity Summit by welcoming the attendees, new and old. New participants this year were selected through the 2018 Diversity Summit Call for Letters of Interest to offer new perspectives and thought leadership to the Summit. Susan also introduced ASLA staff and guests who would support the summit and diversity efforts through the weekend, including facilitator Richard Alomar, ASLA, and observers Tom Balsley, FASLA; Signe Nielsen, FASLA; Rebecca Moden, CLARB; and Greg Miller, FASLA, ASLA 2018 President.

Who's Who Introductions



Who's Who Exercise / EPNAC.com

Richard Alomar, the facilitator, organized the “Who’s Who” introduction activity. Participants and guests sat in a circle and used a personal artifact they brought to share stories about themselves. This creative exercise revealed unique stories from participants’ backgrounds as well as common themes in how they arrived at the profession.

Many participants entered the field through architecture, urban planning, and other majors before switching to landscape architecture as a student or later in their careers. Various reasons that ultimately brought them into landscape architecture included faculty mentorship, interests spurred by seeing the landscape architecture work, and inspiration from meeting a landscape architect. Some participants began their interest in the field as early as high school while some reflected on early childhood memories as the beginning of their passion for design.

Participants shared their passion for promoting diversity as well. Many participants set their design goals as providing the quality life for the diverse groups and ensuring social justice. Other participants shared their interests in women rights and their concern about representing and helping their own racial group in the field.

Review of 2017-2018 Work Plan and 2017 Diversity SuperSummit Priority Survey

Shawn Balon, manager, Career Discovery and Diversity, provided an overview of the work plan set at the 2017 Diversity SuperSummit and items that have been completed or are in the works. Following the presentation, the participants started an open discussion about creating the action items for the five-year goals from the 2017 Diversity SuperSummit.



Work Plan Presentation and Discussion / EPNAC.com

Presentation: The Color of Landscape Architecture

Presenter: Richard Jones, ASLA, President of Mahan Rykiel Associates



The Color of Landscape Architecture Presentation / EPNAC.com

Richard Jones started his presentation by introducing Mahan Rykiel Associates’ diverse background and award-winning projects that were revitalizing neighborhoods, restoring brownfields, stimulating economic development, and protecting natural resources. Based on the education and connectivity situation of Baltimore, where Mahan Rykiel Associates is located, he talked about how landscape architects should try to pursue a vision of design and landscape architecture that aims to enrich human relationships and support vibrant ecological systems. During the presentation, he explained how his bi-



racial upbringing in both Camden, N.J., and Bavaria, Germany, shaped his own deep appreciation for and understanding of community, craftsmanship, and stewardship. In the last part of the presentation, he used Mahan Rykiel Associates' project "Birdland" as an example for highlighting the diversity promoting effort. In "Birdland," Mahan Rykiel Associates built up partnerships with the local middle schools, private and public donors, and government to help create an eight-week module of environmental design for the K-12 curriculum: having the students design birdhouses for competition, build the winning designs, and let the community help with the site planting and birdhouse placement. The videos from the project "Birdland" started an active discussion among all the Diversity Summit participants throughout the weekend.

Day Two – Saturday, June 23, 2018

Group Workshop: Collection of Ideas and Storyboarding

All Summit participants and guests broke into two working groups to discuss initial ideas and storyboard a new resource (groups were assigned prior to the start of the Diversity Summit to allow time for research and brainstorming). This was the first group workshop section during the Diversity Summit, which lasted 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Group 1: Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in Business Practices



Group 1 in discussion / EPNAC.com

Group 1 focused on the topic of embracing diversity and inclusion in business practices. The group discussion aimed at creating a "how to" guide or template for businesses and organizations to use as a resource for implementing diversity and inclusion practices.

The Diversity Summit participants who participated in the Group 1 discussion were Camille Applewhite, Ujiji Davis, Masako Ikegami, Jose de Jesus Leal, Briana Outlaw, Juan Guzman Palacios, and Gaylan Williams.

Group 2: Funding Diversity Programs of the Future



Group 2 in discussion / EPNAC.com

Group 2 focused on the topic of helping with the application for diversity programs funding in the future. The group discussion aimed at creating templates and project ideas for ASLA National and ASLA Chapters to use when writing grants for projects reaching youth and communities.

The Diversity Summit participants who participated in the Group 2 discussion were Patricia Algara, David George Garce, Gloria Lau, Meredith Leigh, Erica MacKenzie, Gabriel Diaz Montemayor, and Darneka Waters.

Group Report Section

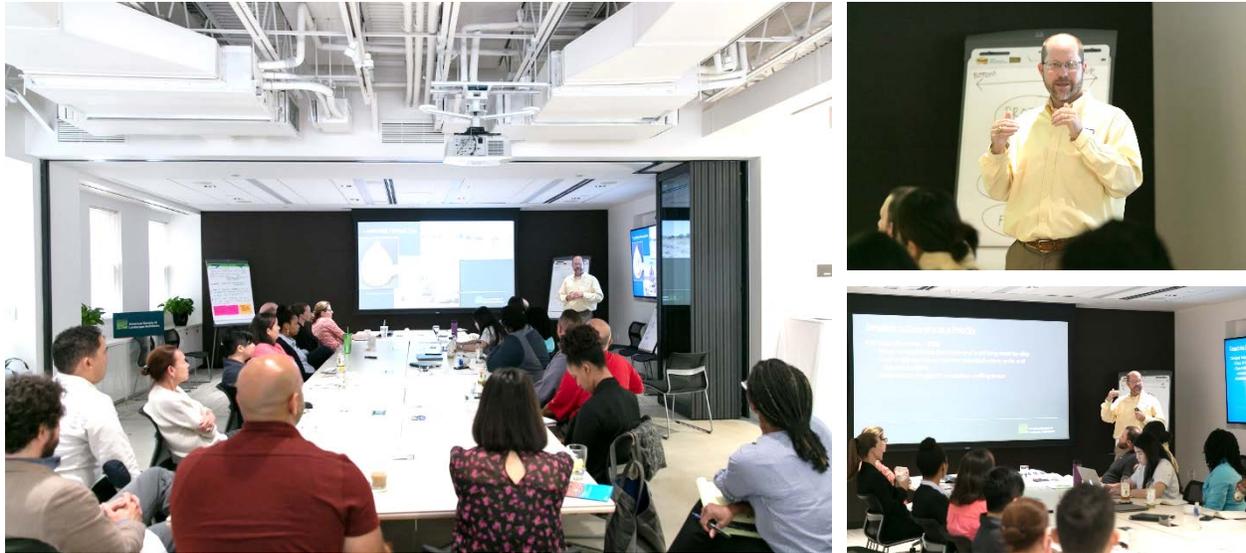
This is the first group report section during the Diversity Summit. In this 45-minute section, both groups presented their initial ideas and concepts for their projects.

Group 1 raised the idea of solving the diversity issues in business practices by creating a diverse and inclusive office culture. The other focus of their discussion was the meaning and advantages of improving diversity in the business practices.

Group 2 developed a framework for sorting different kinds of the diversity projects to understand their structure better. The framework they presented included four parts – project name, targeted population, implementation, and funding resources.

Presentation: Diversity and Perspective

Presenter: Gregory A. Miller, FASLA, ASLA 2018 President



Diversity and Perspective Presentation / EPNAC.com

Gregory Miller, the first ASLA President to participate in an ASLA Diversity Summit, gave a speech to all the Diversity Summit participants and guests about diversity and perspective. President Miller first talked about his understanding of diversity. He thought that diversity should be developed as a priority in the landscape architecture field because of the changes in the contemporary society. He emphasized that different perspectives are based on personal experience and would lead to changes in foresight and judgment. Meanwhile, diversity is the key to perspective. Moreover, he used the examples of his firm's design practices to explain that people should learn from others' perspectives, challenge perspectives, and expand perspectives.

Open Forum and Discussion

Under the facilitation of Richard Alomar and Shawn Balon, Diversity Summit participants and guests continued the conversation from Friday afternoon regarding ASLA's career discovery work plan. The conversation focused on collecting ideas about creating action items for the five-year goals from the 2017 Diversity SuperSummit and the way of informing the future Summits about these goals. The detailed discussion content is summarized at the end of this report.

Group Workshop: Concept Building and Designing Resources

All Summit participants and guests convened back into working groups to begin concept building and designing resources for two hours before they gathered again for reporting their progress.

Group Report Section

This is the second group report section during the Diversity Summit. Both groups brought the discussion to a deeper level and presented their development of the ideas.

Additional to the idea of creating diverse office culture, Group 1 expressed their concern about doing the diversity training in the office environment and measuring diversity awareness and effort in the office using metrics.

Group 2 developed a more complex framework for sorting different kinds of diversity programs, including items like scenarios, scales, examples, funding strategies, and partnerships.

Day Three – Sunday, June 24, 2018

Review of Previous Day's Recommendations and Open Forum

Richard Alomar and Shawn Balon organized the review of previous day's recommendations and let the Summit participants continue the open discussion for other possible action items for the five-year goals from the 2017 Diversity SuperSummit. The detailed discussion is summarized in the Summary of Discussion part at the end of this report.

Individual Commitments for the Year

Susan Apollonio, director, Education & Marketing, started the discussion among all Summit participants and guests about how they plan to commit carrying out their work and efforts for diversity over the next year. After the brief discussion, all Summit participants and guests wrote down their commitments and submitted them to ASLA. ASLA will create a platform to share their commitment results with each other and keep track of their diversity efforts according to their commitments.

Workshop and Final Presentation: Finalizing Ideas and Resources



Groups in Presentation / EPNAC.com

All Summit participants and guests convened back into working groups for the last time to finalize design ideas in preparation for the final presentation.

In the final presentation, Group 1 presented four main ideas to improve the diversity and inclusion situation in landscape architecture business practices, including defining diversity for the profession, identifying benefits of diversity, creating a diverse office culture, and measuring diversity in the office. The detailed presentation is at the end of this report.

In the final presentation, Group 2 presented both short-term and long-term ideas for helping with the future diversity programs, including conducting case studies on diversity projects, creating funding resources, and setting up an interactive map for diversity projects. The detailed presentation is at the end of this report.

Closing Remarks

Richard Alomar and Shawn Balon closed out the weekend by thanking summit attendees and ASLA staff for their participation. ASLA will continue engaging the Summit participants through reporting back, conducting a follow-up survey to prioritize the action items, and creating a platform where attendees can continue the discussion of promoting diversity in our profession.

Summary of Group 1: Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in Business Practices

Group 1 presented four main ideas for improving the diversity and inclusion situation in landscape architecture business practices. Based on the group discussion, the participants thought that all these ideas would need contribution from all the landscape architecture professionals, and ASLA could be the one who leads the effort. Group 1's four ideas are listed as follows.

1. Continue to define diversity for the landscape architecture profession.
2. Identify the benefits of embracing diversity in landscape architecture business practice and bring that to the attention of the business owners.
 - Search for key metrics that support economic benefits of diverse practices.
 - Identify the negative consequences of not incorporating diverse practices.
 - Interview leaders or business owners from the firms that highlight diverse strategies for best practices.
3. Create a diverse office culture to better embrace diversity and inclusion in landscape architecture profession.
 - Use materials or outside facilitators to start diversity training for business owners and the workers.
 - Open the dialogue between workers from different backgrounds.
 - Intentionally increase the diversity level by connecting to the outside consultants, collaborations, and partnerships.
 - Build required committees for diversity efforts in the firms.
 - Highlight diversity in the recruitment materials.
4. Measure the awareness and success of the diversity efforts, and highlight the success.



- Create an instrument or use an existing instrument to measure the diversity and inclusion level for the landscape architecture business practice at the different organization level or individual firm level.
- Highlight the success of measuring and best practices on interactive media.

Summary of Group 2: Funding Diversity Programs of the Future

Group 2 presented ideas for helping with the future diversity programs in the short-term and long-term. The participants emphasized that not only national ASLA but also local ASLA chapters should play an important role in turning the ideas into actions. Group 2's ideas for the short-term and long-term are listed as follow.

1. Define social equity and identify the reasons to design for social equity.
2. Conduct case studies on the diversity projects concentrating on the following content:
 - Project name and content
 - Project starting ideas
 - Project approach
 - People involved in the project
 - Targeted population(s)
 - Funding
 - Impacts
 - Maintenance
 - Obstacles.
3. Create funding resources--for example, a funding library at the national ASLA and local ASLA chapter level.
4. Set up an interactive map for the diversity projects in the long term
 - Raise funding for creating the diversity project interactive map.
 - Conduct case studies on the diversity projects and use the case studies as the basic resource to create the map.
 - Call for submissions of diversity projects from local ASLA chapters and firms.
 - Encourage students and professionals to use the map as a guide to visit the diversity projects.
 - Use diversity projects from the map as examples to inspire local ASLA chapters and firms to participate in the existing projects, come up with their own diversity project ideas, and learn about the funding opportunities.

Summary of the Open Discussion for Action Items

2018 Diversity Summit participants put forward possible action items for the five-year goals from the 2017 Diversity SuperSummit. All the possible action items for the five-year goals from this year's open discussion are summarized below. After the Summit, a Priority and Satisfaction Survey was sent to the participants to rate the importance of the action items. Thus, the action items listed here are ranked from highest importance to lowest importance according to the survey responses.

Goal 1: Diverse imagery and resources integrated across ASLA

1. Review, assess, and implement diverse content across ASLA and treat diversity as a feature of the profession, instead of isolating it.
2. Discuss a new ASLA award category to encourage landscape architecture projects and research to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
3. Create a new event at ASLA Annual Meeting to promote diversity.
4. Increase the landscape architecture profession's impact through various media.
5. Translate current and new materials into Spanish.
6. Plan for the translation of ASLA.org in Spanish.

Goal 2: All ASLA materials in digital format and easily accessible

1. Develop presentations and promotional materials specific to ASLA diversity and inclusion initiatives for ASLA leadership and staff to present to chapters and general audiences.
2. Ensure that ASLA chapter presidents share experiences from diversity training opportunities with the local chapter.
3. Provide materials for Diversity Summit participants to educate peers, students, and the public about ASLA's diversity and inclusion initiatives.
4. Create diversity and inclusion training opportunities for local chapters (i.e., webinars, resource links).
5. Develop draft resource or grant proposals for Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in Business Practices (initial concepts from 2018 Diversity Summit).
6. Develop draft resource or grant proposals for Funding Diversity Programs of the Future (initial concepts from 2018 Diversity Summit).

Goal 3: Diversity efforts are aligned with Presidents' Council organizations

1. Create diversity training opportunities for leaders in the Presidents' Council organizations.
2. Schedule checkpoints among all Presidents' Council organizations to ensure actions towards promoting diversity and inclusion in the profession.
3. Align demographic data collection among Presidents' Council organizations (i.e. race/ethnicity, gender).

Goal 4: STEM/STEAM is built into the pipeline as integral to landscape architecture

1. Ensure that the development of K-12 curricula highlighting landscape architecture meets local requirements for STEM.
2. Encourage accredited landscape architecture programs' curricula to integrate various STEM disciplines.
3. Discover current resources for K-12 curricula highlighting landscape architecture that meet STEM requirements; provide base resources to customize at the local level.
4. Develop a checklist to assist professionals in selecting the appropriate activity from online resources (i.e., ASLA's Tools for Teachers) to highlight landscape architecture to K-12 students; checklist may include time and staff availability, age group of students, etc.