



2014 ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

alumni news

For the birds

Birdhouse competition gives architecture students hands-on design experience

The structures are pieces of art.

They are homages to the styles of award-winning architects, but contain the originality of the NDSU students who created them. And each year these visually stunning projects are displayed at Fargo's Plains Art Museum for all to admire.

Yet, all of it is strictly for the birds. Yes, birds.

Second-year NDSU architecture students for four of the last five years have gone head-to-head during a design competition featuring some of the most unconventional birdhouses in the country.

This year's competition added a new element, as some of the houses were donated to an auction to benefit Habitat for Humanity.

"It seemed to the students at first like a random project," said Joan Vorderbruggen, assistant professor of architecture

and landscape architecture. "But once they got into it they really loved it. This is something they get to do from start to finish. From design to build stages."

The birdhouses range in size, scope and cost. And making a birdhouse for the competition is no easy task.

Student designs must be an interpretation of a randomly drawn Pritzker Architecture Prize-winner. To complete the task, students are required to study their architect's theory and methodology before translating it into their own style.

Competitors can't just make a mini replica of someone else's work. It needs to be original, with a tip of the hat to a Pritzker winner. The Pritzker prize is an international honor given to a living architect or architects whose work has produced significant contributions to humanity through the art of architecture.

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That's not all. The birdhouses also are designed for one of nine different birds. The habitat must be completely compatible with the bird, which also is assigned at random.

"Students have to get into the head of their chosen architect," said Vorderbruggen, who created the competition and works on it with associate professors of architecture and landscape architecture Darryl Booker and Cindy Urness. "It's not just looking at what an architect has already done and then doing the same thing. Sometimes there are very interesting pairings of birds and architects that can pose big challenges."

Vorderbruggen said the competition serves many purposes.

It allows students to experience how important clarity is to architectural design. The competitors become familiar with many different building materials and doing everything

themselves. They also learn about visionary architects, birds and the environment.

A jury of local bird experts, architects and artists reviews the birdhouses. The jury awards prizes for the best translation of the Pritzker architect's design philosophy, and for the house best suited for the bird species.

Each year, the general public is encouraged to vote for People's Choice and Best Overall Design awards.

Birdhouses were displayed this year at the Plains Art Museum March 7-13.

"We get a lot of very interesting looking birdhouses," Vorderbruggen said. "Very few look like a typical birdhouse."

COLLEGE WELCOMES ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture in August of 2013 joined the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

The department initiated the request to enhance the natural relationship to cultural and sociological aspects that remain at the heart of the landscape architecture and architecture professions.

"The move to AHSS will foster and cultivate aesthetic dimensions that contribute to a more human, sustainable and beautiful environment," said David Bertolini, chair of the Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. "Further, the move will promote and strengthen symbiotic relationships with other units in AHSS, such as the programs in community development, emergency management, history and sociology."

Bertolini added that the move will allow the architecture and landscape architecture department to forge closer links to the allied arts, including the Department of Visual Arts.

That relationship could allow the departments to foster new pedagogical and interdisciplinary activities that will enhance student education, program offerings and faculty research.

The Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture previously was located in the College of Engineering and Architecture, which has been renamed the College of Engineering.

"The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences is delighted to welcome the Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture to its ranks and we look forward to the exciting opportunities the college and department will derive from this new partnership," said Kent Sandstrom, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA: BE BOLD, SEEK CAREER OPTIONS

You can choose to do anything, but do what you love. That's the straightforward advice of the 2013 Distinguished Alumna of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Carol (Olson) Larsen, BA '60, speech and drama, is the president of Carol Larsen Consulting Inc. of Edina, Minnesota. She suggests today's students need to be open to change and risk during their careers.

"There are a great many opportunities for you, more than you can ever imagine right now," she told students in an NDSU theatre arts class during a campus visit Oct. 24. "The reality is this generation will change careers no less than five times – not jobs, careers. So, be creative, venture out and find your options."

Larsen's own successful career has been based on grabbing hold of varied opportunities that present themselves. Larsen, who was the 1959 NDSU Homecoming Queen and active in Little Country Theatre, was named Miss North Dakota and participated in the 1960 Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey. She also worked at WDAY-TV in Fargo during her collegiate days.

At the time, Fred Walsh, who was chair of the speech department, told Larsen her communication and speech skills were going to be a necessity in corporate America. They would open doors for her.

"That's exactly what happened. These are skills you take with you. In my case, I did it in the public speaking, leadership development and training world," said Larsen, who went on to a stint with WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, followed by being a field editor for Better Homes and Gardens magazine.

She shifted careers, entering the human resources arena with Control Data Corp. Then came another change. For 16 years, she was employed at Personnel Decisions International, coaching executives, as well as developing and conducting seminars and educational programs, for Fortune 100 and 500 companies.



"Emotional intelligence is the most important factor in career success." — CAROL LARSEN

"My NDSU performance experience and the learning through Dr. Walsh and the speech department gave me the confidence to reach out and try things I did not know how to do," Larsen said. "That's what you frequently do in the corporate world – you do things where you have no fundamental experience, but you're willing to take those risks."

Her latest area of interest is the concept of emotional intelligence, often referred to as EI or EQ. Larsen said a person's emotional intelligence is changeable, and she provides

formal assessment and coaching for clients who want to enhance their personal emotional intelligence to perform better in all facets of their lives, including success in the workplace. She considers it vital for career building in today's international marketplace. "Emotional intelligence is the most important factor in career success," said Larsen, who is a certified coach and consultant. "For people who fail in jobs, it's frequently because something was lacking in their emotional intelligence not because they lacked business knowledge. Most successful executives, we find, have an extremely high level of emotional intelligence."

Looking back on her many-faceted career, Larsen quickly credits NDSU for helping her get a running start.

"I was so lucky and my luck was built by being an NDSU student. I really care about others, and I think it is because I grew up in Fargo and had an experience at NDSU where people cared for each other. This was a place where people helped you," she said.

"This university has grown and developed so phenomenally," Larsen continued. "I am so proud of the progress and the quality of the students and the education here. This is a very high-quality university that is starting to get the recognition it deserves. I'm happy to see that."

Larsen and her husband, Lloyd, BS '58, mechanical engineering, live in Edina.

ALUMNI BRING MUSIC TO THE MOUNTAINS OF INDIA

Every day, Peter “JP” Millican gets to teach music and inspire youth from around the world. Inspiring others is his life goal.

And he gets to do it in an exceptional place. Millican is one of three NDSU alumni teaching at the Woodstock School in Mussoorie in northern India. All three are enjoying life on “The Hillside,” as they’ve coined the school, which is nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas.

Millican met his wife, Diane, at NDSU, where they both studied music education and graduated in spring 2013. They met fellow NDSU alumna Lindsay Boyd, BS ’09, instrumental music education, after Boyd spoke at NDSU about her experiences teaching in India.

Upon learning about the school, Peter and Diane applied for two music teacher positions and were accepted. They arrived in India in July 2013 after signing a two-year teaching contract.

Woodstock School is an international Christian residential school. Millican said its curriculum is similar to western education programs, but students come from throughout the world.

Millican teaches percussion and piano lessons, percussion ensemble and jazz band. He also is learning to play an Indian percussion instrument called the tabla. Diane is teaching private woodwind lessons, beginning band and junior band.

They’ve taught students from India, Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Iran, Egypt, Russia, Australia, the United States and Canada.

While his subject matter is familiar, the culture takes some getting used to, Millican said. India is the second-most



ahss From left to right - JP Millican, Lindsay Boyd and Diane Millican at Woodstock School on India’s Independence Day Aug. 15, 2013.

populous country in the world with more than 1.2 billion people. “Any time you travel, there are people everywhere,” Millican said. “The people of India have no problem being close in proximity so you are always getting your ‘personal bubble’ invaded.”

It’s diverse in culture and geography. Most people speak the national language of Hindi, but many speak regional languages and a little English.

“Relationships are the most important thing in India,” Millican said. “Success is never really centered on money, riches or belongings. It’s all about building relationships.”

ALUMNUS WRITES BOOK ON EARLY DAYS OF NORTH DAKOTA

If the topic interests him, alumnus Robert Dodge writes about it. And it doesn’t hurt if it has a link to his North Dakota roots.



Dodge, a retired educator who lives in Singapore, has written “Which Chosen People?” the story of frontier photographer Frank Fiske, who witnessed first-hand the struggle

for land during the 1800s between the Sioux and white settlers.

“Once I read Fiske’s books and discovered the State Historical Society had eight cubic feet of original documents on Fiske, I thought he deserved a wider audience and the story of expansion during the 19th century was relevant for current times,” Dodge said.

Dodge, BS ’67, majored in history at NDSU, but his interests and his writings cover a broad spectrum. For example,

his previous books include “Prairie Murder: the True Story of Three Murders and the Loss of Innocence in a Small North Dakota Town;” “The Strategist,” a biography of Thomas Schelling, the 2005 Nobel Prize winner in economics; and “Schelling’s Game Theory: How to Make Decisions.”

In mid-summer, Dodge and his wife plan to move back to the United States, probably to the Denver area.

NATION BUILDING: ARCHITECTURE ALUMNUS LEADS INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



As if filming a scene for a spy movie, a casually dressed and charismatic Wayne Perlenfein leans forward in his chair and quickly scans the room.

His eyes lock onto yours, and he lets it be known he’s not about to spill any government secrets.

“The really cool stuff I can’t even tell you about for several more years,” says a whispering Perlenfein, BArch, ’74, architecture, who has worked on classified and unclassified projects for several United States intelligence agencies. “You and I could go to prison for the next 10 years.”

It’s clear from the moment Perlenfein addresses his former job that this is no ordinary architect.

This is an architect who once had high-level security clearances.

He’s been involved in the planning, programming and design of new buildings, and has worked on projects to upgrade, modernize and provide anti-terror protection for the National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Defense Intelligence Agency and the White House. Perlenfein is currently on hiatus in Phoenix, Arizona.

Anti-Terror Force Protection helps detect, defend against, respond to and mitigate the effects of terrorism. The protection provides a safer and more secure environment.

Perlenfein worked in Washington, D.C., from 2002 to 2006 as a jurisdiction executive and senior manager for planning, design and construction at the Architect of the Capitol.

His design input helped provide renovations and protection for buildings of the House and Senate, Library of Congress, U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center and U.S. Botanic Garden and Conservatory.

Part of Perlenfein’s job was to supervise computer blast models to simulate the detonation of an explosive in various parts of a building.

The information provided by the models helped Perlenfein and other architects design protections that help mitigate damage, assist in emergency egress plans and develop reactivation plans. The measures included hardening a building’s surface and taking steps to help lessen the affects of radiological or chemical attacks on people inside the structure.

“I want to be able to share the good, bad and ugly of what I know and don’t know. I want to share what I’ve done and what I’ve seen.”

— WAYNE PERLENFEIN

Perlenfein said he hopes to soon share his knowledge with architecture students.

“I want to be able to share the good, bad and ugly of what I know and don’t know. I want to share what I’ve done and what I’ve seen,” he said.

However, students should be prepared to wait at least five years to hear about the really good stuff.

ALUMNUS LEADS LIGNITE ENERGY COUNCIL

NDSU alumnus Jason Bohrer, BA ’98, history, recently was named president and CEO of the Lignite Energy Council. He was selected following an extensive national search.

Bohrer has 15 years experience in public policy and stakeholder relations. He previously was chief of staff to U.S. Rep. Raul Labrador of Idaho, and was legislative counsel to U.S. Sen. James Risch of Idaho.

“My time at NDSU gave me a very good introduction to being able to communicate with a variety of people,” Bohrer said, noting he was a member of the Bison wrestling team for two seasons and a student reporter for The Spectrum. “It taught me how to communicate effectively with people who might see things differently or who might not share my interests.”

Bohrer, who earned a law degree from George Mason University School of Law, began his political career in Boise,



Idaho, as communications director of the state’s Republican Party.

Bohrer lives in Bismarck, North Dakota.

ALUMNI OFFER STRONG POLITICAL VOICES IN TWO STATES

Alumni Jason Isaacson and Josh Boschee have made the smooth transition from NDSU Student Government and campus leadership to the chambers of state legislatures. Both elected in 2012, they are quickly becoming significant players in the state governments of Minnesota and North Dakota.



ahss Jason Isaacson, left, and Josh Boschee, right, are becoming significant players in Minnesota and North Dakota state governments.

Isaacson, BS '98, political science, MS '11, speech communication, is the assistant majority leader of the Minnesota House of Representatives, representing District 42B in Shoreview, Minnesota. Boschee, BS '03, political science, MEd '08, educational leadership, represents north Fargo's District 44 in the North Dakota House of Representatives.

Isaacson was student body president in 1997-98, and then worked in the Washington office of former U.S. Rep. Earl Pomeroy of North Dakota. He now is a faculty member at Century College in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

"More than any class or working in D.C., my experience in NDSU Student Government prepared me more for what I do at the Capitol than almost anything else I've done," Isaacson said from his office in St. Paul, Minnesota.

For Boschee, it's a similar political path. As a student, he was active in Student Government, Student Court and the North Dakota Student Association. Following graduation, he became active in campaign management, serving as a behind-the-scenes organizer.

"I enjoyed the strategy and getting a candidate elected. But, the state party convinced me to put my name in and I haven't looked back since," explained Boschee, who is a Democrat.

As freshman legislators, each has already been in the media spotlight, addressing important issues. Remarkably, the DFL caucus elected Isaacson to a leadership role, even though he was new to the legislature.

Boschee, meantime, envisions a long tenure as a representative from Fargo, with a potential goal to serve in an administration. "I've really enjoyed the opportunity to meet citizens and community groups and learn about different issues. That's allowed me to grow and discover how policy impacts people and, sometimes, adversely affects people," said Boschee, who is a realtor with Hatch Realty, Fargo.

NDSU GRADUATE LIVES LOW-TECH LIFE IN HIGH-TECH JOB



Jenae Naumann doesn't own a Twitter account and still uses a paper planner and flip phone outside of work.

However, Naumann's job is decidedly on the cutting edge.

Naumann, BA '84, English and communication, works on technology-related contracts such as software licenses and right-of-way use agreements with wireless and wireline telecommunication, Wi-Fi, broadband and cable providers in her role as an assistant city attorney at the Tempe City Attorney's Office in Arizona. She provides legal advice to all city departments on intellectual

property, electronic communications, social media, public records and information privacy and security issues.

"I enjoy learning about technology," said Naumann, who has been in her current job for almost a decade. "I'm really a low-tech person. But that's actually been helpful. I can act as a bridge between the 'techies' who are implementing it and the people who will need to learn how to use it."

Naumann, from Montana, initially came to NDSU to study pharmacy and do research in plant pathology.

She found her way to English and communication as a sophomore, and got a taste for journalism as a reporter at The Spectrum.

Naumann said she was encouraged to attend law school by several influential people in her life, including Catherine Cater and deceased former North Dakota Attorney General Nicholas Spaeth.

She graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1987.

Naumann said her time at NDSU helped cultivate her passion for the law.

"There was a combination of things that were very influential for me at NDSU," she said. "Communication classes were very helpful in showing me how to think about communicating in terms of the main points. And I very much enjoyed English because I love to read. It's all been helpful throughout my life."

UPGRADES HELP BROADCAST STUDENTS GAIN EXPERIENCE

The Bison Information Network re-constructed its studio in 2013 and added a broadcast trailer for live remotes in 2014 to help provide students with state-of-the-art technology and real-world experience.

"I'm excited that we are giving our students a really good on-campus experience that is as close to real-world broadcasting as you can get," said Rich Lodewyk, broadcast program director. "That's really what we are all about."

The re-designed set has transformed into a three-monitor studio. The new setup gives students an opportunity to do a variety of shows on the same set and provides a unique look for each of the set configurations.

The network produces several student broadcasts that go out to the campus and Fargo-Moorhead community, including a sports roundtable, a technology show and an entertainment magazine show. Students produce a three-minute news, sports and weather segment that airs at 10:30 a.m. each weekday on SU TV 84 and is on YouTube.com.

For the last three years, the network also has broadcast NDSU athletics events and fine arts performances.

Those partnerships should become strengthened by the recent addition of a remote trailer. The trailer, which will permanently house production equipment, will help students prepare for remote broadcasts.



"It allows us to more efficiently televise events on and off campus, and allows our students to focus on the most important aspects of remote production," Lodewyk said.

One of the biggest challenges for any broadcast station is keeping up with current technology.

Lodewyk said the network hopes to soon address a few key areas, including new field cameras, an automation system for its campus channel and a replay system for remote broadcasts.

"I'm very excited for what we have and I know we are going to build on it," Lodewyk said.

CHANGES IN FINE ARTS ALIGN FOCUS ON STUDENTS

Several changes in NDSU's fine arts programs have occurred within the past two years. The changes were to honor the success of the programs as they continue to offer opportunities for students and faculty.

On Sept. 26, 2012, the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education formally changed the name of the Department of Music to the School of Music, signifying its far-reaching mission encompassing a broad-based curriculum that includes professional doctoral programs in performance and conducting.

"NDSU School of Music has had a long history of service to the region, the profession and the arts," said NDSU director of the Division of Performing Arts John Miller. "The School of Music designation is not reflective of a change in what we do, but a new name characterizes what we have been doing for the past several years – offering meaningful musical kinships with all our audiences, whether local or global."

The inauguration of the School of Music was commemorated in a yearlong series of events, including residencies by noted musical artists, gala concerts, symposiums and performances.

In addition, the Division of Fine Arts became the Division of Performing Arts in fall 2013. The division houses the Department of Theatre Arts and the School of Music. The Department of Visual Arts is now an independent unit, and remains within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The department is home to a fully accredited professional program with multiple degrees, six faculty and a state-of-the-art facility in Renaissance Hall in downtown Fargo.

"The past 15 years have been a remarkable transformation through the vision and efforts of Dr. Miller and the division to support the visual arts department to a point where it can now exist as an independent department," said Michael Strand, head of the Department of Visual Arts. "This is also a testament to the dedicated faculty in visual arts who have fueled this transformation through inspired teaching, service and research."

Visit www.ndsu.edu/performingarts for more information on all of the programs.

ROSENQUIST ARTIST SHARES TALENT WITH STUDENTS

Megan Mitchell's intricate clay creations have a fascinating way of blending a sense of both space and confinement. A renowned ceramic artist, Mitchell is sharing her talent and expertise with NDSU visual arts students as the 2014 James Rosenquist Artist in Residence.

Mitchell's art and research focus on applying a variety of printmaking techniques to ceramic surfaces. The resulting work is impressive, and has been exhibited at juried and invited shows nationwide.

A native of New Hampshire, Mitchell earned her bachelor's degree in painting and printmaking at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, and a Master of Fine Arts in ceramics from Utah State University, Logan. She was an apprentice at Whitefish Pottery in Whitefish, Montana, and Hoyman/Browe Studio in Ukiah, California.

As part of her artist-in-residence duties, Mitchell taught a pre-sculpture course about three-dimensional design and worked with NDSU printmaking classes. In addition, she presented a two-day workshop titled "Take Printmaking to a New Dimension."

The James Rosenquist Artist Residency is named in honor of the visual artist who was born and spent his formative years in North Dakota. NDSU presented Rosenquist an honorary degree in 2005.

To learn more about Mitchell and see images of her work, visit www.meganmitchellceramics.com.

