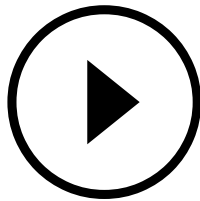


Connecting People and Communities



Architecture Student Constructs His Own Career Path

Tyler Schram created an educational path at the [University of Idaho](#) that allowed him to build upon his interests in architecture, people and sustainable communities.

“As an architect, you are designing buildings and spaces for people to inhabit, and the structure has to be relatable to the people that experience it. It has to fit its surroundings and it has to support sustainability,” Schram said. “Those experiences, to me, are the links between architecture and people.”

Schram, who is graduating with his master’s in architecture from the [College of Art and Architecture](#), believes sustainable development is key to the future of architecture. Many of his projects throughout undergraduate and graduate school allowed him to focus on the topic. During his time at the U of I, whether designing schools abroad or an entryway for [his local park](#), the Boise native learned how to redesign neighborhoods to grow sustainably and help communities connect to residents.

Related Stories

A Partnership Toward Sustainable Insulation

Building Resilient and Efficient Communities

There and Back Again – An Architect's Tale

Related Links

College of Art and Architecture

U of I Boise

Integrated Design Lab

Building a Foundation

After starting his college education at a community college in Boise, Schram joined the [U of I Boise Urban Design Center](#) – where students can start any of the three U of I architecture-related degrees. He completed his degree in the U of I Moscow campus and then split his time between both locations during graduate school, which he will finish in Spring 2022.



As an architect, you are designing buildings and spaces for people to inhabit, and the structure has to be relatable to the people that experience it. It has to fit its surroundings and it has to support sustainability. Those experiences, to me, are the links between architecture and people.

— Tyler Schram, CAA master's student

At U of I, Schram found hands-on experiences that solidified his vision of architecture as a means to create fair and sustainable communities. During his senior year, he joined a class project to create a conceptual design for a

sustainable girls' school in Togo. The class partnered with a nonprofit founded by a U of I alumna to create education and employment opportunities for women. He and his classmates met with local women, teachers and children, analyzed construction site conditions and identified local materials.

"I experienced firsthand a community very different than my own and learned the importance of understanding how different cultures live and interact with each other before you can design a building for them," he said. "Togo was a perfect example of a U of I experience that applied architectural knowledge to social issues and communities. That experience not only opened my eyes to other cultures but also, as a designer, it opened my eyes to see communities differently."

Schram also takes pride in his work on Idaho-based projects with ties to his own communities. In Moscow, he created proposals to redevelop the riverfront in Lewiston as part of an urban design studio project, teaming up with stakeholders from the city to offer input and guidance. In Boise, he won first place in a competition to design a new entrance for the Ann Morrison Park.

"Being able to design a concept for such an iconic park in the city that I grew up in meant a lot to me," he said.



Schram's thesis focuses on a future with less car-dependent communities.

Toward Sustainable Communities

Schram worked as a research assistant at U of I and completed two internships in the Treasure Valley, experiences he credits with teaching him how sustainable communities are a key concept to architecture.

For his master's thesis, Schram wanted to combine everything he learned about improving the livability of suburban communities sustainably. He focused on how a new transit infrastructure in Boise, coupled with architectural interventions, can resolve car dependency issues.

"A new transit system could create node communities that can be more walkable, more connected and more physically and environmentally sustainable," he said.

As a research assistant at the College of Art and Architecture [Integrated Design Lab](#) (IDL), Schram is working on energy audits and creating a new sustainable and safe building material made of hemp. The IDL is dedicated to the development of high performance, energy-efficient buildings to enhance the health and productivity of inhabitants.

His U of I experience also led him to internships at architecture firms like Meridian's Neu Design, in 2019, and more recently at Regen, a Boise firm with a mission to impact communities and the environment by developing sustainable buildings.

"The internships have allowed me to combine my interests in sustainability and people as I developed projects with clients," Schram said. "With my work at Regen, I did drafting for a firm that's making projects as sustainable as they can be. It looks promising as a career path for me."

Article by [Maria Ortega](#), Marketing and Communications.

Photos by [Melissa Hartley](#), U of I Creative Services, and by Pixellight

Video by [Will Knecht](#) and [Kara Billings](#), U of I Creative Services

Video Published in June 2022

Published in May 2022.