

AUGUST 2013

SITELINES

Landscape Architecture in British Columbia



INTERN EDITION

Promoting the Profession | What to Expect Before, During and After the LARE | Emerging Energy (E²) |
Tips for New BCSLA Interns | Navigating LARE Land | Living in a Van(couver) Down by the (Fraser) River |
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The purpose of Sitelines is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of landscape architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of those of the BCSLA.

Process

By Patricia Gooch, BCSLA Intern,
Intern/Associate Representative



BCSLA Interns – we are touted as the next generation of professionals, and I never cease to be amazed by the rich diversity of backgrounds and knowledge bases of my fellows. For some of us, it is a second, or even third, career choice. For others, it is the first professional experience after many years of full-time education. Some interns are fortunate enough to have found a meaningful position at a firm and are regularly exposed to information, experiences, and mentors that can help them to accelerate their professional careers. Others are working in a different realm while

meeting their mentors and keeping their skills current on their own time as they continue the search for internship opportunities. Both forms of interning are commendable and show a deep dedication to the profession.

Most of the interns I have met (myself included) feel inspired by landscape architecture and want to be a part of the positive changes that the profession can bring about. Why else would we devote countless hours (well, we do count them for our intern experience logs), and put off more commonly enjoyed purchases in favour of drafting supplies, software, intern dues, books, CLARB council records, and the LARE? If you have ever spent time correcting a friend or family member when they refer to you as a landscape architect (“actually, BCSLA Intern”) or explaining with enthusiasm why you are studying design standards with gusto despite having completed the better half of a decade in university, then you have likely been hooked by landscape architecture. From the discussions I have had with established landscape architectural professionals, it seems to be a fulfilling and lifelong journey.

Being a BCSLA Intern is a critical step in career development. It is that liminal transition time between student and registered professional that brings challenges and opportunities quite unique to this profession. Interns bring their excitement and passion with them as they set out to build careers, and often reignite or feed that same excitement in their more established counterparts. I hope you find this edition of SITELINES a reflection of just that. **sl**

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Image courtesy of Brett Hitchins.

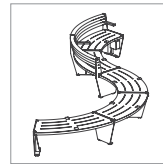
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PROMOTING *the Profession:*

The Role Landscape Architects Play in Creating our Surroundings

By Saba Farmand, BCSLA Intern

The following scenario, in principle but with minor variation, is all too familiar to anyone who studies or practices landscape architecture:

Person 1: “What do you do?”

Person 2: “Landscape architecture.”

Person 1: “Oh, do you know why my petunias keep dying?”

Upon deciding to pursue landscape architecture, I quickly realized that I would be encountering scenarios like this again and again, likely for the rest of my life. Landscape architects collaborate with allied professionals, and often play key roles in turning visions for sustainable and holistically designed projects into working realities. Why then, when mentioning their profession or title to almost anyone outside of the design realm (and even to certain people within it) are landscape architects often met with comments that demonstrate a misconception of what landscape architects do? How can we educate the general public that landscape architecture is about more than just “designing gardens, and that our profession has played, and will continue to play, a vital role in creating our surroundings?”

It was mid-January of 2013 when I was laid off from my job at a landscape architecture firm. My long-time friend also happened to be laid off right around the same time from his position as videographer for a local professional sports team. With the economy slow and no major job prospects appearing for either of us, we decided to combine our passions – landscape architecture and videography – to make a non-profit and educational video series. The ▶

Filming at Don Vaughan's Granite Assemblage in Ambleside Park, West Vancouver.

Images courtesy of Saba Farmand.



Time-lapse capture of changes at Granite Assemblage.



When shooting at Vancouver’s Harbourside Overpass, one cannot help but attract some attention.”

topic for this series came to me rather easily, being something that seemed to be lacking for not only the landscape architecture community, but also for anyone with an interest in urban design and local history. Titled, “Surroundings: Landscape Architecture in Metro Vancouver”, the series tells the stories behind some of Metro Vancouver’s well-known public projects from the perspectives of the landscape architects who were either involved in, or played a primary

role in, their creation. With two simple goals in mind, to promote the profession

and to provide an oral and visual record of Metro Vancouver’s landscape architectural history, ten different landscape architects have already enthusiastically volunteered their time to share in front of the camera, the stories behind nine different projects.

For the video series, we chose projects that demonstrate to the general public the diversity of project types that landscape architects work on: from intimate urban spaces to large scale greenways and everything in between, the video series examines the roles landscape architects have played in creating our local surroundings. The video series is currently in the final editing stage of production and is scheduled to be complete by the end of the Summer 2013. [SL](#)

For more information on screenings and release dates, follow @SurroundingsMV on Twitter.



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BCSLA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



The BCSLA structured Internship Program documents and tracks the specific skills and knowledge of Interns including LARE progress and experience hours accumulated under a Qualified Mentor.

As BC only has one LARE test centre, the BCSLA requires that all candidates wishing to write the LARE in BC must be pre-approved to ensure that valuable test spots are available to BCSLA Interns. The last 5 digits of the candidate's Social Insurance Number and the first four letters of their last name form their CLARB Candidate ID. BCSLA forwards the list of pre-approved BCSLA Interns along with their CLARB Candidate ID in confidence to CLARB several times a year. Please note that CLARB cannot mark a candidate as "pre-approved" until after the candidate has created their CLARB Profile.

Once a candidate has passed all sections of the LARE and has met the minimum Intern experience and Continuing Education requirements, the candidate will be invited to appear before the BCSLA Board of Examiners, which is the last step towards licensure in BC. Candidates may opt out of the CLARB Council record at anytime after all sections of the LARE have been passed.

For more information on the BCSLA Internship Program, visit www.bcsla.org/profession/policies.asp or contact the BCSLA office.

Before, During *and After* the LARE

By Veronica Meadows, CAE
CLARB Director of Member Engagement

Are you ready to begin the Landscape Architect Registration Exam (LARE) process? This article will help you understand what to expect before, during, and after sitting for the LARE.

The LARE is a four-part, fully computerized examination designed to determine whether applicants for licensure possess sufficient knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide professional services without endangering the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The LARE is required for licensure and covers the following subject areas:

- SECTION 1 – Project and Construction Management
- SECTION 2 – Inventory and Analysis
- SECTION 3 – Design
- SECTION 4 – Grading, Drainage and Construction Documentation

Before the Exam

Visit the CLARB website to create a CLARB profile and start your CLARB Council record. Your Council Record is a portable, secure, and verified record of your education, experience, professional references, exam scores and registrations that can be used throughout your career. While in the exam process, your Council Record is your exam application and enables CLARB to communicate directly with you on important exam-related issues. After you have completed the exam, your Council Record can be used to apply for licensure throughout North America.

Next, you will need to contact the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA) to obtain pre-approval to take the LARE. All candidates registering to write the exam in British Columbia must be a BCSLA Intern in good standing. ►

Once you have been approved by BCSLA you may register to take the exam on the CLARB website.

The final step in the registration process is to schedule your testing appointment at a PearsonVue test centre. Please contact CLARB right away if you need assistance in scheduling an appointment.

CLARB also provides a variety of exam resources, many of which are free, to help candidates better understand what to expect on the exam. You can find exam resources and other helpful information on the CLARB website.

During the Exam

When you arrive at the test center, prior to being seated for the exam, you will be required to sign in, provide two forms of identification and take a digital photograph to verify your identity. PearsonVue also has a number of security procedures that you may be required to follow to ensure the security of the exam. Lockers are provided for your personal belongings as you are not permitted to take anything into the testing room. Additional information about what to expect when you arrive at a PearsonVue test centre can be found on their website.

Please contact CLARB immediately if you experience any difficulties when you arrive at the test center so that we can resolve them right away.

The LARE is fully computerized and depending on what section(s) of the exam you are taking you will be asked a combination of multiple choice, multiple response, hot spot and drag-and-place questions. Hot spot and drag-and-place items are only present in Sections 3 and 4. To see a demonstration of the item types on the exam and for additional information on what to expect at the test center, please visit CLARB's YouTube channel.

After the Exam

Exam results are reported as pass or fail and will be available 4-6 weeks following the last day of the exam administration. CLARB will notify candidates via email, Facebook, and Twitter when results are available on the CLARB website.

If you have additional sections to take, you can register for the next administration of the exam. The exam is administered three times per year in April, August, and December. You do not need to be pre-approved by BCSLA for each individual section. Once you are initially approved, you may continue testing directly through CLARB.

When you have completed all sections of the exam, contact the BCSLA to determine your next steps. Your Council Record may also be used to facilitate mobility across North America. [SL](#)

About CLARB

CLARB develops, administers, and scores the LARE on behalf of the BCSLA and other licensure boards across North America. CLARB and BCSLA work together to ensure that interns have the best possible testing experience. We look forward to assisting you on your path to licensure and beyond.

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Emerging Energy (E²)

How to nurture and grow the capabilities of young people and your firm.

By Emily Dunlop, MBCSLA
Images courtesy of Emily Dunlop.

When I volunteered to write an article for this edition of *Sitelines* on all things “intern”, a topic that I am very passionate about, I instantly thought of all the advice I would give to interns (perhaps in the form of a top ten list, a hypothetical story or a “dear interns” letter). But the minute I walked away from the Board of Directors meeting table—the place where volunteering to write this article happened by one eye muscle spasm—I realized that the story I wanted to share was not entirely directed at interns. It transformed into

what I will refer to as “a call to action” for employers of interns. I thought to myself that even if BCSLA Interns only manage to read this, then perhaps it would help shed some light on the principals, project managers, and team leaders that interns will work for, as well as give interns some assurance to help build their confidence and provide tools on how to navigate the “system” and create their own space for personal and professional growth.



The “Emerging Leaders” group brought together young professionals from a variety of disciplines.

The reason for this redirection to the employers in landscape architecture comes from the fact that I believe that interns demonstrate many behavioural characteristics on a regular basis that are the foundation to a successful landscape architecture team. With my past role as BCSLA Intern/Associate Representative and having mentored young staff at my firm, I have learned a great deal about the younger generations. I can say with confidence that I have never observed such a continuous flow of energy and passion, a

commitment to creativity, and a solid structure of social awareness as I have seen coming from emerging professionals. This is not to suggest that interns are good and ready to go out of the educational gates and take on the world of challenges before them; interns require consistent and quality training, boatloads of support, and a diverse balance of experiences (including trying things on their own) to nurture the immense amount of learning necessary to be a quality, professional landscape architect.

This in itself is a lot of effort, especially to balance with business development and managing resources and teams in an office. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the behavioural characteristics that interns possess are at the source of those turbulent waves of energy and creativity moving through our industry. Interns carry an invaluable capacity to affect the approach of our place in the world of creating communities, churning up new concepts in the realms of design and team building. These ►

characteristics can sometimes go unnoticed or unappreciated or just simply locked up in a world of deadlines and schedules. What can an intern provide for a firm or organization using only the basic characteristics that they have? These characteristics boast great potential to significantly contribute to business development initiatives and team management of our people.

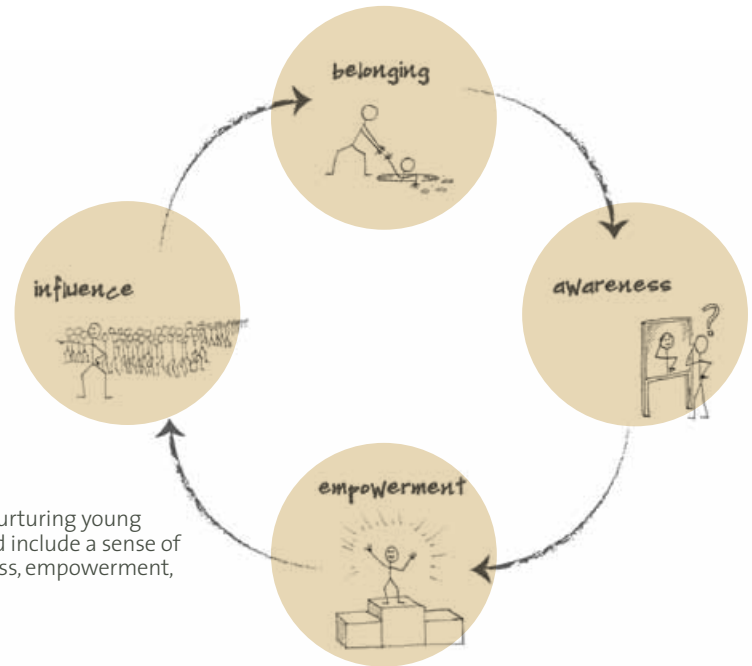
Each person has a quotient for energy. These energy levels fluctuate based on our age and maturity in our careers, what's happening in our personal lives, and in general, how much motivation we have for any given situation or cause. If there is one thing that young people have on average, it is energy potential. Not using or tapping into it through maximizing young people's motivation is a waste of valuable human capability, not to mention negatively affecting employee retention.

The key to unleashing this locked up energy and creativity is to understand how to harness it within the context of the realities of the work environment, with the ultimate goal to create success for the intern, the workplace, and the industry of landscape architecture, together (wait for it...) at the same time.

I don't have all the ideas, but I do have one simple concept that I would like to share. My experience comes in the form of a story of how the motivation of 15 young people transformed into a universe of energy that is still making waves in the company I work at today. One of the major benefits I have found in the culture of my large multi-disciplinary firm is the natural tendency to create space in which to grow your career. In this environment, initiatives that support this growth are common; however, none were quite like one program that was developed about four years ago. I was invited to join our firm's "Emerging Leaders" group, which selected younger individuals of the company based on an observed commitment, leadership skills, and general affinity towards their fields and to the firm itself.

The framework of this group was to meet on a regular basis with an external career development coach and the VP of the region to help learn tools to find our inner strengths and develop leadership skills in an effort to bring those skills into the workplace. But the effects on us as young individuals at the early stages of our career were much deeper than

The experience of nurturing young professionals should include a sense of belonging, awareness, empowerment, and influence.



simply providing "training". For most of us, it became a journey with a diversity of emotional experiences that changed our lives, our careers, and the company. The journey quickly revealed a hidden cycle of human sensations from belonging to awareness to empowerment, and ultimately influence. Let me explain, as I believe that without these sensational experiences, your career development initiatives for your emerging professionals won't quite cut it.

In our shared experience, starting with just the simple act of a senior peer, mentor, or principal of the firm reaching out to us and telling us that we had talents, created an immediate sense of belonging; it was like we were important to the company and our motivation in the workplace increased over night. As we formed into a group, meeting regularly with strategic exercises, the focus

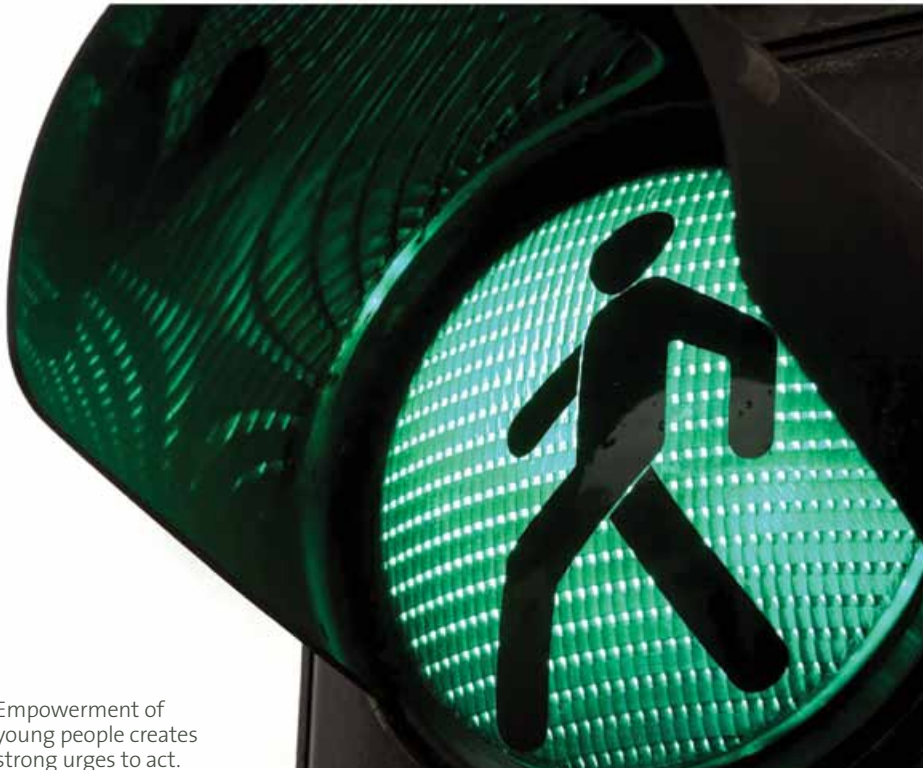
became all about awareness. We gained significant knowledge and became aware of ourselves, and eventually of our fellow team members. We learned more about our strengths than ever before and truly learned how to focus on them to achieve success.

Knowing our strengths and having this new sense of motivation to act on them, created an incredible sense of empowerment. Feeling confident that we could actually affect change both within the company and the community, we felt this urge to do just that. With this sense of empowerment, we found the motivation and energy to learn more about what wasn't working and what needed changing. We finally felt like we had an influence within the company and the community. We felt compelled to act and we did, all the while influencing others to get involved. This is when we noticed our cycle like rings on a tree. Our influence began to create a sense of belonging for others, which continued the cycle spiraling and growing out from the core of what we had started with.

I understand that it's not possible or even appropriate for some companies and organizations to carry out such an elaborate initiative, so as I conclude this story, I believe this is where I must provide insight to the Intern.



Like rings on a tree, the cycle of career development continues to influence others creating a strong foundation for an organization.

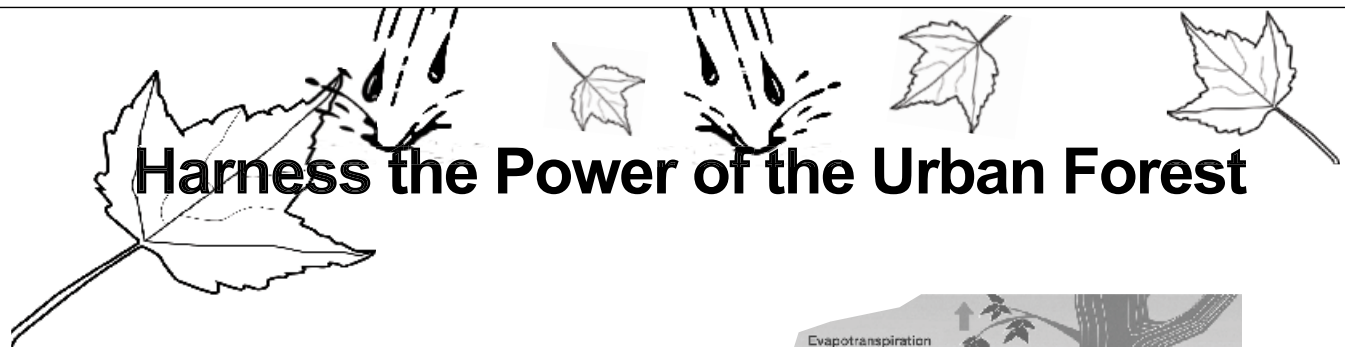


Empowerment of young people creates strong urges to act.

Dear Interns:

Find opportunities where you can create these experiences for yourself, such as getting involved with the community to ignite that sense of belonging or create an initiative within your company that you really believe in, and if you have to, on your own time. You'll be surprised by your employer's reaction and support to carry it out during daylight hours. In the end, you will be amazed where the road leads you, even though you can't quite see it. As for employers, give your interns a sense of belonging, help them raise both self and team awareness, lead them to empowerment and watch the growth and influence they will have. [SL](#)

Emily Dunlop is an Associate and Team Leader of the Landscape Architecture group at Stantec Consulting Ltd. and a Board Director of the BC Society of Landscape Architects.

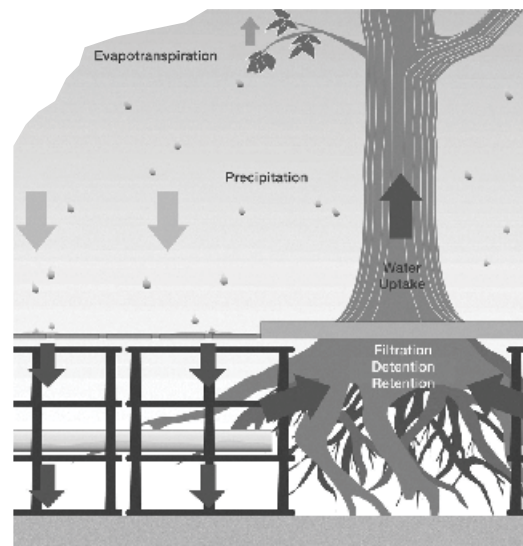


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TIPS FOR *New BCSLA Interns*

By Darren Miller, BCSLA Intern

I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work as an intern landscape designer for both the public and private sector. I have found the experience to be incredibly helpful to my professional development and feel very grateful to all of the patient and talented people that I have worked with during those experiences. I have condensed some of what I have learned through my various experiences into several key points.

Take advantage of the experience of your co-workers (because you probably don't have any).

The people around you will undoubtedly have a great deal more of experience than you. It is important that you get their opinion of things and learn from them as much as possible. In my experience, people are usually very willing to offer advice, you just have to ask.

Asking your co-workers for advice about professional exams and studying techniques can be particularly helpful if you are currently working towards completing your LARE. These casual conversations are also very helpful to learning about specific project management skills that you may not have been exposed to during your educational career.

Always have a pen handy (and make sure it works).

Sorry to disappoint anyone just finishing school, but keeping notes will continue to be essential in your professional career. I realize most of us now use tablets and smartphones to keep track of notes; however, I find that keeping a fine liner on me at all times is an invaluable tool. You never know when you will get called into an impromptu meeting and want to sketch something out, or write down an

important piece of information. Simply keeping notes during project conversations can save you a world of frustration. There is nothing worse than getting back to your desk and completely forgetting what someone asked you earlier in the day to do.

Other people can teach you, but you have to learn on your own.

This is actually a lesson that I learned very early on in my university career and continues to remain important. In my first year of university, I did not study particularly hard for an exam because I assumed that I had learned everything I needed to by simply going to the required classes. The lesson is now seared into my memory, my exam was returned to me with a message written in bold red felt tip marker, "Study next time!" (Not one of the most pleasant messages I have ever read on a test, but effective nonetheless). While your peers and mentors can help introduce you to new concepts, it is really up to you to put in the leg work to further investigate new concepts, technology, or software that could be applied to future projects. There is a vast assortment of design books, articles, and blogs out there, and I don't just mean the ones related to landscape architecture. Landscape architects are constantly working with other professionals

including architects, planners, engineers, and artists. Knowing a little about the ideology of other professionals will help you to communicate with them.

Your opinion matters; don't be afraid to speak up.

With any project, there are more people involved than the landscape architects, and learning to communicate with everyone on the project and keeping them informed is an art form. The delicate balance of communication between professionals is especially evident in a multi-disciplinary firm. When I began working at Stantec Consulting Ltd., I immediately became aware that I needed to be assertive and ask the right questions whenever something was unclear. We constantly need to be up to date on any revisions to a plan made by other departments who are working on the same project at the same time.

It can sometimes be intimidating to speak up during a conversation about design or construction given the high level of talent and experience possessed by your co-workers. However, your employer didn't likely hire you to be a wallflower and would probably appreciate your input, even if they don't ask you directly.

You might not want to ask questions if you are afraid of sounding dumb; however, you are going to look really dumb in the eyes of the client if your landscape plan is not cohesive with the other elements being constructed on site. People can often seem intimidating; however, almost all professionals understand that an intern may not understand all of the “ins and outs” of the typical project development process and they will take the time to answer your questions.

You are going to make mistakes. Get over it, and do better the next time.

No matter how hard you try, you still lack the experience of having worked in a firm for a significant amount of time. When you are first starting out, you may get redlines back that will make you think that your reviewer's pen exploded on the sheet. It's okay—don't panic, just fix your mistakes and take some time to reflect on what the major issues were. Sometimes they are the result of getting used to a new drafting program; other times it could be that you selected a less appropriate tree species for a particular location. Your BCSLA Mentor will understand if you aren't an expert in every area of landscape architecture, but it is up to you to figure out the exact areas where you can grow and improve. I find that people are generally very receptive to loyalty and hard work. If you show that you are willing to put in the effort to improve, they will be happy to provide you with guidance as you continue in your career.

I hope that this information has been useful to anybody starting out at a new firm or maybe given some insight into what life is like outside of school. The notion of working in a professional office can be intimidating, but I find it comforting to know that every landscape architect you work with has been in the exact same situation and will likely try to make your transition into the working world as easy as possible. **SL**

Congratulations

to New Members and Interns!

The BC Society of Landscape Architects is pleased to welcome 17 new Registered Landscape Architects and 1 new Landscape Architect Member in 2013. We are proud to have individuals with such a high level of knowledge and skills within our ranks, and look forward to working together to promote a high standard of practice in BC, across Canada and around the world. The BCSLA Board of Examiners is the last step towards licensure in BC. The next administration will take place on October 25, 2013. For more information, visit www.bcsla.org/licensure.

Mario Arteaga Melgoza	501	Miriam Plishka	510
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Jia Li	507	Lisa Parker	516
Jeff Nulty*	508	Sarah Primeau	517
Johannes Petzel	509	Nalon E. Smith	518

*Landscape Architect Member

The BCSLA is also pleased to welcome 16 new BCSLA Interns in 2013.

David Bishop	Jordan McAuley
Lindsay Bourque	Darren Miller
Nell Gasiewicz	Paul Peters
Lehran Hache	Amelia Sullivan
Lisa Lang	Mary Wong
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Sophie MacNeill	Johnny Zhang



By Miriam Plishka, MBCSLA

Navigating LARE Land

One of the biggest challenges faced by BCSLA Interns is getting through the LARE process while working.

I graduated from the University of British Columbia with a Master's in Landscape Architecture in 2008, interned and worked at a small-sized firm for four years, and am currently working at PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc., where I have worked for the past three years. I became a BCSLA Registered Landscape Architect in June 2013, after having started the process in 2010. While some people are able to blast through the exams in one year, my process was slow and steady, sneaking in the exams when my schedule seemed a little less demanding, and when my finances were healthier. I took each exam one at a time and in sequential order. What I found most challenging on my journey through

LARE Land was making time to study while meeting sometimes unpredictable and demanding project schedules. Even though everyone has a different learning style and study approach, three things that helped me get through the process successfully, and that seems consistent with other people I have spoken to, are:

- 1) Inform your workplace when you are writing the exams so that they can help support you through it.
- 2) Team up with a study group or study buddy.
- 3) Seek advice from people who have already written the exams.

These seem like obvious and logical things to do, however, LARE Land has a way of scrambling your levelheaded side and throwing you into a state of panic.

While one must decide for her/himself whether or not taking the LARE helps them reach their career goals, the real benefit for me was how much I learned while studying. I can safely say that I would not have read the Time Saver Standards in its entirety, if it were not for the study process. All around, the knowledge I gained while preparing for the exams gave me more confidence at work and has made me a more well-rounded landscape architect.

So, if you decide to take a trip to LARE Land and are worried about balancing work and study demands, remember to use the people around you, as they are invaluable resources. And do not forget that it is the journey, not necessarily the outcome that really matters. **SL**



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Living in a Van(couver) Down by the (Fraser) River

My young professional career has taken many twists and turns since graduating with a Bachelor's in Landscape Architecture from the University of Guelph in 2007. Stints studying and working abroad in the Netherlands, Costa Rica, and Chile left a lasting impression, and were instrumental in shaping the path that has led to where I am today, in the midst of my third year working in Vancouver.

I now find myself in a unique situation, whereby these formative international experiences continue to refine a deeper understanding of the parallels and distinctions that span the broad spectrum of this truly global profession. In Vancouver I see a city that is striving to attain the levels of innovation in public space and transit seen in Europe; a city seeking to concurrently maintain a delicate balance while strengthening the link between its urban landscape and supernatural surroundings, a scenario more likened to the oft-precarious relationship of the metropolises of Latin America and their enveloping wild counterparts.

As a BCSLA Intern, I have been exposed to the raw processes that contribute to the city's



Patrons amidst the bustle of Vancouver's Chinatown Night Market on Keefer Street.

evolution and in turn further its goals. It is a thrilling prospect to be playing a role in the grander scheme, working alongside impassioned individuals who share similar mindsets and ideals.

Vancouver, a young city that has garnered international acclaim for its notable achievements in the realm of livability, is

an inspiring place yet continues to struggle to find its identity. Perhaps it is this facet I find most compelling. With impending pressures, climatic and social, global and local, tangible and abstract, the city as we know it must adapt. Fortunately, Vancouver, more often than not, seems to have reconciled this commitment.

As stewards of our urban landscape, it behooves us to see this thing through. Despite its failings, a natural part of any process, Vancouver has demonstrated its wealth of potential. Immersed among a tight-knit network of professionals—many of whom are close friends—that spans this city and province, I feel tuned into the pulse of a community that affords occasional fleeting glimpses of its future. It is an exciting time to be a landscape architect in Vancouver, because the future I see is bright. **SL**



Vancouver's Southeast False Creek Waterfront at dusk, PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc. Images courtesy of Brett Hitchins.

Places for People and the People in the Places

By Maria Fish, BCCLA Intern

A few years ago I was sitting in on a public lecture at the University of Toronto. It was a panel discussion with both private and public sector landscape architects participating. The closing questions started to direct the conversation to how landscape architects never get a chance to review a project after it has been built and that this was especially true of international work.

I was shocked. At that time I thought Post Occupancy Evaluation was mandatory, not optional. I was watching the conversation unfold and all I was thinking was, "How can you learn from your work if you don't go back to the site?"

My intern experience has been solely in the public sector, with the City of Surrey. Yes, I sometimes wonder what it would be like to work in a busy design office with high profile projects across the world. The work that is coming out of Vancouver offices is deservedly getting international recognition. It must be a fast paced and diverse experience with little time for reflection.

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Working in the public sector does limit the geographical range of projects, but certainly provides a fast paced and diverse experience, especially in the City of Surrey.

Many projects start because of interest from the public. It is the feedback from residents regarding need in their community which bring projects forward or is planned prior to the new neighbourhoods being developed. I get involved when we proceed to the public consultation for design of new parks or significant park renovations. This is where we really hear from the public and get an idea for the true scope of a project.

Our team in the Parks Planning Research and Design section is fairly small. We often share ideas and concepts at all stages of the development process. It isn't just the team that works in our small section who impacts these projects. Effectively, it is the work of many people which comes together. It is the meeting of minds and ideas. Here, I'd like to tell you about how the process of design evolves in the public sector.

The work often involves a healthy balance of managing consultants, writing reports and doing both conceptual and detailed design. There is often more work than hours in the day and so we rely on the private sector to help us meet our deadlines. This provides for the opportunities to work with my peers in the creative process. Whether it is a consultant or myself who is working on the park design, we are still making places for people.

We work closely with our Parks Development and Parks Operations staff so that we are able to build parks which effectively serve the community, keeping in mind short and long term goals. In some ways I imagine this aspect of our work to be similar to how a small design/build firm would operate.

Bear Creek Park Exercise Circuit, which opened in Spring 2010, was a project which the community brought forward to the City of Surrey.

Working for a municipality means that there is access to assets which you would normally only see in a large multidisciplinary firm. I am not speaking about what would normally be considered the corporate assets; I am speaking about the people. At times our individual roles seem small, however, the resulting projects can have a huge impact on people's daily lives. This is something which

isn't unique to our discipline and it can be the greatest reward which is shared by all involved in the City's operations.

It is an interesting environment to work in and probably the most compelling aspect has been the people that I work with. This is not to say that every day has been the proverbial, "walk in the park." It is to say that I've learned an amazing amount from ►





Kwomais Point Park Labyrinth, which opened in Spring 2013, was developed in partnership with the White Rock South Surrey Hospice Society, the Labyrinths of Hope Society, and South Surrey artists.

the people around me, both internally and externally.

The most exciting moment is when I go back to a completed project for the first time. The greatest reward has been when I see people using the site as they didn't use it before. It's empowering and awe inspiring.

I look back to that lecture a few years ago and think that with my experience in the public sector I would tell them:

We all work together whether we work for the private or the public sector. We have all studied landscape architecture and because of this we have a common ideology. The public sector Landscape Architect hears from all of the stakeholders of a park, not just during planning and design, but for their entire career. This is what makes public sector work challenging as well as rewarding. [SL](#)



Oliver Park, which opened in Summer 2012, was developed in close cooperation with both Parks and Engineering staff in a new residential area of Surrey.

Images courtesy of Maria Fish.



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