Excellence in Teaching Award

Assistant Professor Pari Riahi AIA was honored with a 2021 Outstanding Teaching Award from the College of Humanities and Fine Arts in recognition of her commitment to the art of teaching, passion for me, that both contradict and complement my pre-conceived ideas of architecture and where my career can take me.”

SKINS publication

Associate Professor Ajla Aksamija guest-edited the April issue of SKINS, published by the Facade Tectonics Institute, focusing on R+D and innovation. To read Aksamija’s editorial article, a book review of Research Methods for the Architectural Profession, and two more articles relating to UMass about our collaboration with industry partners, and life-long learning opportunities for practitioners interested in a PhD program, please follow this link: https://www. facadetectonics.org/skins/april-2021

SAVE THE DATE!

The 2021 AIA New England Design Awards Program, hosted this year by AIA Central Massachusetts, will be held on October 16 at Polar Park in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Renowned urban planner and longtime baseball consultant, Janet Marie Smith, will deliver the keynote speech at the Awards Dinner.

Every year, we feature the MArch Thesis Projects from UMass Amherst in the Summer Issue of the WMAIA Newsletter, as a celebration of the architectural education happening in Western Massachusetts. We want to acknowledge the students, the thesis advisors and faculty, as well as the many community members who serve as outside jurors during the Spring semester - thank you! See pages three to seven for a glimpse of the work presented!

Jeffrey Blankeship Hobart William Smith College
Andrew Chin Florida A&M University
Ruth Connell AIA Morgan State University
Helen Fantini AIA SMMA
Blake Jackson AIA Stantec
Hyacinth G. John DP+ Studio
Rob Markelow AIA Kuth Ranieri Architects
Jason Newman AIA Dietz & Company Architects
Derek Noble AIA Shepley Bullfinch Architects
Justin Pelland AIA Cube 3 Architects
Nada Shuaib Shepley Bullfinch Architects
Lorin Starr Lorin Starr Interiors
Brien Tal-Baker AIA Simple City Studio
Lindsay Comeaux Schnarr AIA

Cover Photo: Dietz & Company Architects, Inc.

THANK YOU!

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OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
CONGRATULATIONS UMASS M.ARCH STUDENTS!
Department of Architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

ALEESA ASFOURA
Thesis Advisor: Rob Williams AIA
CREATING NEW CULTURAL HUBS IN AMERICAN CITIES: THE SYRIAN DIASPORA OF WORCESTER, MA

ALMA CRAWFORD-MENDOZA
Thesis Advisor: Tim Rohan
THE BEIGE CONUNDRUM

ANDREW WEULING
Thesis Advisor: Ajla Aksamija
TALL TIMBER IN DENVER

BRENDAN BAITCH
Thesis Advisor: Carey Clouse AIA
DESIGNING FOR FIRE-RESILIENT COMMUNITIES IN THE AMERICAN WEST

CONNOR SLOVER
Thesis Advisor: Erika Zekos Associate AIA
EXPLORING THE USE OF COMPRESSED AIR ENERGY STORAGE IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

COURTNEY JURZYNSKI
Thesis Advisor: Carey Clouse AIA
THE HOMESTEAD HELPER HANDBOOK
CONGRATULATIONS UMASS M.ARCH STUDENTS!

Department of Architecture
at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

ELAINE TANG
Thesis Advisor: Kathleen Lugosch FAIA
RE-ENVISIONING THE AMERICAN DREAM

KARITIKEYA SONKER
Thesis Advisor: Pari Riahi AIA
BRIDGING THE GAPS IN PUBLIC CONVERSATION BY FOSTERING SPACES OF ACTIVISM: SPACES IN SEARCH OF PROTESTS

MADISON DEHAVEN
Thesis Advisor: Eldra Walker
CULTIVATING FOOD JUSTICE IN THE PIONEER VALLEY: EXPLORING PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN PROCESS THROUGH A FOOD SECURITY & SUSTAINABILITY HUB

MORGAN B. SAUNDER
From Sanctuary to Home in the Post-Interstate City

NATE LUMEN
AN ARCHITECTURE OF A NEW STORY

STEPHEN J. FINK
Physical to Virtual: A Model for Future Virtual Classroom Environments

Thesis Advisor: Ray K. Mann
Thesis Advisor: Rob Williams AIA
Thesis Advisor: Erika Zekos Associate AIA

Thesis Advisor: Steve Schreiber FAIA
Thesis Advisor: Eldra Walker
Thesis Advisor: Steve Schreiber FAIA

September 2020
November 2020
October 2020
March 2021
CONGRATULATIONS UMASS M.Arch STUDENTS!

TARA PEARCE

Thesis Advisor: Erika Zekos Associate AIA

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IN MEMORIUM

MARK LEDWELL

Those who knew Mark professionally are fortunate and the better for it. He was a man of rare and special talent, as well as a devoted husband and father of four children. He was a musician, a craftsman, and a kind and generous soul. His loss is a great loss to all of us.

Mark’s work will live on for generations, carrying his spirit and love of life and family forward, so others may benefit from what he added to this world.

- Charles Roberts AIA, Kuhn Riddle Architects

Mark Ledwell: February 9, 1953 – May 5, 2021

We are a close family of designers and builders in this valley, and if you practice here as an architect, engineer or tradesperson, you would certainly have known Mark Ledwell. The 20 plus years he was a part of Wright Builders resulted in a legacy of buildings that many of us are familiar with; The Bement School Dormitories, Village Hill Townhouses, The Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst (where he crafted hand-made benches from an oak that fell to make room for a new addition), The Belchertown Day School, Green River Condominiums, The Hitchcock Center, and those are just a few.

The Hitchcock Center, along with the Kerns Center, were built contemporaneously by WBI, and are the second and third Living Building Challenge structures in this part of the country. The Hitchcock Center was Mark’s project, and the level of passion, communication and people skills needed for this type of work is a rare commodity. In the words of Jonathan Wright, Mark’s cohort and business partner over those many years, “Being a maker is not just a skill, or a vocation. It is a path through this world and beyond….. Mark could build anything. That’s with a capital A. Buried in that kindly smile and broad shoulders was a fiercely quick intellect and math cognition that would shame a lowly computer. When he said, ‘we’ll figure it out’, it was not a cliché. It was a statement of problem-solving fact.” Before joining Wright Builders, Mark built homes for John Bednarski, a brilliant millwork designer, and was able to bring that dynamic into perspective by trusting and encouraging those around him while asserting his own knowledge and expertise, often with a wink to assure you he was on your side. His laugh would fill the room and was always the right antidote to a problem-solving moment; refocusing attention and mining solutions from the collective mind.

Mark recently worked tirelessly for the better part of a year renovating a home in Greenfield for the Children’s Advocacy Center, an organization “based upon the fundamental premise that children have the right to be safe and protected from harm.” Volunteerizing his talents for this cause, he also helped fundraise for the CAC and increase public awareness of their mission.

Mark possessed the prefect blend of stature, experience, humor and discipline that is essential to this business. Design and construction is an industry where the risk/reward balance is often in flux. Mark was able to bring that dynamic into perspective by trusting and encouraging those around him while asserting his own knowledge and expertise, often with a wink to assure you he was on your side. His laugh would fill the room and was always the right antidote to a problem-solving moment; refocusing attention and mining solutions from the collective mind.

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Those who knew Mark professionally are fortunate and the better for it. He was also a man devoted to his family, a husband and father of four children. He was a musician, a master woodworker, a gardener, an intellectual, a humorist, a man of exceptional talent who knew how to shape the physical world for the greater good. People who live and work in the spaces he helped build are surrounded by the care Mark applied to all his accomplishments. Mark’s work will live on for generations, carrying his spirit and love of life and family forward, so others may benefit from what he added to this world.

- Charles Roberts AIA, Kuhn Riddle Architects

MARK LEDWELL

IN MEMORIUM
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THINGS TO DO + SEE IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

MASS MoCA

SHAUN LEONARDO

YOU WALK...

You walk… is an interactive installation by Brooklyn-based multi-disciplinary artist Shaun Leonardo. Translating his performance practice into a participatory installation, Leonardo offers a series of visual and textual prompts — drawing from themes present in exhibitions on view throughout the museum — to invite us to consider how we process and embody space, ideas, and connectivity.

Using visual elements like two-way mirrors and mock window-scapes, Leonardo creates a space that both reflects a shared physical present but also alludes to the differences that shape our individual perspectives. Text prompts throughout the space encourage visitors to relive your own movements and gestures – walking down the street, averting your gaze from a stranger, holding someone’s hand. These reflections draw awareness to experiences that can’t be articulated as much as felt. By unlocking these physical narratives, Leonardo offers an opportunity to reflect on the ways we perceive ourselves and engage with others.

The Clark

THROUGH OCTOBER 17, 2021

Ground/work is free and open to the public, night and day. No tickets are required.

Ground/work highlights the balance between fragility and resilience that both nature and the passage of time reveal, while offering fresh experiences with every visit.

A reverence for nature and a desire to further enliven the surrounding trails, pastures, and woods inspired Ground/work—the Clark Art Institute’s first outdoor exhibition. Building on a history of collaboration with contemporary artists, the Clark commissioned Kelly Akashi, Nairy Baghramian, Jennie C. Jones, Eva LeWitt, Analia Saban, and Haegue Yang to create new works of art in active dialogue with this specific environment.

The artists conceived their works in response to sites of their choosing, knowing that visitors would have access day and night for more than a year. Found in varied locations across the Clark’s 140-acre campus, these installations are embedded in a landscape that is ever changing—both daily and seasonally.

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About
Sergeant House is an 1820s Federal, Italianate building located in the Pomeroy Terrace Historic District in Northampton, Massachusetts. The building was previously used for both single- and multi-family dwelling, as well as an inn. The latest renovation, completed in 2020, highlights a new addition, and an extensive renovation and restoration effort to restore its character. The building has reopened as multi-family housing, consisting of thirty-one efficiency units for single residency occupancy that serve the housing needs in the community.

Historic Artifacts
Antiquities and unique historic elements were discovered throughout the house during demolition, including sheathing in the attic which was observed to have imagery from a circus advertisement, old glass bottles from Brookside Dairy, Inc. formerly of Northampton, MA, and Hampden Brewing Company, formerly of Willimansett, MA, and old photographs found inside the historic mantels. In addition to those relics, the historic post and beam structure of the existing house was found to contain live edge hand hewn beams with bark still attached which remained intact throughout the renovation and, along with other materials, was left in place to be rediscovered in any future renovations.

Reclaimed / Rebuilt
Significant effort was put into maintaining the historic character of the building while updating and modernizing almost every area. The first-floor monumental stair to the second floor was intended to be salvaged, but due to its condition it was reconstructed in its entirety to replicate the existing historic features and the original banister was refurbished and reinstalled.

The historic entry porcicus, a previous addition to the house, was structurally stabilized and reclad with all new PVC trim and wood decking which were installed to match what was existing; replicating railings, trim, and molding profiles in precise detail. Additionally, two of the six existing fireplace mantles were salvaged and refurbished for reinstallation in the community room. Both mantles were stripped and stained to match the first-floor stair banister and installed with decorative period style tile. In the first-floor foyer adjacent to the stair, a historic decorative mirror was reclaimed, resized to fit the new ceiling heights, and resin was casted to repair a damaged foot. The glazing was replaced with safety glass, and it was painted and reinstalled in its original location.

Modernization & Accessibility
In addition to the reclamation of so many important historic features, the building was modernized to suit today’s needs. The new three-story addition, replacing the existing 1986 two-story addition, increased occupancy and added an elevator that allowed the accessibility needs of the project to be met. The existing main entry did not meet accessibility regulations, so a new main entry was incorporated into the addition on the side of the building allowing easy access from the parking lot.

Energy & Performance
Sustainability played an important role in all aspects of the project from the building envelope to the mechanical systems, and the design and historic character was considered with every decision. All historic windows were replaced with architectural aluminum clad windows, which are triple-glazed with a low-E coating and argon filled for maximum performance. Historic decorative exterior window heads were custom fabricated to replicate the ones shown in historic photographs.

The approach to the exterior was to provide the building with a super insulated exterior envelope, and implementation of a smart interior air barrier and energy recovery ventilation units to keep the building efficient and comfortable. Due to the condition of the exterior studs, many of which were non-continuous or damaged, new 2”x6” framing was added in and around the post and beam structure while leaving as many of the existing studs intact as possible. The interior wall cavity was filled with blown cellulose insulation in order to better fill gaps around existing studs and bracing, and exterior continuous mineral wool insulation behind the siding. Special attention was paid to air sealing each unit for additional energy performance and produced a HERS Index Score of 37 avg per unit.

The flat roof of the new addition, as well as the pitched roof of the connector section of the building, was designed to optimize an expansive 31KW photovoltaic array that substantially supplements the building with renewable energy.

Interior Design & Amenities
The interior finishes of the original house harken back to the Victorian styling of the historic district, while also providing comfortable and durable surfaces that will stand the test of time. Period style door hardware, decorative ceramic tile, light fixtures, wainscoting and paint colors were selected to fit the historic house’s character. The building also provides tenants with a covered bike storage area with charging ports, a community room with original finished fireplace mantles and a large back deck for outdoor enjoyment.

Developed By: Valley CDC and Wayfinders
Constructed By: Western Builders, Inc.
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For more information and to register visit www.architects.org

Looking Ahead…
As we plan our late summer and fall programming you can expect a mix of in-person and remote programs.
Watch for updates in our enews.

A note about WMAIA’s enews:
Are you receiving our regular enews?
The enews is sent several times a month and is used to communicate information about programs and other opportunities. If you are not receiving this information, please contact director@wmaia.org