

LAF OLMSTED SCHOLARS K-12 OUTREACH GUIDE

OUR CALL TO ACTION



When LAF published the New Landscape Declaration in 2016, we committed our resources to strengthen and diversify our global capacity as a profession and to raise awareness of landscape architecture's vital contribution. One of the ways we can do this is by increasing exposure to our profession among K-12 students. We know that many landscape architects don't hear about the discipline until they are already in college enrolled in a different course of study or even graduated with a degree in another field. By letting young people know about landscape architecture earlier, we can make sure they have the opportunity to explore this career path and decide if it suits their interests.

LAF is asking the Olmsted Scholars to take the lead in K-12 outreach because the Olmsted Scholar community offers a unique network of supportive peers across the country who can call upon and empower one another. Olmsted Scholars were nominated by their university for their ideas, communication, service, and leadership. LAF is now encouraging you to continue to use these qualities in the communities in which you live and work and to be leaders for the next generation.

How will you use your platform as Olmsted Scholars to impact the future of the profession?

WHAT IS A K-12 DAY?

A K-12 day is a chance for you, the Olmsted Scholars, to **cultivate the next generation of landscape architects**. It could be a half hour presentation or a longer set of activities, depending on what you and the educator agree upon. You'll get the chance to speak with students about our profession. For many of these students, this will be their first interaction with a landscape architect. They will have many questions, thoughts, and ideas. **This is your chance to showcase the work that we do and to encourage young people to think differently about how they view the landscape.**

REACH OUT



Reach out early to give yourself and the classroom plenty of time to coordinate. Make sure you have a back-up school in mind in case the teacher isn't able to schedule a visit. Follow up with teachers or the school in case you don't hear back after a week.



SHARE

Think about what shareable moments you can leave students with. Does the school have a newspaper or social media accounts to share your visit? Check in with your teacher about the channels that might be available.



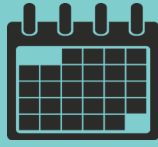
ENCOURAGE OTHERS

Whether you go alone or bring a friend, make sure you're getting other landscape architects involved! They may be inspired to conduct their own outreach and spread the word about landscape architecture.



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

WHEN TO PLAN YOUR VISIT



We're starting in **April with World Landscape Architecture Month and going through the end of the school year.** From April to June, schools start to wind down with testing and finals. For many of them, this might allow an hour or two for enrichment activities, as the teacher won't have any specific curriculum they need to cover.



WHAT DO YOU TALK ABOUT?

This is your opportunity to talk to students in your own way about the profession of landscape architecture. Go easy on the students and recognize that technical jargon is not needed. Instead, a broad discussion about landscapes and design is the most effective use of time. Let the students know that you love what you do and make an impact on communities and the environment.

- **Everyone has first-hand experience with landscapes** – schools, homes, streets, playgrounds, libraries, shopping centers. Drawing on kids' **personal experiences** is a great way to engage and connect with them.
- Depending on the class, you can **shift the language**. Different age groups will respond differently.
- **Keep it interactive!** Bring your drawing tools, designs, pictures, anything to pass around and keep kids engaged.
- **Start with a video.** Check out this [engaging animation from CLARB](#) by Lovisa Kjerrgren that provides a brief overview of how the profession impacts everyday life.

HOW DO YOU FIND A SCHOOL?



Kids and classrooms are everywhere, but **how do you know which is the best fit?** Scheduling your K-12 event may seem like a hurdle, but if you **follow these outreach strategies**, it can be a breeze!



CONTACT A LOCAL SCHOOL

Are you active in your community? If you are a familiar face in the neighborhood, your local school might be especially open to hosting you for a K-12 day.



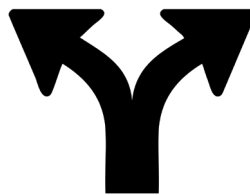
LEVERAGE YOUR NETWORK

Friend, neighbor, cousin, uncle - whoever you might know. They might have a network that can connect you with teachers willing to host you. The key is to let people know what you're doing and ask around.



REACH OUT TO A TEACHER

Avoid the red tape and go directly to the source. Teachers have more control over their classrooms than administrators.



PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SCHOOL?

Public schools might need more lead time than private schools when it comes to curriculum planning but you will reach a greater diversity of students there.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

ACE Mentorship, afterschool programs, summer camps - these organizations are already embedded in schools and classrooms. Coordinate with them!



CAREER DAYS

If you know of one happening in your area, reach out to the coordinators and jump in!



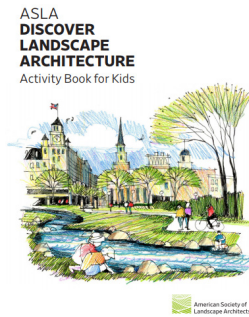
HAVE A LESSON PLAN

Make sure to go in prepared! Understand the teacher's goals, determine your audience, prepare a game plan for the time you have been allotted and be prepared for the plan to change. Things can shift quickly.

However - don't panic! Your lesson plan is your guide. It is meant to highlight all of the important information you want to cover and how, not be an exact script for how the day will go. If you build a little wiggle room in to your lesson plan, you will be prepared for anything and everything.

Remember, you don't have to start from scratch to create a great learning experience for the kids you meet. There are several guides and lesson plan options below to get you started:

- For 45-60 minute lesson plans targeted toward **age groups ranging from Kindergarten to 9th grade**, check out [FLAA's resources](#)
- ASLA created these **activity books** to be used in classrooms: [download the plans](#) and bring them directly to the school.
- Head to the ASLA site for [more inspiration](#).



WOULD YOU RATHER DIY?



Here are some suggestions about what to include if you'd rather plan something new :

Introduction: Nature

- Talk about landscapes. What do students think about when you say the word landscape? How do they view landscape?
- Ask students to discuss their favorite park.
- Have students reflect on being outside and how it makes them feel.

Lesson: Landscape

- Give an outline of landscape architecture. What do you do, and why do you do it? Give examples of local projects, like a well-known park, and large-scale projects, like coastal solutions, and ask students to identify other landscape architecture nearby
- Why is it important for landscape architects to do what they do?
- Explain how you shape the land to fit the needs of clients and communities.
- Use your enthusiasm to show photos of amazing places, especially ones you played a role in and those nearby!
- Have models for students to touch and feel!

Older Students:

- Draw some changes to a landscape they know, or brainstorm changes they could make to their school grounds.

Younger Students:

- Plan a graphic to color. Include websites for parents to use with their kids to learn more about landscape architecture.

Youngest Students:

- Read a book with the class and encourage students to draw what they learn.
- Check out *Finding Wild* by Megan Wagner, *Green Green: A Community Gardening Story* by Marie Lamba, and *The Boy Who Spoke to the Earth* by Chris Burkard to get started.



HOW TO WRAP IT UP

- End the lesson with a wrap-up.
- What did students learn?
- Can they define landscape architecture?
- What was their favorite part of the lesson?
- Does anyone want to be a landscape architect?
- Show pictures of different places, and ask them to describe what they recognize as landscape architecture.

HOW TO TALK TO STUDENTS



This is the scary part! You're landscape architects, not teachers. Maybe you've never been in a class before, but don't worry. Follow these simple steps and you'll be golden!

THE DETAILS



- Do you need a projector, marker board, etc.?
- Don't pass out a handout unless you want kids to look at it immediately.
- Allow plenty of transition time if you will be taking the children outside.

THINGS TO REMEMBER



THE TEACHER IS THE BOSS

Let the teacher control the behavior. This is their classroom, and they have certain rules that need to be followed. Remember to make sure you and the teacher are on the same page on rules, both for you and the students.

TALK LOUDLY & CONFIDENTLY



This is a new subject. Be energetic, but don't talk too quickly or use too much jargon that students wouldn't know. If you want to talk about something specific like stormwater management or green infrastructure, make sure you're defining your terms. If you're unsure whether students know a term, asking a volunteer to explain what it means is a great opportunity for interactivity!



CLAP ONCE

To get students attention, no matter the grade, say loudly "Clap once if you can hear me! Clap twice if you can hear me!" This is a pretty universal call to attention and will regain the focus. You can also check in with your teacher before the lesson if they have another strategy they prefer to use in their classroom.

RAISE HANDS



Younger students might be so excited they'll be asking millions of questions. Make sure you and the teacher are on the same page as to how to answer questions and manage enthusiastic kids.



HAVE FUN

Leave students with the memory that you love your job and you're making a difference in the world. Your enthusiasm is contagious.

HOW TO DOCUMENT YOUR DAY

KEEP US IN THE LOOP



Let us know that you are planning on participating and what school or schools that you'll be visiting so that we can follow up with you for our recap article! Email Rachel at rbooper@LAFoundation.org

#LAFTAKEACTION

Take a selfie in front of the school and post to social media.

DID YOU KNOW...

You may be eligible for LA CEUs. Check with your state licensing board to find out if you can receive credit for participating.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Email Rachel at rbooper@LAFoundation.org



**OLMSTED
SCHOLARS**

STAY TUNED



Over the summer, LAF will do a recap post on the outreach events that features your photos and stories. Take note of how many students you taught and what you talked about so we can share your impact!

Be careful about taking any photos in classrooms. There are strict privacy laws surrounding minors. If this is something you'd like to do, check with your teacher if they have any recommendations for what is and isn't allowed

! HEADS UP