Inspire (Vol. 1, Iss. 3)

Iowa State University College of Design

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Christian Petersen Design Award

Through his passion for imaginative design, commitment to collaborative practice and desire to create landscapes that improve the quality of urban life, ISU alumnus and landscape architect Ken Smith is transforming the practice of practice.
LETTER FROM
THE DEAN

Luis Rico-Gutierrez

At the end of June, Iowa State University completed Campaign Iowa State: With Pride and Purpose, the most successful fundraising effort in the institution’s history. The final tally of more than $867 million far surpassed the initial goal of $800 million—amazing in itself, and even more so in light of the recent global and national economic uncertainties.

Our own success within this campaign is truly unprecedented. The College of Design achieved a total $10.2 million in private support, exceeding our goal of $8.5 million. This represents $4.2 million for facilities, $3.3 million for programs, $1.8 million for students and $0.9 million for faculty.

We could not have done it without you, our alumni and friends. In the past two years since I became dean, I have been gratified to meet and speak with many of you, to share my vision for the college, our needs and priorities, and to hear your dreams and desires for your alma mater. On behalf of all the students, faculty and staff of the College of Design, thank you—for your incomparable generosity in helping us achieve so much.

- This campaign resulted in the King Pavilion, the first higher educational facility in the state of Iowa to achieve LEED Platinum certification for new construction, and the ninth nationwide. Gifts of all sizes—from $10 to the $1.5 million commitment by 1968 alumni Steve (landscape architecture) and Barb King (food science)—were critical to helping us complete this important enhancement of the college facility.

- The Pickard Chilton Professorship in Architecture, established by 1976 architecture alumni Jon Pickard and Bill Chilton, is the first endowed faculty position in our college. Estate gifts documented during the campaign will realize two additional endowed faculty positions.

- Eighteen annual and six endowed student scholarships were created with gifts made through Campaign Iowa State. Among these, Deb (BA 1981 Interior Design) and Bob Pulver established an expendable fund to support three interior design students annually who are participating in a study abroad program.

It is a privilege for me as dean to be able to translate your tremendous support into a world-class platform to create and disseminate knowledge, and to educate design leaders who will address the world’s greatest challenges.

I would also like to acknowledge the exemplary team that includes our staff, development officers, the ISU Foundation and many individual faculty and administrators. In particular, I ask you to join me in recognizing Dean Emeritus Mark C. Engelbrecht, who led the earlier stages of this campaign and continues to be a great advocate for the college.

The social contract that created state universities is changing with the economic challenges that the whole world is facing, and alternative means of funding will need to be developed. You have proven to be powerful allies as we strive to enhance the quality and prominence of our academic enterprise. I am confident in our future.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Innovation and entrepreneurship are critical to promoting economic development while addressing profound environmental and social issues. The College of Design is providing new options for students to become design leaders who can meet these increasing challenges.

The state Board of Regents approved the college’s latest degree offering, the Bachelor of Design, at its June meeting in Cedar Falls.

“In the past two years, we have set ourselves on a path to become the most comprehensive design college in the U.S.,” said Dean Luis Rico-Gutierrez. “That triggered creation of the industrial design program (covered in the Spring 2011 issue of this newsletter) and conversations about new professional master’s programs at the intersection of two or more of our existing degree programs (look for more on this in a future issue).

“The Bachelor of Design developed naturally from a focus on what all of our disciplines have in common: design thinking and design as a tool for problem solving,” he continued. “This general design degree will provide a powerful foundation for careers in all design fields, as well as for many other professions.”

The new, studio-based degree consists of one year in the college’s freshman Core Design Program followed by three years in the bachelor’s program. The Bachelor of Design will emphasize interdisciplinary design as a method for generating ideas and solving problems, said Marwan Ghandour, associate dean for academic programs.

“It will center on thematic studios and forums that help students connect history and theory to design practice through hands-on experiences addressing different kinds of design challenges,” he said.

The degree will draw on existing course offerings, as well as new courses being developed. Given the explorative nature of the program, several courses will be open to non-majors interested in a broad view of design.

“The Bachelor of Design provides a way for students who are not ready to commit to a single design discipline to study design and potentially link this education with other relevant fields,” said Mark Chidister, associate professor of integrated studio arts, who led the committee that developed the degree program proposal.

“They can also use this strong foundation as a springboard to a professional graduate degree,” he said.

The program also will open new opportunities for transfer students and those interested in pursuing a second major outside of design, such as business, advertising or engineering, said Michelle Rasmussen, student services coordinator in the College of Design. Rasmussen will serve as the initial academic adviser for students entering the program.

Although the timing of the regents’ decision meant the Bachelor of Design will be promoted primarily for fall 2012 enrollment, when this publication went to press, 15 students already had enrolled for this fall. Most were either transferring directly from another institution or previously completed an associate’s degree and wanted to continue their education at a four-year school.

One student, Alex Ausenhus of Nora Springs, transferred from North Iowa Area Community College, Mason City, in fall 2010 and completed the Core Design Program last year. When the Bachelor of Design was approved in June, he decided to enter the new degree program.

“It’s perfect for me because I can explore all areas of design instead of limiting myself to one area,” Ausenhus said. “It allows me to tailor my education to my own wants and needs. And my year at community college benefits me more because I can apply more of the gen ed courses I took there to my new major.”
On a sunny Thursday afternoon in mid-July, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg unveiled two blocks of the East River Waterfront Esplanade, the first completed section of a $166 million renovation of two miles of shoreline property in Lower Manhattan. Among the state legislators and other officials attending was acclaimed landscape architect and Iowa State University graduate Ken Smith (BS 1976 Landscape Architecture), who had a hand in its creation.

The East River esplanade embodies two key principles in Smith’s work: a commitment to creating landscapes that improve the quality of urban life, and a dedication to multidisciplinary collaboration.

“Even though I grew up on a farm, it was clear to me early in my career that one of the ways you could be an environmentalist and help preserve open space was by making cities more livable as dense urban areas to reduce urban sprawl,” said Smith, founder and principal of Workshop: Ken Smith Landscape Architect in New York and Irvine, Calif.

“My generation has been largely dealing with recovery of abandoned spaces within older urban areas—old waterfront sites or industrial areas that are being converted to new urban uses,” he said. “It’s something I keep coming back to: how you take existing infrastructure and transform it into something else.”

The esplanade transforms an inaccessible stretch of riverfront into a pedestrian-friendly public open space. It features new plantings and trees consisting of native coastal species, a variety of seating, game tables and a dog run, all with sweeping views across the East River and New York Harbor. Smith is partnering on the project with ShoP Architects and with the city, including planning commissioner Amanda Burden, who calls the project “unapologetically urban, but beautiful and romantic.”

Orange County Great Park
Another of Smith’s recovery projects involves transforming a large parcel of land in southern California that formerly served as a Marine Corps air station. Along with the motivation to restore the land to use, he was inspired by its particular features.

“When I first saw the site for the Orange County Great Park, it was those two-mile-long military runways that were so powerful in terms of creating a view corridor toward the mountains,” Smith said. “There’s something inescapable about that feature that had to become part of the genesis of the design. Generally it’s some dominant feature of a site that captures my imagination and inspires me.”

This sustainable redevelopment will include a 2.5-mile canyon, 20-acre lake, cultural terrace, botanical gardens, great lawn, performing arts venue, veterans memorial, aircraft museum, sports park, nature preserve and wildlife corridor. Construction began in 2010; the first phase should be completed in 2012.

Nollen Plaza redux
In a new collaborative effort, Smith is leading the renovation of Nollen Plaza in Des Moines with local consultant RDG Planning & Design and San Francisco artist Jim Campbell.

Smith was drawn to the project as a former resident—“It’s my hometown, basically. I grew up in Waukee, so it’s really nice to be involved in a local project”—and by the nature of the landscape itself.

“We do a lot of urban public spaces, and that aspect of Nollen Plaza really appealed to me. It’s also a symbolically important place: as part of the civic center for Des Moines, it’s a place people identify with the city,” he said. “To be able to work on something with that kind of cultural significance is really gratifying.”

TOP: One of Smith’s best-known projects, the MoMA Roof Garden—constructed of stone, rubber, plastic and glass—manipulates scale relationships and calls into question the use of natural and artificial materials in landscape architecture. Photo © Peter Mauss/Esto. ABOVE: Smith accepts the 2011 Christian Petersen Design Award Aug. 22 at the College of Design. Photo by Bob Elbert.
Many of the plaza’s existing features, like the grove of trees and the iconic Claes Oldenburg umbrella sculpture, will be preserved and enhanced, Smith said, while features that no longer function well—like the fountain and steps—will be replaced.

“We’re going to create a much flatter, more accessible and flexible space for different kinds of uses, with a better balance between the hardscape and softscape.”

MoMA Roof Garden
Over the past 30 years, Smith has produced designs that range in scale from small public installations to vast parks. He is known for inventive and imaginative gardens and landscapes, some of which rely heavily on native species while others use little or no natural vegetation.

“I think what distinguishes the work of my office is that we don’t try to disguise things. If it’s synthetic, well then it’s synthetic, and we let that be revealed. It’s kind of a modernist tradition of being honest about materiality,” Smith said. “Many of our projects are hybrids that incorporate natural, native and synthetic materials.”

One of Smith’s best-known projects is the Roof Garden for New York’s Museum of Modern Art, which consists of white gravel, recycled black rubber, crushed glass, sculptural stones and artificial boxwood shrubs in a camouflage pattern.

In his award-winning monograph, *Ken Smith Landscape Architect* (Monacelli Press, 2009), Smith observed that while the garden is very visible from surrounding buildings, it is physically inaccessible to visitors and would have been difficult to maintain with living plantings.

Thus, “our challenge was to design a roof that did not look like a roof but openly disguised it with something new,” he said. “The garden responds ironically to traditional applications of camouflage by simultaneously concealing the museum roof and drawing attention to it, by manipulating scale relationships, and by drawing into question the use of natural and artificial materials.”

Spaces for all
Though his work on multi-year, multimillion-dollar corporate and public projects may attract the most attention, Smith also takes pride in his smaller, less publicized and pro bono projects.

A recent example is the Lola Bryant Garden in Brooklyn (pictured on the newsletter cover) that Smith designed as a pro bono community project for the New York Restoration Project, which preserves and manages gardens and green spaces in underserved and economically distressed neighborhoods with few parks. Completed in 2009, this project offered Smith an opportunity to pursue an ongoing interest in vertical gardening for tight city spaces but also required careful attention to accessibility for people of all abilities.

Smith is now part of an initiative with Planters, the peanut and snack company. “They’re creating small pocket parks in inner-city neighborhoods and underserved communities to improve the quality of life,” he said. “I’ve been working with them on a series of these projects around the country.”

Challenges welcome
Over the years, Smith has built his reputation by being receptive to every kind of opportunity.

“When I opened my office 20 years ago, I didn’t have any work and basically we accepted everything that came through the door,” he said. “Over time I learned that projects that don’t seem very promising can turn out very well. So by and large we try to take most of the challenges that come our way. We’ve been very successful.”

Smith received the 2011 Christian Petersen Design Award, named for the noted artist who was Iowa State’s sculptor-in-residence from 1934 to 1955. It is the highest honor presented by the ISU College of Design.

New York’s East River Waterfront Esplanade offers a variety of seating—planter walls, chairs, benches, bar stools and chaises—designed with materials that harken back to the area’s industrial past. The riverfront park provides residents a place to walk their dogs, eat lunch, read books, work on laptops, and enjoy views of the Brooklyn skyline. Photo © Peter Mauss/Esto.

home.design.iastate.edu/Alumni/christianpetersenaward.php
An Iowa State University-Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) study uses high-tech devices to encourage low-tech solutions to escalating childhood obesity rates in Iowa. In August, the researchers began providing the 12 pilot communities with the study results they’ll need to achieve the goal: Create safe routes for children to walk and bike to school.

“Walking to school is one of the easiest ways for kids to increase physical activity. But, over the years, we’ve changed the environment, making it more difficult to walk or ride a bike to school. Studies have shown that this has had an impact on obesity,” said Christopher Seeger, ISU associate professor of landscape architecture and extension specialist.

I-WALK helps school districts
Seeger spearheaded the I-WALK (Iowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit) project. It was created to help Iowa school districts that may need financial or technical assistance with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. SRTS provides funds to states to improve the ability of primary- and middle-school students to walk and bike to school safely. The Iowa DOT funded I-WALK.

The research team included Alan Jensen, ISU extension geospatial technology specialist; Catherine Lillehoj, research analyst, IDPH; and Tami Larson, I-WALK coordinator, IDPH.

The team adapted online mapping technologies and global positioning systems (GPS) so local volunteers could collect and accurately map children’s current school routes and identify barriers to safety. They also created tools, including a smartphone application, that enabled the 12 communities to implement safety improvements and provide route updates for the national SRTS program.

Results of the yearlong I-WALK study were presented to each community in late August and early September. Communities included Adel-De Soto, Atlantic, Fort Madison, Hull, Independence, Kalona, Riceville, Spencer, Tabor, Vinton, West Des Moines and West Union.

According to Seeger, communities can make good use of results when applying for grant funding. The reports include thorough documentation of the conditions, needs, barriers and opportunities for safe school routes. They will help communities identify the areas to address that will give them “the most bang for their buck.”

Tallies, survey provide baseline
In the study, teachers tallied their students’ modes of transportation to and from school to establish baseline information. Secondly, students in grades 3 to 5 and their parents completed an online survey.

The survey included standard questions from the national SRTS program, as well as questions tailored to Iowa schools. Seeger said the spatial component in the Iowa questions was key to the I-WALK study.

“A big part of the survey was the spatial questions not found on the national survey. We asked where they lived and their perceived distance to school,” Seeger explained. “Lots of people don’t know the actual distance. We also asked them to map their preferred walking or biking routes to school.”

They were also asked to map barriers—such as no sidewalks, no crossing guard, state highway to cross—and opportunities for simple improvements, like adding a bike rack.

Innovative field assessment
Seeger said the most innovative...
component of the project was the field assessment, which included GPS training for volunteers. They learned how to conduct an inventory of their community using iPhones equipped with the ESRI ArcGIS app.

The volunteers hit the streets, collecting information about intersections, midblock sidewalks and other features that impede pedestrians and cyclists. They could photograph an intersection or sidewalk, pinpoint its location with the iPhone and send it to the data server.

They reported the existence and condition of sidewalks and lighting, overgrown vegetation, water pooling on sidewalks, frightening dogs, painted crosswalks, traffic control at intersections, heavy truck traffic and other characteristics.

“We customized the app with our own questions and connected it with the GIS server so the data the volunteers collected was mapped online in real time,” Seeger said.

“Geospatial data really helps in the design process,” he said. “And smartphones are going to be a valuable device for use for environmental research in which you want public input.”

**General findings**

Although findings were specific to each community, Seeger identified a couple of generalities.

“Community size doesn't appear to determine whether or not kids walk to school,” he said. “Our teacher tallies showed that it's all over the place. It really comes down to the culture of the community, the infrastructure and the school location.”

And beyond considerations about how long it takes to walk to school or Iowa's quirky weather conditions, sidewalks are the biggest issue. Residential areas built in recent years, Seeger said, were often developed without sidewalks.

“If you don't have sidewalks, you've already put the kids at a disadvantage because the only place for them to walk is in the street,” he said. “Or in some older communities, the sidewalk infrastructure is crumbling and falling apart. Sidewalks require maintenance and are expensive to replace.”

Finally, Seeger said communities need a coalition of school teachers and administrators, city officials, law enforcement and parents to make a project like this work. “In order to promote walking or biking to and from school, it's essential to have the support of the community,” he said.

“At the core I'm still looking at ways in which citizens can volunteer to share their knowledge about their neighborhoods and collect that knowledge spatially so decision makers can make better decisions about the future,” Seeger said.

Seeger presented a technical review on the use of Volunteered Geographic Information (VGI) in public transportation projects at the ESRI International User Conference in San Diego in July, and gave a presentation on incorporating VGI into SRTS planning at the National Safe Routes to School conference in Minneapolis in August.

SRTS coordinators from several other states have contacted him about customizing the smartphone app used in the I-WALK project for similar efforts in their own communities. Seeger and Suganya Baskaran, an ISU graduate student in computer science with a background in geoinformatics, are already developing a customized infrastructure assessment tool for SRTS planning for the iPhone and iPad. Eventually they hope to have one for the Android operating system.
ALUMNI MEDAL
The premier award given to alumni by the ISU Alumni Association, the Alumni medal—established in 1948—recognizes long, loyal service to the university through alumni-related activities.

Choy Chun Leow
BA 1985 / MArch 1988 Architecture Apple Valley, Minn.

Choy Leow is a true university champion whose impact has been felt globally. He first came to ISU from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to study architecture and quickly found not only a professional calling, but a personal passion for the people of Iowa State University. As he has carved out a successful design career in the Twin Cities, he has never forgotten his Malaysian roots—or his Iowa State ones.

Leow was president of ISU’s Association of Malaysian Students, through which he founded the Guanghua Lion Dance troupe that he continues to mentor today as the organization’s honorary co-adviser. As an alumnus he has also helped foster the ISU Alumni Association’s international outreach efforts in Malaysia, which are arguably the most successful on the globe. In fact, during the Ames flood of 2010 Leow worked with ISU alumni in Malaysia to provide a $1,000 gift for the flood relief effort back “home.”

Leow spent eight years as a member of the alumni association’s board of directors, including a stint as president in 2004-2005. He was a key member of the board’s building planning committee that paved the way for construction of the ISU Alumni Center.

Leow has also been extremely active as a College of Design alumnus; he established an architecture scholarship, has served on the Architecture Advisory Council, and mentors ISU Malaysian graduates and architecture interns in the Twin Cities area.

Currently the director of design and construction for Allina Hospitals & Clinics in Minneapolis, Leow is a member of the Minnesota AIA and Minnesota Architectural Foundation’s board of directors. He received the Minnesota AIA’s presidential citation in 1997 for his work on the AIA intern development program. He also serves as president-elect of the Hunter Woods Association and as a member of the Apple Valley High School Site Council.

Leow is an ISU Alumni Association life member and a member of both the ISU President’s Circle and ISU President’s Leadership Council.

ALUMNI MERIT AWARD
Established in 1932 by the ISUAA’s ISU Club of Chicago, this award recognizes ISU alumni for outstanding contributions to human welfare that transcend purely professional accomplishments and bring honor to the university.

Scott E. Olson
BArch 1969 Architecture Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Scott Olson is an outstanding example of the power of community service.

Olson has been a real estate broker/architect with Skogman Commercial Group since 1993, and prior to that (1979) he was the co-founder/principal of OPN Architects, Inc. In 1973, he helped establish the nonprofit child welfare agency Four Oaks, Iowa’s largest children’s agency, which today helps more than 14,000 children and families throughout the state. In 1995, he helped establish the Ecumenical Community Center (ECC) to provide humanitarian service to the core neighborhoods of Cedar Rapids. And in 2008, after Cedar Rapids was devastated by severe flooding, Olson donated space and real estate/architectural services to help those affected.

On campus at ISU, Olson has given back to the ISU Alumni Association, where he is a past board of directors president; to the ISU Foundation, where he is a governor and was a member of the Campaign Iowa State: With Pride and Purpose national committee; and to the College of Design, where he has served on the Architecture Advisory Council, dean’s Advancement Council, and as a member of the college’s campaign committee. In 2005, Olson created a leadership and community service scholarship to recognize architecture students for activities outside the college.

Besides continuing service to Four Oaks and ECC, Olson is active with such organizations as Rotary, Methwick Retirement Community, International Facility Managers Association, the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce, Discovery Living, Westminster Presbyterian Church, and many, many others. Among the awards he has received are the Cedar Rapids Jaycees’ 1977 Distinguished Service Award, the ISU Alumni Association’s 1978 Outstanding Young Alumnus Award and 1996 Service Key Award, the Iowa Association of Realtors’ 2003 Good Neighbor Award, the ECCF/Green Square/Witwer Senior Center 2009 Pillar of Community Achievement Award, and ISU’s 2010 Beardshear Medallion.

This list of honors is only a small sample of Olson’s many professional and community service awards.

Olson is an ISU Alumni Association sustaining life member, as well as a member of the Cyclone Club and Order of the Knoll.
These College of Design alumni will be honored during Homecoming at the ISU Alumni Association’s 80th annual Honors & Awards Ceremony, Friday, Oct. 21. Christian Petersen Design Award recipient Kenneth W. Smith (BS 1976 Landscape Architecture), featured on pp. 4-5, also will be recognized. The public event will begin at 1:30 p.m. in Benton Auditorium, Scheman Building. View complete bios of the 2011 honorees and past recipients at home.design.iastate.edu/Alumni.

**Rachelle Schoessler Lynn**
BFA 1990 Interior Design
Minneapolis, Minn.

Rachelle Schoessler Lynn, FASID, CID, LEED AP BD+C, is a co-founder and partner with Studio 2030, Inc., in the Twin Cities and a national leader in sustainable design solutions. Her firm’s name refers to the goal of reaching carbon-neutral buildings by 2030.

Schoessler Lynn is a member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund board, and past member of the national American Society of Interior Designers board and the Minnesota Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience and Interior Design. She also chaired the ASID Sustainable Design Council. She was a founding member of the U.S. Green Building Council’s Minnesota chapter and helped create Minnesota’s Sustainable Building Guidelines.

An adjunct faculty member at the University of Minnesota, Schoessler Lynn is a frequent lecturer on sustainable design, indoor air quality, workplace issues and material development. Before co-founding Studio 2030, she led the interior design practice for two major Minnesota design firms.

Schoessler Lynn was named the ASID MN Designer of Distinction in 2004, and the Minneapolis-St. Paul Business Journal honored her as one of Minnesota’s “Forty under 40” influential business leaders in 2006. She was inducted as a Fellow of the ASID in 2010.

Schoessler Lynn served on the ISU Interior Design Advisory Board from 2002 to 2008, including two years as chair. She is an ISU Alumni Association annual member.

**Donald R. Young**
BS 1976 Landscape Architecture
San Rafael, Calif.

Don Young is the president of D. R. Young Associates, which offers professional services in corporate and institutional real estate development and project management. Young specializes in project organization, direction of entitlement and approval processes, and design and construction management.

Young applies an innovative approach to design practice that transcends the production of physical artifacts by guiding decisions that shape the built environment. His clients have included E*Trade Financial, The Gap, Symantec and Adobe Systems. He has been involved in the redevelopment of the California Academy of Sciences and the Walt Disney Family Museum. Presently, Young is leading the expansion of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, which, upon completion, will become the second-largest contemporary art museum in the United States.

Before establishing his consulting firm, Young was the director of corporate real estate and development for Silicon Graphics, Inc., where he led projects such as the award-winning Shoreline Entry site (now the Silicon Valley Tech Museum), the Crittenden Campus (now the location of Google’s management team), and SGI’s European manufacturing headquarters in Switzerland.

Young is an active member of Lambda Alpha International, the Urban Land Institute and the San Francisco Urban Planning and Research Institute. He received a Master of Landscape Architecture with honors from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1978.

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**Sally Cooper Smith**
BFA 1983 Graphic Design
Des Moines, Iowa

Sally Cooper Smith is the president and creative director of Cooper Smith & Company in Des Moines. She formed the company in 1993 with a commitment to integrate honesty and intelligence into marketing communications, and believes there is an intrinsic correlation between staying small and maintaining a high level of quality.

Smith’s work has appeared internationally in Communication Arts, Creative Quarterly, Graphis and Studio (Canada). She has earned national and regional recognition with Creativity International Awards, Addy Awards, Davey Awards, and awards from the American Advertising Federation of Des Moines and the Art Directors Association of Iowa. A poster sequence she created for the State Historical Society of Iowa is still in use and remains the most popular series created.

Prior to founding her own firm, Smith was design director for Design Group, Inc., for six years. She has served on the boards of the Rotary Club of Des Moines, A.M., and Ballet Des Moines, and is past president of the Civic Music Association, Des Moines Symphony Ambassadors and Art Directors Association of Iowa boards of directors.

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Over the past year, the College of Design has hosted visits, lectures and exhibitions with administrators and faculty from several Chinese universities. The goal is to establish new partnerships and strengthen current ties with these institutions that will enhance opportunities for design students and faculty to study and conduct research abroad.

“Until the last decade, our more visible partners had been in Europe,” said Dean Luis Rico-Gutierrez. “But as our view of design education becomes more comprehensive, we’re looking to Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East for additional collaborations.”

While the college has engaged with China for many years, “there is a new sense of urgency, both to prepare our students for a global professional context and to contribute to the disciplinary knowledge that informs decision making about the built environment in China,” he said.

In 2008, the college established a dual-degree program with Lanzhou Jiaotong University’s (LZJTU) School of Architecture and Urban Planning, which allows students to study for two years there, then transfer to Iowa State to complete a degree in architecture, landscape architecture or community and regional planning.

A member of the ISU design faculty helps teach the Core Design Program at LZJTU in the students’ sophomore year. Upon successful completion of their studies, the Chinese students earn degrees from both schools. The first cohort of four architecture students completed their first year at Iowa State in 2010-2011, and the second group has arrived for 2011-2012.

Rico-Gutierrez and several College of Design faculty visited Lanzhou in August 2010, and this past January, LZJTU officials came here to sign a new agreement to expand dual-degree programs to all College of Design disciplines and their counterparts at Lanzhou. To celebrate the signing, the college hosted a two-week exhibition of artwork by LZJITU faculty. Lanzhou is set to host an exhibition of work by College of Design faculty in the coming year.

The college is also exploring activities with other Chinese institutions, including Tongji University in Shanghai, Beijing University of Technology (BJUT), and Tsinghua University (also in Beijing). Tongji and BJUT are interested in dual-degree programs similar to those already in place with Lanzhou.

“This is not a one-way street. We see opportunities for our students to study abroad at these universities, which is not only important for personal growth but will also give them an edge as global practitioners and entrepreneurs,” Rico-Gutierrez said. “We also see opportunities for jointly funded faculty exchanges, research and outreach,” the dean said.

Establishing a relationship with Tsinghua University offers potential access to industry partnerships, he said. “A number of high-tech companies—Google, Microsoft, IBM—have facilities in the same district as the university, and the interest is there.”

Top officials from Tongji and BJUT visited the College of Design this past academic year to present lectures and discuss further cooperation. Rico-Gutierrez and architecture Professor Chiu-Shui Chan traveled to China with President Gregory Geoffroy and other Iowa State officials in May to visit these and other universities and lay the groundwork for further collaboration.

“Design is enriched by a variety of experiences, and solutions need to address local perspectives,” Rico-Gutierrez said. “Developing these important relationships will improve the quality of our students’ professional education and provide new outlets for faculty teaching and research.”
Architecture Professor Emeritus Howard Heemstra (BArch 1952 Architecture), 82, died July 22 at Israel Family Hospice House in Ames. He was on the faculty for 37 years until his retirement in 2003, and remained involved with the architecture program for several years. He received the 2002 Academic Advising Award from the College of Design.

“At the luncheon celebrating Howard’s retirement from full-time faculty responsibilities, I remarked that he had been a ‘royal pain in the __,’ and only Howard immediately recognized the comment for the compliment I intended,” said Dean Emeritus Mark C. Engelbrecht.

“Broadly educated and talented, he had spent considerable time in challenging professional collaborations and come to view the practice of architecture as producing facts on the ground informed as much by science and technology as by artfulness.

“This point of view—prompting Howard to go for his gun whenever he heard the word ‘theory’—was a valuable thing for his students and faculty colleagues, setting one ready reference for many of our conversations,” Engelbrecht reflected.

Associate Professor Mikesch Muecke first met Heemstra when both served as reviewers for the architectural photography course colleague Cameron Campbell began teaching when Heemstra retired.

“I think Howard and I became friends over the next few years because we were straight up with each other, which was reflected in the student reviews,” Muecke said.

“Neither of us held back with constructive criticism, even if we often disagreed in our evaluations of a student’s work. The banter of our arguments must have been entertaining to students at the time, but it also helped them understand the different approaches one could take with respect to framing and developing visual representations,” he said.

Over time, Muecke and Heemstra met almost weekly for lunch or dinner at local restaurants and spoke at length on topics from science to health to finance.

“I came to know Howard as a likable curmudgeon with a wicked sense of humor and a taste for jazz and classical music, someone who enjoyed good food and talking up the servers in the restaurants we frequented,” Muecke said. “I always had a sense that we learned from each other through a boundless curiosity.”

Before beginning his academic career, Heemstra was an architect with firms in Minnesota and Iowa, including Crites & McConnell, one of two firms commissioned to design C.Y. Stephens Auditorium on the Iowa State campus. Heemstra was the project architect for Stephens and worked closely with acoustical consultants to create the rich, enveloping sound quality that distinguishes the auditorium.

Completed in 1969, the building was chosen as Iowa’s “Building of the Century” in 2004 by the Iowa chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Heemstra received an associate’s degree from Northwestern College, Orange City, in 1948 and a Master of Architecture from Cranbrook Academy of Arts, Bloomfield, Mich., in 1958. He served in the U.S. Army from 1952 to 1954.

A public memorial service was held Aug. 12 in Ames. Memorial contributions may be made to the Hannah Heemstra Scholarship fund at Northwestern College.
Thomas Leslie, an internationally recognized expert on the history of technology and architecture, has been named the first holder of the Pickard Chilton Professorship in Architecture in the Iowa State University College of Design.

Iowa State alumni Jon Pickard, FAIA, RIBA, and William D. Chilton, FAIA, RIBA, the founding partners of Pickard Chilton, a collaborative global architectural practice headquartered in New Haven, Conn., created the endowed professorship to support the recruitment and retention of Iowa State faculty who are leaders in the advancement of progressive architectural education. Both Pickard and Chilton received Bachelor of Arts degrees in architecture from ISU in 1976.

Leslie, professor of architecture, teaches the fifth-year comprehensive design studios and advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in architectural science and technology.

He has received numerous awards for teaching and creative achievement from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the American Institute of Architects. His research has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Graham Foundation and the American Philosophical Society, among others.

The author and co-author of several books, Leslie is completing work on *The Technical Evolution of the Chicago Skyscraper*, to be published by University of Illinois Press in 2012.

Prior to joining the Iowa State faculty in 2000, Leslie was an architect for Foster and Partners in London and San Francisco.

“Professor Leslie brings together significant practice experience and an exemplary teaching record with a clear scholarly research agenda,” said Professor Gregory Palermo, director of the ISU architecture program.

“The Pickard Chilton Professorship will allow him to build upon prior scholarship to delve even more thoroughly into issues of construction technology, building design and cultural change, and to share this knowledge with students, colleagues and peers in the profession.”