

ASLA

4 March 2011

ASLA Board of Trustees
c/o Carolyn Mitchell
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

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CHAPTER

AMERICAN
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ARCHITECTS

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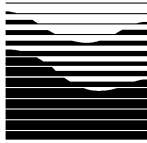
Re: Nomination of Professor George W. Curry
Jot D. Carpenter Medal

Dear Trustees:

On only a handful of occasions throughout one's career does one encounter an individual who has a profound influence on the direction one's life takes (professional or otherwise). Professor George Curry is one of those rare educators who has reliably provided such wise counsel to generations of students. He is an educator, mentor, pioneer and practitioner of the highest order and I am most honored to put forth his nomination for the Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal.

Throughout his career as an educator spanning over four decades George has passed on his passion for the profession of landscape architecture to countless future practitioners and educators. George is one of those unique individuals whose commitment to the growth and intellectual development of his students extends well beyond the classroom and the profession. Through what I can only describe as a Socratic approach to learning by probing beyond the obvious he has instilled in generations of students a desire to question the "givens" in the world around them and to consider broader possibilities. It seems to me that this is the ultimate definition of an educator, and I have long considered myself lucky to be the recipient of such wisdom.

Professor Curry's commitment to his students and leadership in the field of education has been recognized repeatedly throughout his career. In 2005 he was conferred the honor of Distinguished Teaching Professor by the Chancellor of the State University of New York, one of only a handful of such appointments in the vast SUNY system. In 2007 Professor Curry was named Landscape Architecture Educator of the Year by *Design Intelligence* magazine and in 2008 was named New York Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.



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George is a true innovator. Early on in his tenure at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry he pioneered the Off-Campus Program for 5th year students of landscape architecture which, by immersing them in environments and cultures unfamiliar to their own, has helped hone their skills of observation and analysis. This semester abroad has gone on to become a touch stone for the LA program at ESF due in large part to George's dedication. Before the term "service learning" was coined, Curry had his Urban Design Studio students working with cities and institutions throughout the region to find ways to celebrate their long ignored cultural heritage and re-energize their communities. His pioneering work on cultural landscapes has more recently allowed him to develop a close working relationship with the National Park Service's Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation through which he has overseen over one million dollars of research grant work in this growing field of scholarship.

As a practitioner, George has stayed close to the focus of his academic pursuit. He has been an active partner in the redevelopment of a long neglected but historically significant sector of downtown Syracuse, NY, which has lead to the revitalization of the entire neighborhood, further affirming his long held commitment to the inherent value in these cultural landscapes.

Although recently retired, Professor Curry's characteristics of passion, commitment, innovation, and integrity have left an indelible imprint on his students (several of which are represented in the attached letters of support), and the Landscape Architecture program at SUNY ESF, which will continue to influence the profession as a whole for years to come. I believe he is the embodiment of the ideals represented by the Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal and as such is eminently deserving of this honor. I urge your support for this nomination.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Golde", written over a large, stylized letter "G" that serves as a graphic element.

Robert J. Golde, ASLA
Trustee, Connecticut

ASLA Board of Trustees
c/o Carolyn Mitchell ASLA
636 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Jot D. Carpenter Medal

Dear Trustees:

It is with great pleasure that I ask your consideration for George W. Curry, FASLA, for the Jot D. Carpenter Medal. He has served as a professor at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry for over thirty years, influencing two generations of landscape architects.

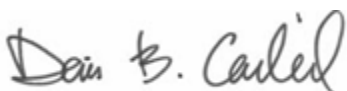
An excellent designer and critic for all areas of urban landscape architecture, George is most noteworthy for his contribution to cultural landscapes as a type. In many ways, he is the father of this area of specialty, conducting over \$1 million worth of grant studies for the National Park Service, the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservations, and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. His students have produced plans under his direction for such noteworthy landscapes as Muir Woods National Monument, the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, and Shenandoah National Park. His students are the leading practitioners in both the public and private sectors in this area of specialty.

His academic work has been recognized with a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor position and in 2005; he received the honor of the Kennedy Distinguished Faculty Chair. ASLA has honored him with a Merit Award for the FDR National Historic Site Cultural Landscape Report and named him a fellow in 1995. His design work for his own firm has also been recognized with awards from the NYS Nurseryman's Association, APA, and the Armory Square's Abraham Walton Award for Professional Excellence. In 2007, Design Intelligence named George Curry Educator of the Year, and most recently, he was named 2008 New York Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council of Advancement and Support of Education.

Finally, it is worth noting that Professor Curry has put his money where his mouth is, so to speak, relative to preserving and regenerating urban neighborhoods. His academic work led him to study the moribund Armory District of Syracuse in the 1980's. He became an investment partner in the redevelopment of several historic structures in this area and that initial work was the catalyst for an impressive revitalization of the entire neighborhood, which today is the most robust area of downtown Syracuse.

It is for all of these reasons – teaching, research, design, and development – that George Curry is such an inspiration to so many of his students and to the profession of landscape architecture. I wholeheartedly recommend Professor Curry for the Jot D. Carpenter Medal and hope that you will support this nomination with your vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis B. Carmichael". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dennis Carmichael, FASLA

February 25, 2011

ASLA Board of Trustees
c/o Carolyn Mitchell
ASLA
636 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Jot D. Carpenter Medal

Dear Trustees:

It is with great pleasure that I whole heartedly endorse George W. Curry, FASLA, for the Jot. D. Carpenter Medal this year. He served as a professor at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry for over 40 years influencing two generations of landscape architects including myself. George deserves the recognition that comes with this prestigious medal award.

As designer, teacher and urbanist, George brought a deep perspective to my academic experience and was influential in the urban landscape architectural direction I have taken in my NYC practice. In those early years, it was difficult to connect the dots between the practice of landscape architecture and the needs of the city stigmatized by the 60's upheavals. George showed me the way by teaching and by example and continues to set an example with his urban commitments to young students whose interests lie in the profession's impact on the future of the city.

I return to the school often to give spring lectures and fall lectures and to conduct design, research and planning critiques. I can testify to his reputation with the students as the school's finest teacher. His impact has been lasting not only on the students but more broadly on the profession and its standing in the world of politics, planning, preservation and the built environment.

One of his greatest contributions to the profession is the manner in which he has advocated and practiced its broadest reach and influence. His

encouragement to step out of our insular world and into the complex urban realm of planning and preservation has influenced countless successful and influential practitioners throughout the USA. These have been lessons for which we are all grateful and are now passing on to each successive generation of well-rounded landscape architects.

George has led the way for this profession to move forth with a holistic and passionate approach to every day of our professional lives. He has been an inspiration since we crossed paths and embodies all of the values that we aspire to as individuals and professionals. I strongly support George as the recipient of the Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal this year.

Sincerely,



Thomas Balsley, FASLA
Thomas Balsley Associates

■
Board of Trustees
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye St., NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Nomination of George W. Curry for the Jot D. Carpenter Teaching Medal

Dear Trustees:

I take enormous pleasure in advocating for George W. Curry's recognition with the Carpenter Medal. I studied with George in the late 1970s, and he made me want to teach landscape architecture myself. For nearly thirty years now, I have been privileged to know him more as a colleague, and I can say without hesitation that he remains, remarkably, still, one of the best teachers I know.

Several areas of special contribution stand out. The first applies mostly to his students and his community, but I know of very few landscape architecture teachers who turn students into urbanists. George has been active over the years in political culture and economic culture in Syracuse, and has been a true catalyst in revitalizing an entire district in the city's downtown. He has continually introduced these aspects of complex, contemporary urban life into the studio with rigor and reality. Our programs need to draw their students toward a commitment to urbanism, because they don't on the whole come to this naturally. George Curry's example is unique and of very long duration.

Secondly, and indeed more broadly, his consistent drive to foreground the ethics and tactics of landscape preservation has helped change the way we work on historic sites. George's studious applied research, with real clients and with real communities, has had a notable impact on practice. Many of his students—I will be immodest here and count myself among them—have in turn made their own contributions to evolving preservation approaches for landscape architecture.

Finally, he has always encouraged involvement in the profession, and I am indebted to him for that. It was for these reasons that I was honored to have George as escort and sponsor upon my election to Fellow of ASLA. He deserves this recognition, and I will be very proud to congratulate him should he receive the honor.

Thanks for allowing me to comment.

Sincerely,



Gary R. Hilderbrand FASLA FAAR
Principal, Reed Hilderbrand
Adjunct Professor, Harvard Design School

Urban Trees + Soils

James Urban, FASLA, ISA

February 15, 2011

Carolyn Mitchell
Jot D. Carpenter Medal Nominations
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Carolyn;

This letter is in support of the nomination of George Curry for the Jot Carpenter Medal.

In 1967, a time of great upheaval and optimism, I met George Curry as I began to try to understand how being a landscape architect might contribute to a better outcome for the future. I was an incoming freshman and he was a young design professor at the SUNY College of Forestry. He nurtured our class and gave to us an energy that still vibrates today whenever several of us get together.

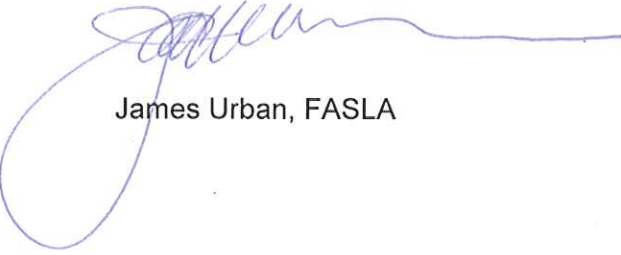
Teaching design requires threading that fine line between being a good, firm critic while also encouraging us to reach into new directions even if that direction may seem careless or without conviction. It is teaching us to rely on ourselves, giving us the basic principles of aesthetics, the professions history and craft while retaining a passion for exploration. George found those points within us and helped us to flower. He certainly was a mentor and role model for my career and its explorations into researching urban trees and soils.

Over the years I have worked with many of George's other students. He has inspired scores of us within this wonderful profession. He is thoughtful and reverent and at the same time jovial and congenial. He is the one person that always comes up in conversation when a discussion turns to our school days or to the best in the teaching profession.

George had a great knack to get us to understand the importance of supporting ASLA even while in school. The ASLA student chapter at Syracuse was quite active and even today he remains the connection between students and their future professional society.

I believe George Curry personifies the requirements for this award. Please give his nomination the most careful consideration.

Thank you



James Urban, FASLA



VirginiaTech

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Landscape Architecture Program

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March 4, 2011

Jot D. Carpenter Medal Nominations
c/o Carolyn Mitchell
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Letter of nomination for George Curry, FASLA, professor extraordinaire of landscape architecture at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF)

Dear Nomination Reviewers:

Professor George Curry, FASLA has been an amazingly excellent, committed and passionate teacher for more decades than I can fathom. I am a former student and continuing recipient of his mentorship as I've pursued first a professional then an academic practice. His life's work in academia, particularly as it relates to students, has been an inspiration and a model of achievement. It's been twenty-six years since I graduated from ESF, and Professor Curry's approach to students and teaching remains a personal touchstone example of excellence. His presence at national and local ASLA events and alumni receptions continues to draw alumni in.

As a student I watched and was mentored through coursework and independent internships that Professor Curry set up. His research included renovation and revitalization of a declining downtown, a complicated project for anyone. For years he has brought students to downtown Syracuse to see and develop a vision of possibilities when they were difficult to see. His helped students understand the role landscape architects can play in helping communities and individuals see and define a future. Armory Square is see tangible evidence of Professor Curry's long-term commitment to place and people, and a place for his former students to remember his site specific lessons, whether in landscape architecture or in life.

Professor Curry's passion for historical preservation emanated in his courses and afterhours discussions in his office and elsewhere. Students quickly gravitated to him and took advantage of his open door policy. The careers of such students as Charles Birnbaum (Director of the Cultural Landscape Foundation) and Robert Page (Director of the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation), ESF students a few years ahead of me, started under his tutelage and mentorship. He has also been a strong supporter of student involvement in the ASLA and with Sigma Lambda Alpha. He seems to live the idea that excellence and involvement go hand-in-hand.

Professor Curry held everyone to a high standard of excellence and effort with a strong but soft push. He has made and continues to make personal, intellectual and professional connections for his students and alumni. And he makes it seem easy! As a current faculty member, I am still amazed at how he can guide even the most recalcitrant students through coursework and help them succeed. His advise was rarely sharp but usually on-target and insightful. Through him, I learned about commitment, honesty and directness, and a fondness for the history of place and people. I believe that Professor George Curry exemplifies the ideals of the Jot D. Carpenter Medal and heartily support his nomination.

Sincerely,
Terry L. Clements, ASLA
Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture

Invent the Future