

Design Workshop, Inc.

Landscape Architecture
Planning
Urban Design
Strategic Services
Environmental Graphic Design

designworkshop.com February 12, 2024

ASLA Community Service Award Nominations
c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

I am pleased to provide this letter of nomination for Design Workshop Foundation (DW Foundation) for the ASLA Community Service Award. Over the past 20 years, I have seen DW Foundation grow from a volunteerism-focused endeavor to an organization with a clear vision and goals for how landscape architecture, planning, and design can create a more equitable future. Design Workshop Foundation was originally established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2002 with the vision to provide opportunities for community service, educational programs, pro bono planning and design projects, and research. Since the founding, it has engaged over 100 individuals in delivering pro bono design and planning support. At the intersection of innovation and advancing society, Design Workshop Foundation has emerged as a trailblazer in pro bono landscape architecture services.

This nomination not only acknowledges their journey and history but signals as a call to celebrate an organization that has evolved into a driving force for positive change in the landscape architecture, planning, and design community. Design Workshop Foundation distinguishes itself by engaging in pro bono work in a sustained manner, operating on a scale that sets itself apart from the very few organizations committed today to such impactful community service initiatives.

The Foundation's Deep History

In the early 2000s, DW Foundation began efforts to bring professional design services to communities that historically have not had access, socially or financially, to professional landscape architecture and planning firms. DW Foundation has delivered a variety of pro bono design activities over its 20-year history, including a diverse range of projects aimed at community improvement, environmental stewardship, youth engagement, and organizational support across various regions and demographics. Here is a snapshot of some of the diverse project and community initiatives DW Foundation has contributed to:

- Engagement with Tahoe High School Youth and Design Student Mentoring – 2007
- Town of Marshall, North Carolina Rural Community Redevelopment Charrette – 2007
- New Beginnings Plan and Marketing Support for Formerly Incarcerated or Homeless Women – 2008
- Excelsior Youth Center, Aurora, Colorado – 2008
- Town of Hayesville, North Carolina Community Revitalization Charrette - 2008
- Habitat for Humanity 9th Street Community Plan, Salt Lake City, Utah – 2008
- Under One Sky Foster and Adoption Village Master Plan, Asheville, North Carolina – 2009

- Design Week with higher education institutions, Kansas State, Clemson, and others – 2008 - 2011
- Sheridan/Quincy Trail Project, Sheridan, Colorado – 2015
- Gives Back Volunteer Program Engagement, Nationwide – 2019-2022
- Greening Five Points, Denver, Colorado (ASLA CO Merit Award and DEI Recognition) – 2022
- Northeast Houston Collaborative Capacity Building, Houston, Texas – 2023
- Kinston Teens Capacity Building, Kinston, North Carolina – 2023
- The Hive Park, Lewiston Woodville, North Carolina – 2023
- Design Assistance Project with LA Parks Board in South Central Los Angeles – 2024
- Capacity Building Projects in Chicago, Illinois and Austin, Texas – 2024
- I-70 Restoration Project and Community Stewardship Training at Globeville Neighborhood, Denver, Colorado – 2024

How the Foundation is 'Meeting the Moment'

Determined to go beyond traditional grantmaking activities, DW Foundation has taken a progressive approach and has become an organization that communities can look to as a source for catalytic ideas, technical support, and partnership. In 2021, the foundation underwent a reinvestment initiative. The following year, in 2022, they hired a full-time Executive Director. They also re-launched a Board of Trustees and crafted a new mission, vision, values, and strategic plan with a focus on equity, justice, and community-led action. With this established structure, DW Foundation has expressed an anticipated ongoing growth and longevity.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence supporting DW Foundation's deserving of this award is reflected in its proactive response to current social justice movements and the climate crisis. In 2023, DW Foundation launched its inaugural Community Capacity Building Initiative, a technical assistance effort to support under-resourced communities in overcoming built environment challenges. Designed to address the systemic poor funding of public projects in historically under-represented communities, DW Foundation provides no-cost support for community teams. In 2023, DW Foundation supported two capacity building projects in Houston, TX and Kinston, NC. DW Foundation worked with the Northeast Houston Collaborative along with the Hive Fund for Climate and Gender Justice to identify momentum projects and produce extensive mapping and analyses that reinforce their lived experience with data in support of a \$20M EPA Community Change Grant proposal. This pre-project consensus-building phase was crucial in a community with decades of legacy environmental racism and urgent priorities. Community coalitions have previously struggled to prioritize projects with limited funding. DW Foundation has worked shoulder to shoulder with over 15 different organizations comprising the Northeast Houston Collaborative to plan first steps towards community resilience hubs, a "hub homes" network, and an energy justice micro-network.

Additionally, through the Community Capacity Building initiative, DW Foundation partnered with Kinston Teens, a local youth empowerment organization in the Coastal Plains region of eastern North Carolina, to support visioning for and development of the East Kinston

Equitable Development Plan. The city has long struggled with economic decline and poverty rates that are double the average for the state. Being on the coast, the city has also struggled to find the funds to cover repairs caused by severe flooding and damage to infrastructure. DW Foundation co-developed strategies in real estate, organizational growth, partnerships, and fundraising to support the East Kinston neighborhood in redevelopment efforts after decades of repeated flooding and displacement. Notably, DW Foundation pivoted the project approach after the first community meeting, when residents voiced lingering trauma and pain stemming from years of disinvestment and ongoing flooding. Working with Kinston Teens, DW Foundation held several Community Trauma and Healing Conversations, which are being carried on in perpetuity by local partners. Working through this trauma-informed lens and providing responsive services pro bono, DW Foundation shows that they are a solidified partner in community building efforts.

DW Foundation's Capacity Building work has touched both urban and rural communities across the U.S., with project teams that have co-created ideas and solutions that will result in lasting positive change. DW Foundation is leading the way for historically under-resourced communities to chart paths to a sustainable future by making significant pro bono investments.

True to the vision established over 20 years ago, DW Foundation imagines a world where design thinking can accelerate equitable access to healthy, resilient community spaces for underserved communities. DW Foundation's pro bono design assistance program bridges the gap between vision and implementation for projects in historically under-resourced and untapped communities. Each year, this collaborative model engages the Design Workshop Dr. Charles Fountain interns, a diverse team of students from across the country, in support of a community-driven site design project.

In summer of 2022, the Green Dot Coalition, an equity-focused placemaking organization, requested support from the DW Foundation to advance their community engagement efforts in Denver's Five Points neighborhood, which faces built environmental challenges resulting from discriminatory redlining, years of disinvestment, and climate change. The DW Foundation and a team of Dr. Charles Fountain interns collaborated with the Green Dot Coalition to develop a green infrastructure toolkit, called "Greening Five Points," in support of the community-led, equity-focused urban greening effort. The toolkit communicates and advocates for the value of green infrastructure, validates residents' stories of lived experience with data and analysis, and identifies priority improvements to maximize the Coalition's limited resources.

The Green Dot Coalition was recently awarded a \$500,000 EPA Environmental Justice Grant to begin a transformational restoration project along Interstate 70 in Denver's Globeville neighborhood, adjacent to Five Points. DW Foundation supported the Coalition by co-writing the proposal and providing additional mapping and analysis at no cost. DW Foundation will continue to engage in community workshops, events, and volunteer planting days to implement the project over the next three years as a co-creator of improvements that will provide dramatic and lasting environmental, social, and climate resilience benefits.

Another impactful design assistance project was The Hive Park project in Lewiston Woodville, North Carolina. DW Foundation was invited to help realize The Hive Park vision, working in partnership with the town residents and the project leaders, including the town matriarch, a respected minister, and an environmental justice advocate. DW Foundation and the Design Workshop Dr. Charles Fountain Interns led an engagement process to develop a grassroots vision that highlights the town's rich history and community, supports healthy living, and

restores native ecologies to create a park for all. In total, the client group received over 1,200 hours of pro bono design support. Local and national partners, donors and supporters are advancing the vision for The Hive Park so that construction can begin in 2024.

Collective Impact

In conclusion, DW Foundation's efforts are rooted in the principles of collective impact, aiming to drive systemic change by empowering their partners to transform projects into advocacy initiatives, as well as policy and funding changes. They are dedicated to nurturing a new generation of designers committed to addressing real-world challenges. Through their collaborative approach and dedication to leveraging projects for broader change, they have built momentum for projects advancing parks and open space, green infrastructure, and climate resilience. Additionally, they have provided over 10,000 hours of in-kind services that has helped leverage implementation funds for communities. Between 2022 and 2023 alone, DW Foundation collaborated with 15 partner organizations and engaged 16 interns in social impact projects. Looking ahead to 2024, the Foundation has activities planned that include capacity building in Chicago and Austin, as well as a community-led project in south-central Los Angeles, engaging BIPOC interns from across the county. Design Workshop Foundation is deserving of this recognition, as their work has evolved from volunteerism to pro bono projects to a strategic and national systems change approach. DW Foundation carries on the original spirit of giving back while expanding reach to new communities. For more than 20 years, Design Workshop Foundation has been committed to advancing their vision of cultivating empowered and thriving communities for future generations, and they are strongly deserving of consideration for the ASLA Community Service Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kurt Culbertson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

Kurt Culbertson, PhD, PLA, FASLA, FAICP
Principal/Chairman Emeritus
Design Workshop, Inc



Community members and partners participate in a collaborative art piece installation at a Design Workshop Foundation community event, Denver, CO



Student interns on-site at the future Hive Park in Lewiston Woodville, NC



Volunteer planting day in Five Points with Green Dot Coalition, Denver, CO



Dr. Charles Fountain Interns at the Hive House and Vitality Center, Lewiston Woodville, NC



Community engagement workshop for the Kinston Teens Equitable Development Plan, Kinston, NC
Image above by Aniya Bourne, Bourne to Film

Photo of Nominee

Board of Trustees, Design Workshop Foundation



Sarah Konradi



Chris Geddes



Tarana Hafiz



Emily McCoy



Alison Bourquin



Carolyn Levine



Ben Fish



Ashley Hejtmanek



Mo Bachtiar



Grace Tice

Sasaki Foundation

ASLA Community Service Award Nominations
c/o Honors and Awards
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

To whom it may concern:

Re: Letter of support - Design Workshop Foundation Community Service Award nomination

I am pleased to support the nomination of Design Workshop Foundation for the ASLA National Community Service Award. As Executive Director of the Hideo Sasaki Foundation, I've watched the growth and impact of Design Workshop Foundation over the past several years. I've observed the Foundation's commitment to equity through their pro bono efforts and believe that they should be considered for the ASLA Community Service Award.

Design Workshop Foundation and the Hideo Sasaki Foundation are both driven by similar missions aimed at promoting equity in design. Our approach and programming are different and synergistic, and I am grateful for the role that DW Foundation plays in the non-profit design ecosystem. The needs within communities are immense, and Design Workshop Foundation's pro bono design assistance and capacity building work is moving the needle in communities where change is most needed.

Besides my appreciation for their on-the-ground efforts, I'm also struck by their willingness to share ideas and lessons learned. I consider DW Foundation a close partner in our field and our collective efforts are strengthened by an open dialogue. As two colleagues in a very small field, our collaboration and partnership has been incredibly helpful and useful as we strive to build a more equitable design industry.

Very few nonprofit design organizations can boast the longevity of impact as Design Workshop Foundation. Not only are they delivering no-cost services to communities across the country, they are doing so with a thoughtful and sustainable model that I believe others can look to and replicate into the future. Solutions to the urgent crises of our time will be co-led by organizations like Design Workshop Foundation. I look forward to future collaborations and I appreciate your consideration of this nomination.

Thank you,



Jennifer Lawrence
Executive Director
Hideo Sasaki Foundation



American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Design Workshop Foundation letter of support: Community Service Award

I'm writing to express my support for the Design Workshop Foundation's nomination for the ASLA Community Service Award. I am intimately familiar with the transformative power of community-driven planning initiatives, as well as the gaps that exist in community access to professional design services. Design Workshop Foundation plays a critical role in bridging that gap by providing high-quality pro bono services for a variety of community partners and projects.

The Just Communities Lab that I lead at North Carolina State University's College of Design has collaborated with Design Workshop Foundation on two recent projects in rural North Carolina. In Lewiston Woodville, NC (pop. 426), The Just Communities Lab and Design Workshop Foundation worked with community leaders to plan the town's first public park: The Hive Park. By providing a significant amount of design and community engagement support on a no-cost basis, including a phased site plan and management plan, Design Workshop Foundation helped the community preserve limited grant funds and maximize their first phase of implementation. Lewiston Woodville is poised to have its culture and history reflected in a new public space, in great part due to the investment from Design Workshop Foundation.

Most recently, Design Workshop Foundation partnered with Just Communities Lab to support the neighborhood redevelopment efforts of Kinston Teens, a youth engagement nonprofit led by local young people in East Kinston, NC. As a partner in Design Workshop Foundation's Community Capacity Building initiative, Kinston Teens is leading the creation of an equitable development plan, a sustainable and resilient community plan that reflects the desires and aspirations of East Kinston residents. Design Workshop Foundation provided nearly \$100,000 in pro bono services to develop plan recommendations and co-facilitate engagement events, including a community block party and community trauma and healing conversations. The deep engagement and innovative plan framework will strengthen Kinston Teens' ongoing efforts to build community and boost social, economic and environmental resilience in East Kinston.

I believe that Design Workshop Foundation is distinctive in its depth and breadth of community partnerships that are geared towards tangible results. The Foundation is modeling the collaborations between communities, professional partners, and academic institutions that are required to advance 21st century land stewardship. Design Workshop Foundation is a worthy recipient of the ASLA Community Service Medal. Their commitment to catalyzing transformative change in underserved communities across North Carolina and the US through pro bono services will have an impact for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration of this endorsement, and please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kofi Boone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kofi Boone
Joseph D. Moore Distinguished Professor and University Faculty Scholar

American Society of Landscape Architects

636 Eye Street NW

Washington, D.C. 20001-3736

Re: Letter of support for Design Workshop Foundation's Community Service Award nomination

To the Awards Selection Committee,

My name is Brenda Palacios Rodriguez, and I am writing to share my enthusiastic support for the Design Workshop Foundation's nomination for the ASLA Community Service Award. I am a 4th year undergraduate student at UNC-Chapel Hill, majoring in Environmental studies and Studio Art. My work is focused on community planning and environmental social justice narratives. During the summer of 2023 I was selected to participate in the Dr. Charles Fountain internship offered through Design Workshop. At the center of this internship was a transformative Design Workshop Foundation community-led design and planning project for the first park of the diverse rural community of Lewiston Woodville, North Carolina.

The experience of working with the residents of Lewiston Woodville on the Hive Park project helped me develop a deeper appreciation for the impactful work and intention that goes into Design Workshop Foundation's process that centers community voices, capacities, and needs. Through this project, our close work with residents and non-profit community groups on our site visits and design presentations expanded beyond a design exercise. We worked in tandem with neighbors, children, elders, and community leaders. Together, we formed relations that would help guide a long-term transformative community gathering initiative with realistic goals, empowering the well-being and stories of community members in this town. Throughout this process, I received wonderful mentorship from the Foundation that helped reinforce my desire to continue engaging in this type of community-participatory based work as I grow into my career.

As someone who benefited from Design Workshop Foundation's spirit of giving back, I hope to offer the same support and guidance to students in the future - helping them grow to understand the value of pro bono and accessible professional services for underrepresented and lower-socioeconomic communities. This experience has inspired me to uplift diverse community voices through creative works. Currently I have been leading and organizing a social not-for-profit artistic initiative highlighting global indigenous community narratives for cultural heritage preservation efforts. Through a self-directed documentary film titled *Creative Roots: Qatanum Arts*, conserving my Qatanum (Awakatek) Mayan heritage is a beautiful way to continue preserving a future legacy of our community stories inspired by Design Workshop's Charles Fountain experience. I am very passionate about the mission and vision of the Design Workshop Foundation and as a first-hand witness of their impactful work, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the ASLA Community Service Award.

Sincerely,

Brenda Abigail Palacios Rodriguez



American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Letter of support for Design Workshop Foundation's Community Service Award nomination

On behalf of the Green Dot Coalition in Denver, CO, I am pleased to support the nomination of Design Workshop Foundation for the ASLA National Community Service Award. Green Dot Coalition has been fortunate to partner with Design Workshop Foundation on a variety of equity-centered placemaking projects. I strongly believe that Design Workshop Foundation deserves this important recognition, as Design Workshop Foundation has been instrumental in supporting Green Dot Coalition's transformative work to "green the in-between" in historically marginalized communities of Denver.

Two years ago, we invited Design Workshop Foundation to collaborate with Green Dot to develop a vision for community-driven green infrastructure in Five Points, a north Denver neighborhood that was the first predominantly Black community in Denver. Our neighborhood has been shaped by redlining and disinvestment that has exacerbated the lack of green space, heat island effects, sparse tree canopy, and high percentage of impervious surfaces. We knew what we wanted to do, but we need a plan to prioritize our efforts and support our community engagement and advocacy efforts.

Through this initial project effort, Design Workshop Foundation donated over 1,200 hours of pro bono services to create the Greening Five Points roadmap, helping our Coalition not only bring our ideas to life through professional designs leveraged during presentations and funding conversations, but most importantly, helped us implement more comprehensive strategies for enhancing green spaces and fostering community cohesion for increased resilience in the Five Points and Globeville neighborhoods. Beyond the hours of time donated, Design Workshop Foundation has generously helped with planning efforts, community engagement coordination and support, advocacy support, facilitating relationships, pilot project implementation, and fundraising.

In our continued work with Design Workshop Foundation, they have demonstrated a commitment to the type of real, long-term dedication and partnership that is needed for sustainable, community-led visions to come to full fruition. Design Workshop Foundation is a trusted partner and collaborator that has advanced our vision for a greener Denver not only through landscape architecture and design, but also through collaborative advocacy, communication and fundraising efforts. Most recently, DWF provided pro bono analysis and mapping for an EPA Environmental Justice grant proposal submitted by Green Dot Coalition. We received \$500,000 for a transformational project and we will be continuing our collaboration with DWF on community engagement workshops and volunteer planting days over the next three years of this project.

I'm proud of what Green Dot Coalition and Design Workshop Foundation have accomplished together. We share a vision for a greener, more equitable Denver, and I look forward to continued collaboration that creates measurable impact for neighborhoods across Denver. I strongly believe that Design Workshop Foundation should be considered for the ASLA Community Service award.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jevon Taylor".

Jevon Taylor
CEO, Green Dot Coalition + Owner, Green Spaces Denver



American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: Letter of support for Design Workshop Foundation's Community Service Award nomination

I am pleased to support the nomination of Design Workshop Foundation for the ASLA National Community Service Award. In my time working with and serving on the Board of Trustees for the Foundation, I have witnessed firsthand the depth of the Foundation's commitment to sustained community partnership and transformative built environment projects. Design Workshop Foundation has been at the forefront of advancing and putting into practice innovative and much-needed models of community-based placemaking, urban greening and community capacity building work.

The Foundation brings a remarkable commitment to multi-faceted pro bono support for its partners, which has resulted in significant and sustainable community building and transformative placemaking. Design Workshop Foundation's progressive approach to community-based built environment work aligns with my training and values as an urban planner specializing in equity-focused placemaking. I have worked with the Foundation to support community partners like Denver's Green Dot Coalition through grant writing assistance, community engagement and tactical placemaking events. This commitment to sustained support has catalyzed significant positive impacts, including the expansion of scope and funding for Green Dot Coalition's work, which brings much-needed urban greening to historically marginalized communities in Denver.

As Design Workshop Foundation has expanded to offer its relationship-based models for capacity building and placemaking to urban and rural communities across the country, I have been inspired by and impressed with the Foundation's consistent approach to its work. No matter the context, the Foundation works in close dialogue with its partners to support their needs and chart paths that effect sustainable, long-term change. Authentic, community-based capacity building and placemaking work is rarely practiced so effectively and at such a significant scale in the field of landscape architecture.

I count myself as fortunate to continue supporting Design Workshop Foundation's work. As the design and planning communities continue to confront built environment challenges wrought by legacies of racism and historical disinvestment, as well as an urgent climate crisis, we need to recognize emerging models of community-based built environment work oriented around these challenges. I believe that Design Workshop Foundation not only demonstrates how to work in partnership to tackle these challenges, but also does so on a scale that is unique and worthy of recognition.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn Levine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Carolyn Levine
Manager, Civic Engagement & Development, Downtown Denver Partnership
1515 Arapahoe St., Tower 3, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Nominee Contact Details

Main Point of Contact

Sarah Konradi, Executive Director, Design Workshop Foundation
1390 Lawrence Street, Suite 100
Denver, Colorado 80204
720 907-9336 (direct)
303 623-5186 x9336 (main)
skonradi@designworkshop.com

DESIGNWORKSHOP
FOUNDATION