

2006/2007 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Kraus Family Foundation Award



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Throughout my architecture education I have been concerned with the connection between the study of architecture and my interest in community development. This interest prompted me to pursue a graduate degree in Urban Design because of the field's potential as a vehicle for change while simultaneously being mediated by a cultural sensitivity that helps to give communities social agency through built form. And individually speaking, as an African American designer, I have often witnessed the lack of social responsibility on the part of many designers, planners, and developers. I feel that I would bring both sensitivity and a fervent desire for innovation to the field of urban design. The summer after my second year in college I taught design to elementary age students from low-income families in DC at the Children's Studio School. The theme of that internship was to empower the children as designers for social change. The program not only affected these young people, but also involved their families and community. It was an experience which cemented my belief in the possibilities of designers to play an important role in community activism. There are multiple career goals that may evolve from my graduate research; however, my current goal is to pursue a career in community development and affordable housing design with a focus on citizen involvement. Additionally, I have career objectives to work globally on infrastructure and housing in developing regions and to integrate into all of my work an advocacy of sustainability. I look forward to a graduate education that will enhance my abilities to work towards a career in the thoughtful design of urban spaces.

