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## Letter from the President

*Aaron Zahm, PLA, ASLA*

Happy New Year! I hope the holiday season was a happy one for you and your family. We're coming off of an exciting year for landscape architects in New Mexico. If you missed it, and not very many of you did, the Design Awards Gala on December 3rd was a huge success! (More on that later...) The NMASLA Executive Committee has planned another exciting year of events, but before we update you on what's in store this year, I'd like to recap all the fun events of 2011 in case you missed any of them.

In April, 30 of you celebrated Earth Day and National Landscape Architecture Month with us at Quarai Mission near Mountainair. Thanks to Baker Morrow and Jill Cowley for leading a fantastic tour of this important cultural landscape!

On 8.17.11, many of you participated in the first of many events for the National ASLA public awareness campaign- an important effort to tell the world exactly what landscape architects do. Thanks to Sara Zahm for coordinating our local efforts on the UNM campus and

Santa Fe Plaza. Stay tuned for the next awareness event coming in April!

Our Annual Golf Outing and Vendor Expo in August is always a great time to let loose, enjoy the summer heat, and socialize with members, sponsors, and allied professionals. This year was no different. Big thanks to Tag Gay for organizing another great tournament, and to our friends at Desert Greens Golf Course for accommodating such a crazy group of landscape architects.

Our inaugural education "mini-conference" in October was also a huge success. In keeping with our goal to provide free and relevant continuing education opportunities for our members, we held a half-day session on three interesting topics: proper irrigation installation/observation, edible landscapes, and lighting design for landscape architects. Thanks to our generous sponsors and presenters for sharing so much great information, and to UNM SAAP for providing a great facility and catering. We followed the sessions with a lively Student/Professional Mixer at O'Niells Pub in Nob Hill.

We ended the year on a BIG

## NMASLA 2011-2012 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DIRECTORY

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note! The Design Awards Program and Gala were the largest in NMASLA history. Over 200 people attended the Gala and we handed out 29 awards for the excellent work of professionals and students throughout New Mexico. We also recognized four members and one non-member for their outstanding contributions to our chapter and the profession of landscape architecture. Thanks to everyone who entered, attended, sponsored, and volunteered. And an especially big thanks to the Design Awards Committee members for planning and executing such a wonderful event! Check out the website for event photos and a recap of award winners. We'll be spotlighting the winning projects on our website throughout the coming year.

I hope you had the opportunity to take part in events throughout 2011 and that you'll mark your calendars for these exciting events planned for 2012:

Q1: April – Join us for the Multi-Modal Experience! We'll be traversing the City of Albuquerque by foot, car, bicycle, train, and bus... all in one afternoon! Along the way, we'll tour recent transportation projects throughout the city, learn how to create livable communities through responsible transportation design, and make a grassroots push for transportation funding and implementation of Complete Streets policy. The event serves as a

celebration of Earth Day and National Landscape Architecture Month, and will include pre-approved continuing education credits.

Q2: June – We're heading north to Santa Fe for a half-day event that includes project tours, education sessions, and social time with your NMASLA friends. Don't miss it!

Q3: August – The NMASLA Golf Outing and Vendor Expo returns in its' 17th year! In addition to the traditional team scramble, there will be food, fun, prizes, and product demonstrations from NMASLA sponsors.

Q4: October – We'll repeat last year's successful "mini-conference". We're organizing numerous education sessions and will end the day with the annual Student/Professional Mixer. The event will be held in Albuquerque and will provide members with up to four free continuing education hours.

We think we've got a pretty neat year in the works, but we're always interested in hearing your ideas for making the NMASLA experience even better. Please let me know what you think. Thank you for your membership and CHEERS to a prosperous 2012!

To comment on the President's message, please email responses to Aaron:  
azahm@mrwnm.com

## Q4 Design Awards Gala



### Design Award Winners

#### Student Awards

*Los Duranes Installation*  
Micah Giardetti- Merit  
*Southside Waste Water Treatment Park*  
Alexandria Leider- Merit

*Where the Neighborhood Ends*  
Alexandria Leider- Merit  
*Urban Meadow - Railway Park*  
Jitka Dkojova- Merit  
*21st Century Urban Park*  
Rachel Bakker- Honor

#### Communication Awards

*Canyon Gardens*  
Baker Morrow- Merit  
*Amy Biehl Community School - Green Guide*  
Design Office- Honor

#### Design Constructed Awards

*Baker Residence*  
Clemens + Associates- Merit  
*Canyon Rim Trail Park*  
Los Alamos County Parks- Merit  
*The Harris Residence*  
LOLA- Merit  
*Central and I-25 Interchange*  
Morrow Reardon Wilkinson Miller- Merit  
*New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Merit  
*Alamosa Skatepark*  
Morrow Reardon Wilkinson Miller- Merit  
*Albuquerque Intl Sunport Landscape Improvements*  
Sites Southwest- Merit  
*Emma B. Heske Community Garden*  
Consensus Planning- Merit  
*ABQ Uptown*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Merit  
*Goldstein Residence*  
Clemens + Associates- Merit  
*The Big I Landscape*  
Morrow Reardon Wilkinson Miller- Merit  
*Salazar Green - Salazar Elementary School*  
Design Office- Honor  
*Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza*  
Ken Smith Workshop- Excellence

#### Design Exploratory Awards

*Smart City - Green Grids*  
LOLA- Merit  
*Hyderabad New Community*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Honor

#### Planning & Analysis Awards

*Bachechi Open Space Master Plan*  
Sites Southwest- Merit  
*Southwest Park Master Plan*  
Design Office- Merit  
*Madrid Mining Landscape*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Merit  
*UNM Master Plan 2009 Update*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Merit  
*South Capitol Campus 2040 Master Plan Surroundings*- Merit  
*La Tierra Trails - Trail Master Plan*  
Design Office- Merit  
*Mesa Del Sol Design Book*  
Dekker Perich Sabatini- Honor



**Individual Award Winners**

- Outstanding Service to Emerging Professionals Award- Amy Bell*
- Outstanding Chapter Service Award- Greg Miller*
- Outstanding Professional Service Award- Dennis Wilkinson & George Radnovich*
- Distinguished Community Member Award- Tom Udall*

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- Trees of Corrales
- Surveying Control
- Sara Zahm Landscape Architect
- Ironsmith

- Downs & Associates
- Mountain West GolfScapes

**Thank You To These Student Volunteers Who Helped During The Event.**

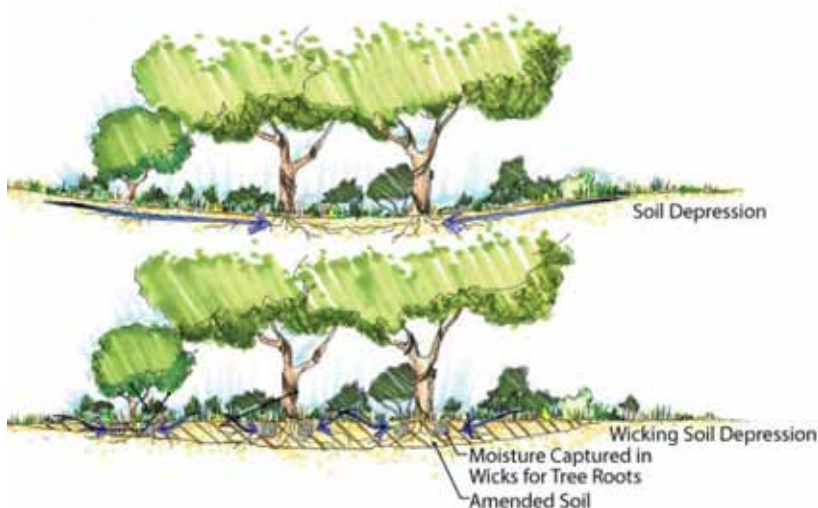
- Andrew Bernard
- Emily Hunt
- Claire Haywood
- Sida Li
- Jitka Dkojova
- Alexandria Leider
- Rachel Bakker

## Bachechi Open Space Park

Clay Campbell, AICP,  
Planning Manager for the Bernalillo County  
Parks and Recreation Department

Sites Southwest worked with Bernalillo County, New Mexico on the master planning and design of a 27 acre parcel of land in Albuquerque's North Valley. The Bachechi site is adjacent to the nation's largest cottonwood Bosque and the 20 mile long reach of the Rio Grande Valley State Park. The project showcases ecologically and environmentally appropriate techniques to help create an urban forest. This open space amenity enhances the experience of users; bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians. A master naturalists program supports environmental education in the region. The park serves as a

*Bosque Depression*



gateway to the larger Rio Grande Valley State Park. The project also educates through an extensive system of interpretive signage and includes an Environmental Education Center used to study Rio Grande Valley habitat and ecosystems. The Education Center is designed to facilitate small classroom events, community meeting spaces and research with organizations like

the University of New Mexico's Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Project (BEMP). Water from the Education Building roof will be directed to above ground cisterns and used as supplemental irrigation for the surrounding landscape as well as an educational feature.

The Park was the subject of a large amount of community interaction, welcoming local residents into the design process through a series of meetings and plan reviews. Neighborhood groups participated in the selection of materials and helped author the text for an interpretive sign that described artwork included in the project area.

The program for the Bachechi Open Space Park includes the creation of a sustainable urban forest of Rio Grande Valley

*Continued on page 7*

"The Bachechi site is adjacent to the nation's largest cottonwood Bosque..."



### BACHECHI SITE PLAN



Sites Southwest won the Merit award in the Planning and Analysis category in the 2011 NMASLA Design Awards for the Bachechi Open Space Master Plan.

*Continued from page 5*

native plants including historically accurate plant communities with wildlife viewing, picnicking and hiking. On site earthwork is a key component to the success of this project. Numerous moist soil depressions and xeric depressions have been created to harvest water from surrounding surfaces so no water leaves the site. These depressions mimic Bosque plant communities and help to sustain not only the plant materials with collected water but also encourage surrounding wildlife to move into the spaces. All grading has been designed to collect water from hard-surfaces like sidewalks, pathways and parking lots for landscape irrigation. Other features of the Bachechi Open Space Park include a boardwalk with wildlife viewing blinds over a constructed wetland, a picnic area

within an ancient pecan orchard and a working arboretum with other both passive and active uses. Wildlife is attracted to the site through the use of habitat fields specifically designed for migratory water fowl that traverse the Rio Grande corridor. The arboretum sustains existing trees by directing flood waters from the Lane Lateral acequia to moist soil depressions. The Bachechi Open Space Park is intended to be a jewel in the chain of public parks in the Albuquerque Metropolitan area.

Please direct any comments or questions to Clay Campbell:  
[ccampbell@bernco.gov](mailto:ccampbell@bernco.gov)

#### **LID Techniques Used:**

- The Bachechi Project manages stormwater in natural ways that mimic the historic flow of the Rio Grande and recreates forests (Bosque) respecting the area's native plants.
- All pavements added to the project are either permeable or lead to water harvesting zones.
- Cisterns from buildings were used for the collection of water from rooftops for the irrigation of the landscape.
- Drainage solutions were applied on a broad scale to restore the watersheds hydrologic functions.
- The park serves as a community recreational resource, providing space for social interaction.

*Water Harvesting Scheme and Outdoor Learning*



## New Member Spotlight: Dominique Dupont, MLA, Associate ASLA

Happy New Year, NMASLA members! I am thrilled to be featured in the New Member Spotlight and to have the opportunity to share my background with you. As you may know, I have been an associate-at-large member of the NMASLA Executive Committee for the last 18 months and have enjoyed assisting our chapter through this position. From what we have planned so far, it looks like 2012 will be a fun and educational year for our members.

My connection to landscape architecture, outdoor aesthetics, and sustainability in the desert southwest has deep roots. Growing up in Albuquerque, I was taught from a young age about water scarcity and other aspects of sustainability. I would regularly parade through my neighborhood with "Keep America Beautiful" signs and loved vegetable gardening and the compost pile. At 17, my dad gave me his copy of *Cadillac Desert* to read and this is where I truly began to understand the dichotomy of New Mexico's rich history in relation to its meager water supply. My mom started her own residential landscape design and installation business when I was in high school and I spent many hours on weekends digging holes, dividing perennials,



and fertilizing roses. Little did I know how important these events were in shaping my future.

My undergraduate degree is from the University of San Diego where I double majored in Urban Studies and French. The Urban Studies degree had classes in politics, sociology, and economics all focused on the urban realm. A particularly influential professor often spoke of the benefits of public spaces and vegetation in the urban core. My French degree took me to Avignon, a city in Provence, France where I spent a semester studying French language and culture while experiencing European city life first-hand (and meeting my husband!). In May 2010, I graduated from UNM with a Masters in Landscape Architecture with a thesis focusing on water harvesting strategies throughout New Mexico's history.

Today, I have the great opportunity to work for

the City of Rio Rancho as a Municipal Planner. This job consists of a variety of tasks and challenges and I find that my background in landscape architecture is very valuable and informative. I am learning many new skills as well, such as the mapping software ArcGIS, the process of entitlements, and how to apply theory learned in school to current and long-range planning projects. Although I work as a planner, I stay involved with landscape architecture every chance I get. Two of my former classmates (and NMASLA members) and I started entering design competitions in the last year. Our project for the Washington Monument Grounds Ideas Competition, titled "Reclaiming Histories", was a semi-finalist out of more than 500 entries. Most recently, we were asked to include our project in the exhibit "Unbuilt Washington" at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. If you find yourself in DC this

spring, be sure to check it out!

On the side, growing food is a true passion of mine. Weekends are often dedicated to 170 sq ft of raised beds in our backyard where we grow a variety of vegetables and fruits. My favorite vegetable to grow is a French pickling cucumber called a "cornichon". Don't tell U.S. Customs, but I sneak these seeds into the country every chance I get. Stemming from an abundance of cucumbers, tomatoes, peaches, and more, I began canning the bounty. This has grown into a passion in itself. For several years, I offered to pick excess fruit from friend's and family's fruit trees to feed my need to can. Last summer, I started a small business called Urban

Orchards ([uorchards.com](http://uorchards.com)) where I produce and sell canned goods made from local fruit. Urban Orchards recently had the incredible opportunity to be featured in a Time Magazine article on urban food foraging (October 31, 2011).

I love landscape architecture for its multidisciplinary, creative, and influential qualities. I look forward to the undoubtedly interesting and unknown places my career in this profession will take me.

Please direct any comments or questions to Dominique Dupont:  
[DDUPONT@ci.rio-rancho.nm.us](mailto:DDUPONT@ci.rio-rancho.nm.us)



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## American Death Care

### Envisioning a New Venue

#### Typology for Disposition

*Joy Elaine Denett, MLA,*

*Associate ASLA*

#### Background

This thesis began with the idea that the future of landscape architecture as well as the future of humanity depends upon the re-framing of outdated modes of thinking and the redefinition of ways of interacting with the built environment and the earth. At the very core of this thesis is the understanding that we can and should design outdoor spaces in a manner that will produce a quick and positive environmental as well as social impact. Social change and design encouraging change must happen concurrently, congruently and as soon as humanly possible. As a step toward the aforementioned change, this body of work proposes a more holistic approach to the disposition of the dead.

As places of burial are becoming over-crowded and with growing awareness of negative environmental impacts from our treatment of the dead, the need to re-frame our thinking and traditions regarding these practices becomes apparent. Amidst advantages of conventional cremation are also staggering drawbacks. About 240 pounds

of mercury are released annually into the environment, threatening fresh water supplies (Harris, 2007). Green burial sites, while implemented with good intention, tend to be located on the edges of cities rather than within them. The idea of nature as some bastion, some place other than here, some place where we dump our garbage and our dead, in the long term, will not work. We have empty spaces within cities that are unwanted and unused (Berger, 2006). These places could house a new infrastructure of the life cycle that is honest and reverent and celebratory of that which sustains us.

#### A Viable Solution

Alkaline hydrolysis lessens negative environmental consequences of disposition and does so in a non-cost-prohibitive manner without dedicating land in perpetuity to the dead. Alkaline hydrolysis uses a highly basic solution, a twenty to one ratio of water to potassium hydroxide (KOH), to speed the decomposition process. In the United States, the first use for human remains was in 1998 in Florida at the University of Florida, Gainesville for disposition of medical school cadavers. The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota has been using this process for disposition of human test subject remains since 2008 (Rahill, 2010).

#### Pros Include:

- Quickly decomposes organic matter
- Requires 1/8th the energy of conventional cremation
- Exponentially reduces CO2 emissions – no burning of caskets or anything else
- No mercury emissions
- Some water used in the process for cooling can be immediately reused
- Effluent can be legally and safely disposed of in sanitary sewer or used to fertilize plants
- Inorganic materials such as joint replacements can be recycled or re-purposed as they are not broken down in the process
- Ash remaining from the process can be returned to the loved ones of the deceased as with conventional cremation

#### Cons Include:

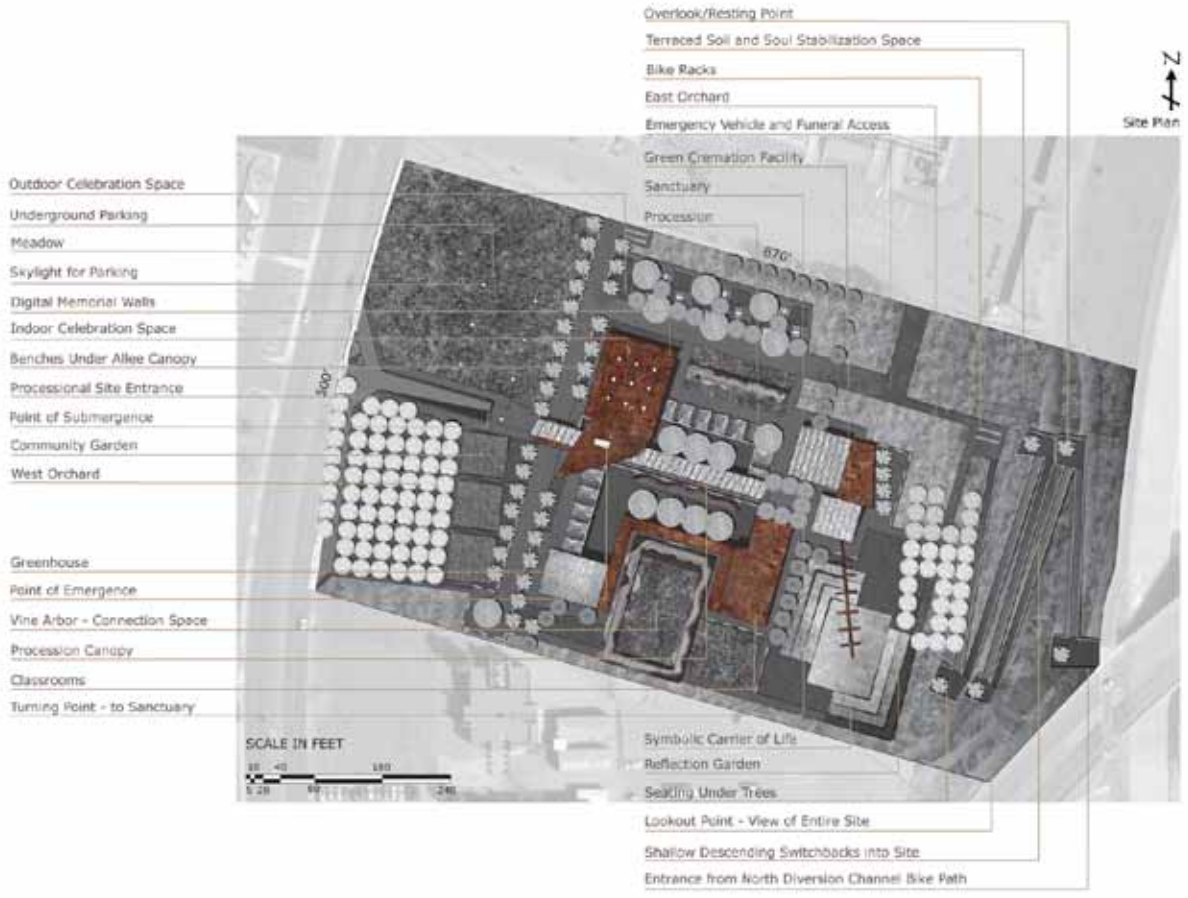
- Currently, this is still a part of the privately owned and run funeral industry
- This process may not accommodate all belief systems and may be difficult to promote
- This process is not yet legal in most states (<http://biocremationinfo.com/>)

#### Design Project: EXITUS - Life Transition Space

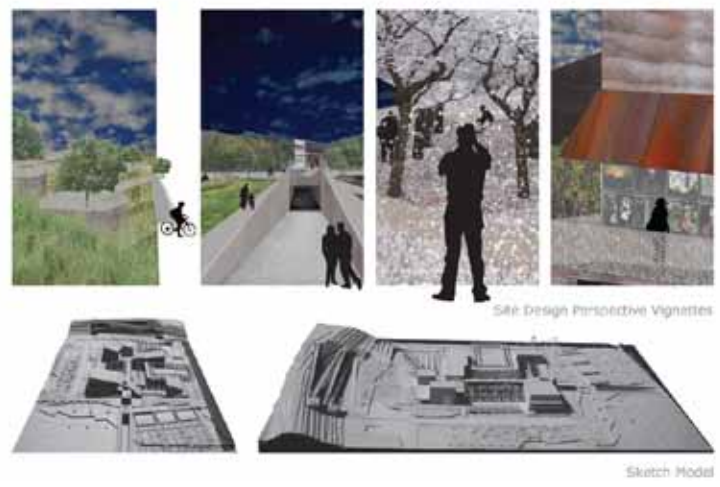
This site design addresses both the logistics of alkaline hydrolysis as a means of disposition as well as the need for a place of remembrance

*“Throughout time, burial practices have shifted under new rule and with changes in cultural attitudes surrounding death.”*

**Joy Elaine Denett**  
 MLA Thesis Design Project  
**EXITUS - Life Transition Space**



This design utilizes wasted land and an under-used building in the urban context. It replaces the traditional cemetery in its function without the same necessity of perpetuity of that function. The concept can be implemented almost anywhere. This is a place of transition, of mourning and of celebration. This design, through a series of outdoor rooms, interconnected with interior spaces, seeks to bring people together for the celebration of the lives of those who have died and also to provide a place of community and support for the living. It employs the process of alkaline hydrolysis for the disposition of the dead as well as the nurturing of new life in the form of plants. The significance of this concept is that it eliminates the potential hazards to groundwater from the burial of embalmed bodies as well as greatly reduces energy consumption and emissions associated with conventional cremation. It is also conservative of land and cost-effective. This concept embraces the impermanence of an individual life while honestly addressing the cycle and inter-connectivity of all forms of life.



Sketch Model

*Continued from page 10*

and celebration. Working with already-developed land rather than dedicating and newly developing space outside of the urban context, EXITUS offers a place of destination. Accessible by all modes of transportation, it encourages bicycle and pedestrian travel, again lessening our environmental impact.

**Some key features of the site design include the following:**

- Alkaline hydrolysis or green cremation facility
- Non-denominational sanctuary
- Digital memorial walls connected to online database
- Indoor and outdoor Celebration spaces
- Greenhouse and classrooms
- Orchards and community garden plots
- Underground parking and bike/pedestrian paths

In the future, EXITUS will become a part of the vocabulary of landscapes within our everyday lives just as is park or cemetery. It will bring awareness to the issues surrounding death care and initiate changes to that system. Not only is this strategy useful in the context of everyday death care, but it would also be of benefit in the event of a great tragedy such as the earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

Throughout time, burial practices have shifted under new rule and with changes in cultural attitudes surrounding death. Old cemeteries are often neglected as the people who knew the people who died, themselves, pass on. EXITUS is a re-purposed site within the urban context with an identity that possesses potential for metamorphosis. As no human remains are housed on the site (only fertile byproducts of the alkaline hydrolysis process used to fertilize plants), it is not considered sacred ground. Sanctity lies in memories created within this space, in interactions among the living and in the respectful act of generating life out of death.

Please direct any comments or questions to Joy Elaine Denett:

*joysteros@gmail.com*

**Works Cited**

- Berger, Alan. *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.
- Harris, Mark. *Grave Matters: A Journey Through the Modern Funeral Industry to a Natural Way of Burial*. New York: Scribner, 2007.
- Rahill, Paul F. "Bio-Cremation - The Game is Changing." *Catholic Cemetery* 50(4)pp43+5pgs, 2010.

## Annual Board of Trustees Meeting 2011

Chris Green, PLA, ASLA

At the annual meeting in San Diego, the ASLA Board of Trustees approved the Professional Licensure: Universal Designation policy, which encourages all licensed landscape architects to use the post nominal designation "PLA." As an abbreviation of the title "professional landscape architect," it will better enable potential clients and the general public to identify licensed practitioners. It will also provide consistent recognition for the landscape architecture profession, and is consistent with other

allied professions, i.e. "PE" for "professional engineer", etc.

Also, the Board of Trustees: approved the 2012 budget and Annual Operating Plan for the Society; amended the ASLA strategic objectives to include support and advocacy for the Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™); reviewed progress of priority initiatives including the public awareness campaign, government advocacy, and SITES; held a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) assessment discussion as part of ASLA strategic planning. The Board also approved the recommendation of the Task Force on Accreditation and Reciprocity to expand

the scope of the Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) to include non-degree granting (certificate) first-professional landscape architecture programs; such programs would have to meet the same standards used by LAAB to evaluate degree-granting programs and would have to require a bachelor's degree as a prerequisite to entry.

A strong push is being made to get everyone involved in advocating for our profession. The ASLA Advocacy Network "provides you with the information and tools you need to quickly and effectively communicate with your policymakers about issues important to



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you and to the profession.” Go to the ASLA website and get signed up to receive advocacy alerts. These alerts come via email and take less than a minute to respond to so please take action when you receive them. During the annual meeting there was an amendment proposed by Senator Rand Paul (KY) to completely eliminate the Transportation Enhancements program. ASLA members stood in line at the ASLA Commons to send their messages and helped other advocates around the country defeat this amendment. Ultimately, 60 senators voted against the amendment, leaving funding for the program intact, for the moment.

Regarding the Society’s finances, ASLA continues to be in pretty good financial shape, especially compared to our allied professions. Although membership is down slightly, it has again remained strong in comparison to other organizations, which is a testament to the value membership in ASLA holds. The annual meeting was one of the most attended on record, both in terms of event attendees and exhibitors. Next year’s annual meeting and Expo will be held in Phoenix, from September 28–October 1, 2012. Mark those dates on your calendar and plan to attend – it’s a short drive or cheap flight away, and well worth it. If you haven’t been able to

attend past annual meetings, handouts from the education sessions are available on the ASLA website.

Please feel free to ask if you’d like additional information on these topics or any other ASLA issues.

Please direct any comments or questions to Chris Green:  
[cgreen@consensusplanning.com](mailto:cgreen@consensusplanning.com)

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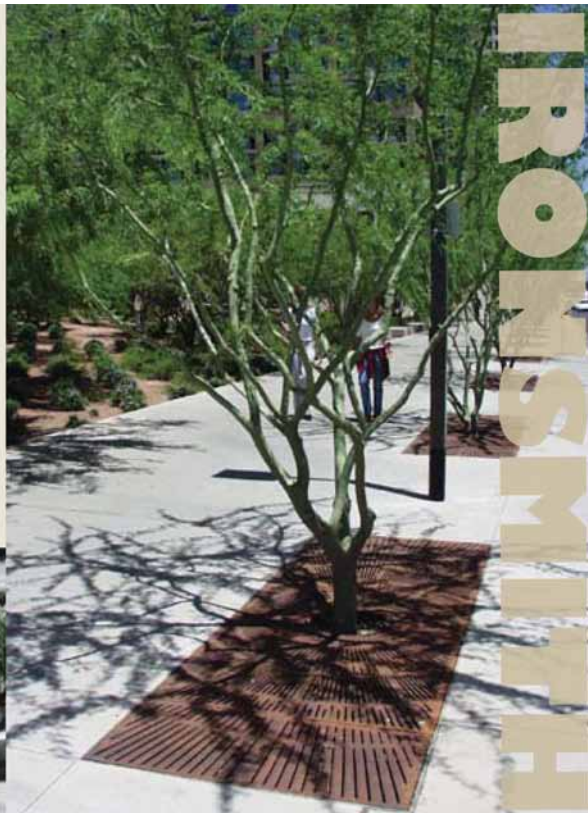
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## Take the 2012 Advocacy Challenge!

In 2011, 5,300 people used the ASLA Advocacy Network to send more than 13,000 messages to their elected officials. Are you one of the 5,300? ASLA's influence with policymakers lies within your expertise. Landscape architects have so much to offer to demonstrate how policies and programs impact communities and your practice. The Advocacy Network makes it possible for you to not only comment on upcoming legislation, but also to tell your story about

how policies affect real projects and real people in your neighborhoods. ***And it only takes 30 seconds to make a difference. Seriously!***

Based on recent usage statistics, NMASLA's contribution to the Advocacy Network isn't what it should be. More importantly, most of New Mexico's current elected officials are actually listening! So let's all take advantage of this grassroots opportunity. Our challenge to every NMASLA member and friend is:

1. Visit: [asla.org/advocacy](http://asla.org/advocacy)
2. Sign up for the Advocacy Network to stay informed of important issues and receive alerts.
3. Take Action! (It only takes 30 seconds!)

## Chapter Events

### Women in the Dirt Screening

**Date/Time:** Feb

**Location:** UNM George Pearl Hall

**Note:** Exact Date/Time TBA

### Q1 Multi-Modal Experience

**Date/Time:** Friday, Apr 20 or

Friday, Apr 27

**Location:** Albuquerque

### Q2 Santa Fe ½-day CEU Event

**Date/Time:** Friday in June

**Location:** Santa Fe

### Q3 Golf Tournament

**Date/Time:** Friday, Aug 17

or Aug 24

**Location:** TBA

### ASLA Annual Meeting

**Date/Time:** Sep 27 thru Oct 1

**Location:** Phoenix, AZ

### Q4 Student Mixer/CEU Session

**Date/Time:** Friday in Oct

**Location:** TBA

### Holiday Party

**Date/Time:** Dec

**Location:** TBA

## Newsletter

The NMASLA newsletter is produced by students in the MLA program at the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning.

Please submit articles, news, photos, corrections, etc., to the editor:

Alex Leider

aleider@unm.edu

## Call for Articles!

We want to showcase YOUR projects in our newsletter! Please send us your case study of a project completed in the last year and a half for inclusion in the next or future newsletters. Additionally, if you have ideas for a different type of article, please send us your suggestions. Help us keep our newsletters relevant and interesting for the NM Landscape Architecture community.

Please send your questions, case studies and/or articles to Alex Leider:  
aleider@unm.edu

## Website

### Have you visited the NMASLA Website?

Please check it out:

<http://www.nmasla.org/>

Want to show off your projects??? We are requesting project images or landscape images that anyone would like to have posted on the website. Please include a note with a brief description (name of project/landscape, location... anything else to explain the image).

Please send projects to Sara Zahm:  
sara@sarazahm.com

## LARE Study Materials

NMASLA now has a collection of LARE Study Materials that can be checked out by NMASLA members.

Please email Kristina Guist:  
kguist@mrwnm.com

## Membership & Address Changes

Please email Amy Bell:  
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