

2008/09 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Honorable Mention

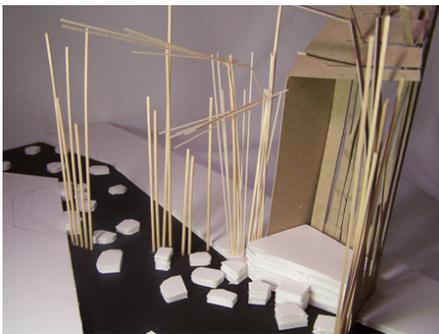


TIFFANY KNIGHT
Architecture
Junior
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The largest impact on my childhood was moving to Georgia when I was four. I grew up in a comfortable environment, my parents having a certain level of control over our surroundings. As a kid growing up in the South, out in the country, I filled my time with sports and extracurricular activities. This included everything from softball and singing to gymnastics, ice skating and art. It was art that inspired me the most, and even though I did not know it then, it was art that would shape my future. It was at the age of ten that I began taking professional art classes and I discovered a whole new world. As a child, all I knew was Georgia and through my teacher's pictures and stories, I began to envision a world outside my own.

I further embraced my new ambition to pursue art in middle school and high school. If anyone needed a poster or a mural, I was the first to volunteer. I would spend my free time in the halls of my high school using my painting and drawing skills to tell a story. The amount of clubs or community effort never seemed satisfying enough and as I began to look to other careers outside of the art field, I began to struggle with where I wanted to be.



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Architecture



It was only coincidental that I took a drafting class as a high school elective, suggested only to fill up my schedule. Over the following three years I transformed in that class, and as I learned about the many roles of architecture, something clicked. I found architecture not to be an obvious solution to my fuzzy future, but rather the perfect channel for every passion and desire I had ever wished to accomplish, in a career. As my drafting teacher guided me in my decision, I saw that becoming an architect could be a wonderful tool in influencing the everyday lives of society.

Being active in my immediate community is very important to me. In high school it was community service clubs (National Honor Society, Leo Club, Latino, Partners in Art, Learn to Swim, etc.). At Temple it has been projects in the Village for Arts and Humanities, helping launch a Temple Mural Committee (promoting the idea of murals on campus), participating with Mural Arts (MLK Day of Service), becoming a mentor for the AIC in Philadelphia and an active member of the AIAS chapter, AdeL, and NSCS, and remaining in the University Honors program. These experiences have taught me the importance of engaging the community, especially where you live.

As architects, our role needs to be refocused on the user and how architecture can be used to improve the lives affected by our designs. I feel that some parts of architecture focus on the building, rather than the site. Or a structure seems to lose a connection with its environment. With all the large-scale problems that some architecture has caused in our American cities, it's really important to focus on the smaller details and possibilities.

I am taking my career to the point where I will have the opportunity to raise awareness that changes and solutions do exist! In our studio projects, as we work with community members, it is very rewarding to know that by just engaging them and introducing realistic solutions, changes are generated. In order to really use architecture as a tool to engage our society, I see myself changing the negative mindset of society and fostering communities that invest time into the possibility of change.

