CONFRONTING THE DUAL PANDEMIC
Project Pipeline teaches and empowers young people to shape their communities in their vision. SFNOMA Project Pipeline celebrates 10 years of design justice. SEE PAGE 24

Breana Palmer working with Pipeline student. PHOTOGRAPHY: Edgar Garcia
Dear NOMA Family:

I write this message to you with just over 100 days remaining in my two-year term as president. It has truly been an honor to serve and grow as a leader during such uncertain times, while also seeing our membership double in the process. I cannot thank you enough for either remaining committed to NOMA, re-engaging with us, or joining NOMA for the first time. I firmly believe that there is strength in numbers and that our organization will continue to thrive and flourish with a robust and diverse membership. Again, thank you for being ALL in for NOMA!

In case you are wondering what happens when I leave office on December 31st, I’d like share some insight and confidence in the future of NOMA. My successor, Jason Pugh, is an amazing leader who is committed to advancing the initiatives that we have worked on together over the past two years. We are very much aligned in our philosophy on how NOMA can not only serve our members, but also how we may enhance the potential of our great profession. You will hear more from Jason soon, but suffice it to say that NOMA will be in good hands.

The bigger question that I’d like to address is where we will go from here as a community of architects, designers and built environment professionals who wish to design a better future for everyone. It goes without saying that 2020 has challenged us in ways that we never imagined would be possible. We are encountering inconvenient truths about our society that we must confront head on. In response to the murder of George Floyd, NOMA’s leadership mobilized quickly to finalize a revamped mission statement on May 31, 2020.

NOMA’s mission, rooted in a rich legacy of activism, is to empower our local chapters and membership to foster justice and equity in communities of color through outreach, community advocacy, professional development and design excellence.

While these words are important, they are empty without action. This is why we provided some very specific action items for your consideration, calling on everyone to be B.R.A.V.E.:

Banish racism
Reach out to those who are grieving
Advocate for the disinherited
Vote in every American election
Engage each human you meet as you would want to be engaged

While all of the above action items are important, the one that I must emphasize for the sake of time is VOTE IN EVERY AMERICAN ELECTION. Our nation is more polarized than we have ever been in history. Our democracy depends on informed citizens exercising their right to vote. This November, you must vote and do your research prior to casting your ballot. While we are voting for the presidency, there are also many other important seats that our votes will determine. Please study your ballot in advance and learn about all of the candidates. This is our civic duty and I implore you to take this seriously.

One very important issue that often remains unaddressed is the mass incarceration that takes place in the United States. There is no other country in the world that incarcerates citizens at the rate that our nation does. This burden of over-incarceration is largely shouldered by the Black community, destroying the fabric of so many American families. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Black males accounted for 34% of the total male prison population. In architecture, Black males account for just over 1% of the full population of licensed architects in the U.S. These are both unacceptable disparities.

NOMA is actively working on the architecture disparity by building bridges with new and existing partners in the profession, including ACSA, AIA, AIAS, NAAB, NCARB and others. On the mass incarceration front, this is where we need to get more involved in vetting our elected leaders, which is why being an informed voter is so important. We must look closely at our judges, district attorneys and sheriffs, who all have the authority to move the needle on sentencing reform and decreasing incarceration rates. I encourage all NOMA chapters to work together to help people register to vote, study the ballots carefully and actually vote on or before November 3, 2020. So, where do we go from here? The polls.

ALL the best,

KIMBERLY DOWDELL
2019–2020 NOMA National President
How does the human “fight or flight” response work when you’re being attacked on multiple flanks by two formidable adversaries? By definition, we experience fight or flight as a physiological reaction that occurs in response to a perceived harmful event, attack, or threat to our survival. The challenge is that at the moment there are few places to which we can flee, and the only people around to fight are the loved ones we’re lucky enough to share space with throughout these times of the dual pandemics—COVID-19 and systemic racism.

Tragically, it appears to have taken the murder of brother George Floyd to reveal to all those who witnessed the graphic event, as captured by the ubiquitous cell phone video, the brutal ways that systemic racism continues to keep a knee on the collective neck of Black people, not only here in America, but around the entire globe. As many try to convert their outrage into constructive action, questions abound as to how and where to direct their energy and resources. Meanwhile, time has seemingly accelerated as many of us work from home, isolated from physical contact with our friends and colleagues. The worst thing that any of us could allow to happen is paralysis or fatigue that would stand in the way of our individual and collective responsibilities to “get into good trouble,” so that the death of Floyd and countless other Black people at the hands of law enforcement will not have been in vain.

But out of tragedy comes opportunity. The NOMA Magazine was originally conceived to address the lack of coverage given to our members by the mainstream architectural press, no matter the excellence of our projects and accomplishments. Thankfully, the profession, led by NOMA, the AIA, and the AIA Large Firm Roundtable has changed course and made significant commitments to move onto a righteous path that is just, equitable, diverse and inclusive. Today, we are noticeably present and accounted for in such publications as Architecture Record, the Architects Newspaper, and Architect Magazine. For us, this represents opportunity. There is a heightened interest in building teams that represent a diversity of thought, expertise, and frankly, lived experience. Whether you’re a firm owner or an employee, this is the time to seek new opportunities where they are being created, and to refocus on the ones you might have pursued in the past with only limited success. The decision-making lens is expanding, so what was seemingly out of reach before, may be attainable now, if for no other reason, we are being seen and heard differently at this moment in time, and hopefully as evidence of an altered paradigm by mainstream society. Lastly, this is the time when we need to make significant inroads within our own client base. Black clients need to know who we are, what we’re about, and what their responsibility is to support and work with us. All things considered, we will turn tragedy into opportunity as we enter this brave, new world.

R. STEVEN LEWIS
FAIA, NOMAC, LEED AP Principal
Urban Design at ZGF Architects

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In 2018, the Government of Jamaica, acting through the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, launched an international competition to design a new parliament building. Since securing its independence in 1963, the country’s parliament has met at a temporary location, Gordon House in Kingston, the capital city. The Government envisioned a state-of-the-art facility that will signify its independence and stable democracy. For all competitors, teams were required to include a registered Jamaican architect and also a minimum of fifty percent Jamaican citizens or those of Jamaican diaspora.

Jamaican-born Gordon Gill of ASGG served as the competition patron in promoting the design process’s transparency. The Urban Development Corporation of Jamaica managed the competition process which was comprised of a distinguished jury of design industry leaders throughout the island and other Caribbean countries. Subsequently, the jury and separately the voting public made final selections and rankings for competitors in this two-stage process. Our team consisted of four individuals: Daimian S. Hines, AIA, NOMA; Christopher Bent, Assoc AIA; and Gregory Lake, AIA, who are all Jamaican born and now residing in Texas. Additionally, the team included Evan Williams, JIA, a practicing architect in Kingston, Jamaica. Some 37 proposals were submitted, and five shortlisted. Among the entrants was British architect David Adjaye.

In March 2019, the Honorable Prime Minister Andrew Holness announced the winning teams. Our team—named after the country’s motto, “Out of Many, One People”—won both the coveted People’s Choice and Design Jury first-place selections. Hines Architecture + Design (design architect) joint-ventured with Design Collaborative Ltd. of Jamaica (architect of record) to deliver the building design as well as a comprehensive campus masterplan. Our team also collaborated with the office of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill, who was commissioned to deliver a masterplan for a government oval project which is adjacent to our project’s 52-acre site. As our site was the focal point of the larger master plan, the work of the two teams needed to be a confluence of themes. Continues on next page...
The building program centers on two debate chambers. The spaces are the House of Representatives and Senate debate chambers. The balance of the program includes other parliamentary support spaces, offices, a museum, a library, visitors’ accommodations, and other amenities. Critical adjacencies drove the program development to support various user interfaces while simultaneously segregating government and visitor circulation and access protocols.

The project site is quite significant in the collective history of the island nation. The site resonates as a reminder of the island’s colonial past. The site is currently underutilized as downtown Kingston experienced a substantial transformation over the past. The site is currently underutilized as the new central business district. The design solution is a circular building that is legible at both urban and human scales. In analyzing the oval site, a former colonial-era horse racing track, coupled with the notions of the country’s motto “Out of Many, One People,” suggested a circular building that would have no perceived front, back, east, or side profiles. The building form would always present a front while the landscape would define the vehicular and pedestrian site access and circulation pathways.

HinesHESAD collaborated with OJB Landscape architects who without hesitation signed on early during the competition stage of the pursuit. Through a series of workshops with local stakeholders and government officials, our team developed an informed site program that was the result of many meetings with local stakeholders and government officials. The program included a central circulation boulevard and a circular loop around two interior gardens which introduce natural light from rooftop skylight glazing systems. Rich woods, stones, planting, and feature walls to incorporate local art define the main circulation routes throughout the building.

Prime minister the Honorable Andrew Holness, noted that this project will be the most important in the history of the country. I had the opportunity to study in India where I was able to visit Chandigarh, the country’s capital. There I was able to experience the masterwork of Le Corbusier’s designs for the buildings that comprised the Indian parliament. This was a magnificent experience and was made even more profound as I was able to build a relationship with one of the country’s most notable architects Balkrishna Doshi, a protégé of Le Corbusier. I also had the opportunity to study in Berlin, where I and fellow students toured the then under construction iconic German Chancellory, which spans the Spree River, with the lead Architect Axel Schultes. I did not imagine that in 2018 I would be conceptualizing a modern vision for my country of birth. This experience was both surreal and a source of great pride. I was extremely emotional during the entire design process. When I was eight years old, my family migrated to America so that my sister and I would have a chance at a better education. After graduating from university and practicing in Chicago, Houston, and Southeast Asia, I returned to Houston where I started a boutique design office. I leveraged relationships with my long time cohort Daniel West, AIA. As a small office, I was confident we could compete. I had studied at a top college for architecture, I had worked in large scale competitive design firms, and I had recently built a sixty-person office in Southeast Asia with a long time cohort Daniel West, AIA.

Since winning the commission, I have been asked to speak about the competition process and the design of the Government of Jamaica’s new parliament building. I often start a speaking engagement with a preemptive disclaimer noting that I may become emotional. I, therefore, implore our NOMA design community to seek and deliver projects that evoke strong emotion, challenge traditional forms of practice and endeavor to compete whenever an opportunity arises.

ARCHITECTURE OF EMOTION

It is not often that architects have an opportunity to work on a transformational design such as the Jamaican parliament building. The building program centers on two debate chambers. The spaces are the House of Representatives and Senate debate chambers. The balance of the program includes other parliamentary support spaces, offices, a museum, a library, visitors’ accommodations, and other amenities. Critical adjacencies drove the program development to support various user interfaces while simultaneously segregating government and visitor circulation and access protocols. The project site is quite significant in the collective history of the island nation. The site resonates as a reminder of the island’s colonial past. The site is currently underutilized as downtown Kingston experienced a substantial transformation over the past. The site is currently underutilized as the new central business district. The design solution is a circular building that is legible at both urban and human scales. In analyzing the oval site, a former colonial-era horse racing track, coupled with the notions of the country’s motto “Out of Many, One People,” suggested a circular building that would have no perceived front, back, east, or side profiles. The building form would always present a front while the landscape would define the vehicular and pedestrian site access and circulation pathways.

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which were educational, enlightening, and in some cases, a trigger for memories long forgotten. Never did I think our team would sweep the competition awards nor did I allow myself to dwell on the possibilities. My core focus was on producing the body of work required to compete.

As a small office, I was confident we could compete. I had studied at a top college for architecture, I had worked in large scale competitive design firms, and I had recently built a sixty-person office in Southeast Asia with a long time cohort Daniel West, AIA. Since winning the commission, I have been asked to speak about the competition process and the design of the Government of Jamaica’s new parliament building. I often start a speaking engagement with a preemptive disclaimer noting that I may become emotional. I, therefore, implore our NOMA design community to seek and deliver projects that evoke strong emotion, challenge traditional forms of practice and endeavor to compete whenever an opportunity arises.
UPDATE ON LFRT COMMITMENTS AND PARTNERSHIP WITH NOMA

By TIM DUFALT, FAIA, LEED AP

Our June 5th open letter to the members of NOMA, the member firms of the AIA Large Firm Roundtable (LFRT) committed to work in partnership with NOMA to create meaningful change, equitable work environments, and build systems which will make real our core values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Since the member firms of the LFRT represent the 60 largest architectural firms in the country, we have a unique platform and opportunity to make a difference, and we are committed to doing just that. In the last several months, we have engaged our member firms in activities designed to facilitate that change, including:

Committed over $127,000 in member and general fund contributions to NOMA to expand and support the NOMA Fellows program for emerging professionals working in internships at architecture firms across the country.

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Supported the founding of the NOMA President’s Circle with more than half the member firms committing across all levels of the Circle.

Our HR leaders are working on sharing processes in recruitment, interview, and hiring practices that reduce the impact of implicit bias in the hiring process.

Penned an open letter to producers of digital media content on the lack of representation of people of color, especially black people, in digital entourage and demanding they immediately correct the problem.

Began a program with the seven HBCU Schools of Architecture to bring additional resources and content to support their students through mentorship, shared instruction, seminars, and dedicated internships.

Hosting a joint meeting of the LFRT and NOMA leadership in conjunction with NOMA’s national virtual conference, October 14–18, 2020.

These activities are only the start. Our Justice and Equity = Diversity and Inclusion (JE=DI) task force continues to meet monthly to develop strategies and tactics we can implement in our firms, develop language we can adopt across the profession on justice and equity, and promote broader and deeper discussions on race, racism, and architecture’s role in solving the problems in our profession and in our built environment. In support of this goal, we are developing programs for the senior leadership of our member firms to evaluate the culture of architecture with a focus on building intercultural humility, self-awareness, and opportunities for all.

The LFRT remains committed to ongoing support and partnership with NOMA leaders locally and nationally to achieve our shared vision of a profession that embraces all people of color and creates opportunities for the growth and development of a new diverse generation of firm leaders. As the CEOs of the largest architecture firms in the country, we are committed to making a difference in our own firms, holding each other accountable, leveraging architecture as a tool to break the chains of systemic racism, and continue to build our partnership with NOMA to double the number of licensed black architects by 2030.
UPGRADE YOUR SOFTWARE: TIPS FOR MASTERING THE VIRTUAL WORKPLACE

By JOEL AVERY, NOMA

If there were a singular instance demonstrating the poignance of our current technological climate it would’ve been this past Saturday when, at the end of our weekly family meeting, my eighty-four year old father bowed his head in prayer and thanked God for Eric Yuan and the digital marvel he has created. It’s important to mention here that Zoomfatigue is a real thing that many of us battle every day. Mindful individuals will make the best use of the technology while using it sparingly.

YOUR WORKSPACE OR YOUR LIFE
One of the newest realizations is that people who work from home often work harder and longer hours. This means you need to take greater care of the space you’ll be occupying. Use all of your ergonomic skills to optimize desk and chair height particularly to minimize stress on your wrists, arms and back. Standing desks offer the most benefits will live well beyond the current world but research has shown “Zoom Fatigue” is a real thing that many of us battle every day. Mindful individuals will make the best use of the technology while using it sparingly.

5 steps to great meetings
25 tips for remote meetings
Zoom Fatigue
Really, it’s a real thing

REDUNDANCY
This is another area that hasn’t changed just because the workplace is mostly virtual. All core business processes need to have a “Plan B” especially in the middle of a pandemic. If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that anything can and will go wrong. Already having a plan in place for what to do when it does will not only ease stress but it may save your company.

How do you keep you and your team productive when the office internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? How about when their home internet is out? 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“We must imagine and build spaces of liberation, where black life can thrive, but this will be only be possible if we first abolish the (institutional) spaces where black life does not matter.”

MABEL O. WILSON

“An earth centered environmental design investigation that evolves more than it is manifested, where the body and the spirit of that body are of utmost importance and almost always enclosed within an ‘asymmetry symmetry’ aesthetic.”

JACK TRAVIS

“Black space is in part a place of celebrating and sharing how we can thrive in the face of anti-Black racist practices that perpetuate the cultural, economic, and political harm enabled by our built environmental work on our communities.”

KOFI BOONE

“Freedom is often haphazardly construed by the misgivings of independence, and both are lost to an instability founded on the inability to find something of value in ourselves. The failure to achieve freedom comes from a personal perspective that you, yourself, can not willingly share equitably. True freedom flourishes with trust, which flows from interdependence—an interdependence with others. We have lost the ability to blissfully trust one another in the places that we’ve grown accustomed to, the places that we love, and the simple being that comes from this. Interdependence cannot exist until racism is removed, and therefore, freedom, true freedom cannot be obtained until racism is removed. The poorest of people in their darkest hour seek to trust in our society. What COVID-19 has taught us is that even in the most gloriously rich in our culture, seek to trust. Trust is equitable interdependence.”

ULYSSES SEAN VANCE

“The train of capitalistic exploitation of black bodies has come to crashing halt. COVID-19 has exposed white America’s infatuation with historical erasure. The act of rebellion is generations of triumphant survival and a reckoning that silenced voices have not forgotten their past and predetermined future. Sacred black space is defined by the culture of resilience, because around these parts, this train will result in not 6 feet apart but 6 feet under.”

CHRIS LOCKE

“Black space to me is a space of Pride without boundaries set by physical or mental constraints. Within our dual pandemic Black Space has transformed to be a fragile yet critical space where I must protect my peace while continuing to push for a better future for black and brown Architects.”

SAMANTHA JOASPHA, RA, NOMA, NCARB
MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM NOMA MEMBERS

LEED FOR DIVERSITY
By MICHAEL MARSHALL

As a practicing architect for almost thirty years, who happens to be an African American, I would like to share my thoughts on the need for diversity in our profession, and a few ways to possibly achieve it. It has been noted by economists and other international thinkers that all trends and indicators predict that in the next 50 years 75 percent of the world’s population will live in urban settings. There is obviously an advantage here, as we evolve on our planet and as resources become increasingly scarce, sustainable, cultural and racially-diverse environments will be necessary to achieve an equitable balance, bringing people from different backgrounds and ethnicities together in peaceful coexistence as this migration to urban centers occurs. Architects, planners and designers who share the same background as this migration to urban centers occurs.

Architects, planners and designers who share the same background as this migration to urban centers occur. There are others that have been traditionally separated by socioeconomic and other factors. Diversity in the profession of architecture is imperative. As it stands now, minorities are woefully underrepresented in the field and practice of architecture. From my perspective I can see that there are steps being taken to correct this imbalance, but it will take perhaps a few generations to achieve effective results. I think there are some “affirmative” steps that can now be utilized to correct this present day disparity of representation in the practice of architecture.

There are two areas I see where corrections are needed: 1) in large corporate architectural practices where there should be more advances in the hiring and promotion of women and minorities at meaningful levels, and 2) in the need for collaboration between woman- and minority-led firms teamed with larger mainstream corporate practices. This goal of equity should also be the target in the private sector where, unless there is some mandate for inclusion, it is never considered as a positive means to bring in new voices for the design of our communities. I would like to offer a solution that is more “carrot” than “stick” as a possible remedy to this situation that I have witnessed, personally and professionally.

In my past experience the sharing of services and, in particular, fees for an architectural project, depending on the scale of the project, can result in push back from larger corporate architectural practices to collaborate with woman- and minority-owned small businesses, even when there is a call for inclusion as part of a mandate to achieve diversity. In addition to the sharing of fees and services, there is also the sensitive subject of artistic authorship of the design of a project. The titles of “Design Architect” and “Architect of Record” usually settle this issue, but with true collaborations in the design of projects this can sometimes result in a difficult call. I have found that M.O.U.s at the start of the project is highly recommended for clarity of tasks and responsibilities of the teaming and is now a standard practice of our collaborations.

So here is my pitch for the “carrot”. Just as there is certification of buildings that are LEED CERTIFIED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), I propose an institutional rating system or certifications for architectural firms that will establish what are good standards in achieving diversity and inclusion.

I propose that these agencies, similar to Standard and Poor’s or Moody’s would function not unlike these rating systems as recommendations for understanding the diversity and inclusions intent of particular architectural practices. This rating can be leveraged in a competitive fashion for winning commissions in the private sector or public sector. For the private sector developers of public or private projects, they can achieve certification for being good corporate citizens for bringing together diverse design teams, in return for regulatory approvals, as the LEED ratings are now a bonus and are sometimes mandatory depending on the jurisdiction. I think this can be a certification that will allow private sector firms to brand themselves as making socio-economic inclusion a normal “business as usual” process. Collaborations with small businesses, and woman- and minority-owned architectural practices could then have a business development advantage nationally.

In conclusion I want to see diversity and inclusion “monetized.” I want to show that diversity is a great investment now and for our future.

Respectfully,

MICHAEL MARSHALL, AIA, NOMA, NCARB

Just as there is certification of buildings that are LEED CERTIFIED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), I propose an institutional rating system or certifications for architectural firms, monitored by a group outside of the normal professional organizations that architects are associated with that will establish what are good standards in achieving diversity and inclusion. This rating can be leveraged in a competitive fashion for winning commissions in the private sector or public sector. For the private sector developers of public or private projects, they can achieve certification for being good corporate citizens for bringing together diverse design teams, in return for regulatory approvals, as the LEED ratings are now a bonus and are sometimes mandatory depending on the jurisdiction. I think this can be a certification that will allow private sector firms to brand themselves as making socio-economic inclusion a normal “business as usual” process. Collaborations with small businesses, and woman- and minority-owned architectural practices could then have a business development advantage nationally.

In conclusion I want to see diversity and inclusion “monetized.” I want to show that diversity is a great investment now and for our future.

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The inaugural fellowship cohort includes the following architecture students and graduates placed at design firms across the U.S.

By AMBER LACROIX

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) has recently announced the placement of 30 architecture students as the inaugural cohort of the NOMA Foundation Fellowship (NFF). The NFF is a two-month virtual research fellowship hosted over the summer at leading architecture firms across the country. Fellows engage in design research and benefit from firm mentorship. Amidst COVID-19 and record unemployment, NFF provides professional experience to underrepresented students with the goal of diversifying the field of architecture and reflecting the industries we serve. We are inspired to learn from our younger professionals who will mentor them. We only need the opportunity to show what we are made of. This is mine.”

"I've spoken to firms who offer professional development to students by providing advice and hosting summer workshops. This is an amazing first step! However, I pray that students are able to find additional ways to become engaged in the profession. As young designers we can change the future, designing buildings that will stand for a long time with safety, sustainability, and justice in mind." said Monique Dornoh, a third-year M.Arch student placed at FXCollaborative, and a 2020 M.Arch graduate of University of Virginia.

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"The fellowship application process was open to any National Organization of Minority Architects Students (NOMAS) members in good standing. The virtual program ran for eight weeks from July 6–August 28, 2020. The fellowship funding is paid for in large-part by the AIA LFRT donations to NOMA. Fellows’ work is capped at 100 hours for a $2,000 stipend; however, host firms offered additional funding to supplement the fellows’ work and hours.

In addition to the fellows and firms matched above through the NFF, KTGY Architecture + Planning extended internships to two additional finalists, Zac Cook of Virginia Tech and Ferdinand Bartoloni of University of Detroit Mercy. Aaron deReus, a 2020 M.Arch graduate of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, placed at HED, was also named the 2020 Kenneth E. Casey Fellow. Kenneth E. Casey, AIA, NOMA passed August 3, 2019. NOMA honored Casey with the creation of a new fellowship named in memory of his legacy.

Most NOMAS students who accepted the fellowships are seeking full-time employment, post-graduation, from their architecture programs.

““The uncertainty of COVID-19 has caused so much stress in the lives of degree-seeking students. I’m extremely thankful for the NOMA Foundation Fellowship paired with the support of AIA firm members and others. It is an opportunity and privilege that truly keeps me engaged in the profession,” said Monique Dornoh, a third-year M.Arch student placed at FXCollaborative, and part of the NOMAS Penn State chapter. “I’ve spoken to firms who offer professional development to students by providing advice and hosting summer workshops. This is an amazing first step! However, I pray that students are able to find additional ways to become engaged in the profession. As young designers we can change the future, designing buildings that will stand for a long time with safety, sustainability, and justice in mind.”

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2020 marks the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the San Francisco Chapter’s Project Pipeline Camp. Initially developed by Deanna Van Buren, Rommel Taylor, and I in 2009, we envisioned a camp where middle school students would have a similar studio experience to college students. The camp was founded on four main pillars 1) Engaging young people on real-world community-based projects. 2) Cultivating future visionary minds and civic leaders. 3) Teaching critical thinking and problem-solving skills to build communal connections in neighborhoods. 4) To have young people become active participants in shaping their communities. Along with our pillars, we supplemented all our camp design projects over the last decade to have a clear focus on projects that deeply incorporate integrated sustainability and issues which resonate with young people, their needs, knowledge base, and interest. Our first camp held the summer of 2010 on the campus of California College of the Arts in San Francisco, started with two days, moving to a four-day camp over two consecutive weekends and, now, a five-day week-long camp. We curated an experience of skill-building and learning how to use design tools inclusive of practicing public speaking throughout. It also consisted of how to approach a design problem, site analysis, community engagement, conceptional design, design development, and concluded with a final public presentation and exhibition. The first several projects our young designers worked on were small-scale projects, an urban kiosk located in a community plaza at a subway stop in the mostly Latino neighborhood of the Mission District in San Francisco; a redesign of a public plaza in the Bayview area, one of the last predominately Black neighborhoods in San Francisco, and a pocket park on a long-time vacant site along a central corridor in the same area.
Five years ago, we added two additional pillars; all our projects would be rooted in design justice and would integrate former pipeline students into leadership positions for developing and implementing the camp. Our shift to a week-long camp allowed students more time for design iterations and deeper integration of cultural, sustainability, and craftsmanship. With a robust pipeline of students who had completed the camp multiple times, we hired our first trio of Teaching Assistants (TA). The TA’s were paid to help organize, run, and teach the camp as well as a way to develop future leaders in the profession. Two years ago, we elevated Breana Palmer and Cameron Clarke to be Assistant Camp Directors who have now been with us since 2012 and 2013 respectively, they both have helped to shape the program to have an integrated youth perspective and voice in the entire camp process, including curriculum development, leading teaching sessions, developing projects, providing the latest in teaching themes and methodologies occurring at the university level. They have become integral to making sure we have a successful camp from design mentors to our young student designers.

Our project focus has increasingly integrated justice, equity, and inclusion in the design problem; four years ago, our students worked with the non-profit Urban Ed Academy, which focuses on delivering new models of the academic programming for black males and provided options for an outdoor learning parklet. Three years ago, the students in groups built upon a community plan to develop a new sustainable neighborhood on a former power plant site, then the students chose one building within their community plan to design out, including building 1/4 scale models. Two years ago, we made a profound shift and had our students design a youth restorative justice center as an alternative to the soon to be closed Juvenile Hall in San Francisco. We charged our young designers to create a safe space to heal, build trust, and provide career opportunities. This year due to COVID-19, we crafted our first virtual eight-day camp; the design problem was based on the civil unrest throughout the country in response to the killings, excessive violence, and mistreatment of Black citizens by police enforcement. One of our newest TA’s Umi Green came up with a Center for Civil Action and Equity located in East Oakland. Umi viewed the center as a space for in-depth discussion on civil and righteous teachings as well as the untold history of Black Americans. The center will train people in methods of peacefully protesting, provide a deeper understanding of Oakland and its role in advancing civil rights globally.

Our pipeline students have proven to be able to meet any challenge we created for them. On all the design projects, they have delivered solutions that were thoughtful in understanding the issues, taking into account the information they learned from visiting the site, and talking with the community. These young designers attentively integrated sustainability and provided unique and intelligent designs rooted in the communities’ thoughts, ideas, and needs while showcasing their individual style.

“We have seen our pipeline students more than meet the challenges we have created for them… These young designers have proven to be able to integrate sustainability and provide unique and intelligent designs rooted in the communities’ thoughts, ideas, and needs while showcasing their individual style.”

PRESCOTT REAVIS, NOMA, LEED AP, SEED, NCARB, Co-Founder and Director SF Project Pipeline
The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) is working to bridge the cultural gaps that exist in the workplace by serving as a resource for firms, companies and institutions that have sought support with enhancing their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts. To help address the heightened demand for corporate engagement and DEI consulting services, we have created the NOMA President’s Circle (PC) corporate membership program.

Our industry must respond to the racial awakening that is emerging across America in 2020. The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) is proud to lead the charge in this important work within our field through a diverse membership roster of talented professionals and students along with a corporate membership community of forward thinking companies and institutions.

Many thanks to our inaugural cohort of NOMA PC members for committing to build a future that is more diverse, equitable, inclusive and harmonious.

With our nation trending towards the majority of citizens being people of color by 2045, the time to foster cross-cultural understanding and respect is now. NOMA is proud to lead the charge in this important work within our field through a diverse membership roster of talented professionals and students along with a corporate membership community of forward thinking companies and institutions.

We sincerely appreciate our individual and corporate members for being #AllInForNOMA.

The Inclusion and Diversity Compendium for Designers is intended to equip designers to take action in order to support more inclusive and diverse workplaces and communities.

Many, but not all, of the resources have a design lens. They were compiled by Marissa Louie (UX Design Director at Expedia) and recommended by dozens of diverse designers and design leaders from Designers Guild, Expedia, and other members of the design community.

We welcome you to help build out this document. Feel free to message Marissa Louie on LinkedIn with any suggestions for resources and topics to add.
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