



Landscape architecture students and emerging professionals can significantly benefit from interaction with practicing landscape architects. This exposure can enhance a student's education by introducing them to the professional world, providing important learning resources, and potentially connecting them with future employment opportunities. In addition, ASLA chapters benefit from the energy, optimism, and talent students and emerging professionals provide.

A recent survey provided valuable insight regarding the status of each chapter's emerging professionals program, and generated many of the ideas expressed herein. Some chapters already have a very active committee, others are in the earlier stages of development. This document offers suggestions for programs and events chapters can utilize to foster a strong and meaningful relationship with emerging professionals and the student chapter(s) in their area.



- Establish an EPC within the chapter with the sole purpose of creating and managing an effective relationship with emerging professionals and the student chapter.
- Set forth a detailed program that includes scheduled activities and events involving the professional and student chapter.

Mentorship

- Establish a job link on the chapter website and keep it current. Make sure emerging professionals and the student chapter are aware of, and have access to, this website and job link.
- Establish a mentoring program for recent grads who opt to reside within the chapter after graduation:
 - For new grads who are employed, a member from another firm, can serve as mentor to expose the EP to the rarity of LA services.
 - Given the current economy and job market, it's critical that unemployed grads understand that their chapter and ASLA can help in their transition from school to professional career. This may include offering advice on their job pursuit, invitations to chapter events, or to simply get together for a cup of coffee.

Landscape Architecture Program

- Start with the faculty. Convey to them that the chapter values their membership, participation, and contributions.
- Promote the benefits of ASLA membership to faculty members and encourage them to express these benefits to their students.
- Assign a professional liaison with the student chapter. This could be the chair of the chapter EPC or another committee member.

Communications

- Include a student chapter portal in the professional chapter's website that highlights current department news and events. For instance, "What's Happening at the University of _____?"
- Add student email addresses to the professional chapter newsletter distribution list.



Events

■ Coordinate and participate in student chapter events at the university:

- Co-sponsor an annual event with the student chapter that includes speakers, education sessions, and sponsors (product reps, etc.). Encourage professionals to attend.
- Conduct education sessions at the university (one or two per year) to make it more convenient for students and faculty (who may need CEUs) to attend.
- Sponsor an annual student awards program or add a student category to the chapter's professional awards program.
- Conduct a student mock interview and portfolio review program.
- Sponsor back-to-school and/or graduation events.
- Assist professors in project critiques.
- Collaborate with a professor to sponsor/lead a studio design project. Establish the design problem and provide input and review during the course of the project.
- Collect contact information from graduating students that will allow the chapter to stay in touch.
- Post chapter news on the student chapter's Facebook page.
- Give lectures and presentations (current projects, issues, trends, professional practice, etc.).
- Establish a job-shadow program that brings students into professional offices.



Front image: Canada's Sugar Beach, Toronto, Ontario
 Credit: Jesse Colin Jackson
 Front page panoramic image: Citygarden, St. Louis, Missouri
 Credit: Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects



■ Invite emerging professionals and students to participate in chapter events and activities:

- Educational sessions
- Annual chapter meeting and awards banquet
- Speakers and social events
- National public outreach events (such as 8.17.2011 or 4.26.2012)
- State-level government advocacy efforts
- Chapter Executive Committee Meetings (student rep in person or via conference call)
- Office and project site tours.

Financial Support

■ Promote student participation in the ASLA Annual Meeting, regional conferences, and LaBash, and provide financial support for attending students. Invite students to make post-conference presentations to the chapter.

■ Initiate a scholarship program that can be supported via a chapter-sponsored golf tournament or similar event.



Emerging professionals and students are the future of our society and profession. It is imperative that each chapter reach out and make them feel welcome!