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CONNECTIONS

College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2025/ Academic Year 2024-2025

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College of Architecture, Planning
& Landscape Architecture

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(Cover) The design and build of the full-scale prototype of an 8-by-12-foot micro-shelter was a collaborative effort among several entities including the Drachman Institute, the School of Architecture, the City of Tucson, St. Francis Shelter Community, and the Tucson Hope Factory.

Photo by Kyle Mittan / University Communications

(Left) CAPLA West Building.

CAPLA Photo.

A MESSAGE FROM

DEAN NANCY POLLOCK-ELLWAND



DEAR FRIENDS OF CAPLA,

As I reflect on the past year, I am inspired by the remarkable momentum across the College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture. Our community—students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners—continues to advance CAPLA’s mission with purpose and creativity, reaffirming our role as a leader in shaping sustainable and equitable futures.

This year, we made great progress on the CAPLA Strategic Plan, a roadmap that guides our shared vision. Across each of our five priorities, we have deepened our commitment to ensuring CAPLA continues to thrive. These accomplishments are not simply milestones. They reflect a culture of continuous improvement and a dedication to meaningful, measurable impact.

Our students continue to excel. They earn national and statewide recognition, contribute to vital research, and collaborate with communities across Arizona and beyond. Their achievements reflect an education rooted in design intelligence, environmental resilience, and social responsibility.

Our faculty continued to distinguish themselves through award-winning scholarship and practice that addresses some of today’s most pressing challenges, from extreme heat and water scarcity to housing, mobility, and community wellbeing. Their work underscores CAPLA’s expanding influence in Building a Better World.

We also strengthened our community and industry partnerships, highlighted by the inaugural Community Outreach and Impact Celebration hosted by the Drachman Institute. Also newly established this year is the Drachman Community Engaged Scholars Program, a new initiative that connects students with faculty mentors to work on projects that serve local communities. Through these collaborations, we expand opportunities for student learning and positively impact the people and places we serve.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to CAPLA’s success. Our collective efforts elevate the college’s impact and reputation, and I look forward to building on this momentum together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Pollock-Ellwand'.

Nancy Pollock-Ellwand

Dean and Professor

College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture

CAPLA STRATEGIC PLAN

The CAPLA Strategic Plan is designed to guide and steer the college on a path for continued growth, research innovation and community impact. For the first year of a five-year plan, we have implemented 23 percent of the plan.

Follow our progress » capla.arizona.edu/strategic-plan

WHERE DO WE STAND?

OVERALL COMPLETION

23%

Our Strategic Priorities

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST	<p>We will promote a CAPLA culture based on trust, respect and mutual support, the pursuit of work-life balance, and opportunities for career advancement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Improve faculty, staff, and student satisfaction through consistent communication, coordination, and collaboration. b) Strengthen onboarding, mentoring, and clarity of expectations for faculty and staff. c) Develop more and clearer pathways to career development for faculty and staff. d) Promote greater efficiency and effectiveness of committees. 	<p>3%</p>
DELIVER DIVERSE PEDAGOGY FOR A NEW ERA	<p>We will deliver an innovative curriculum tightly integrated with research and outreach that benefits our students, faculty, industries, and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Foster interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation, co-learning, and integration of new theories, technologies and opportunities for research into the curriculum. 	<p>33%</p>
PREPARING FOR A CHANGING WORLD	<p>We will prepare our students to be well-rounded, with the necessary skills and experiences to become leaders in their professions and fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase our graduates' placement in work, advanced education, and leadership positions. b) Foster professional-student relationships to create forward-looking dialog and engagement with the profession based on broader activities and needs. 	<p>17%</p>
ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES	<p>We will apply our distinctive regional expertise globally to create more environmentally and socially sustainable futures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Become a leader in built environment research, embracing emerging perspectives, materials, and technologies. b) Identify and address challenges for communities in the Southwest and borderlands (including Indigenous and Hispanic), focusing on natural and built environment sustainability and equity topics. c) Integrate research priorities with development, outreach, student recruitment and retention. 	<p>37%</p>
STRENGTHENING ASSETS	<p>We will generate, support, and manage the financial, human and facility resources necessary to meet our mission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Generate and manage resources that are aligned with CAPLA's purpose and mission. b) Ensure even greater transparency and clarity regarding management of CAPLA's resources. c) Promote agency and empathy in planning and decision making related to resource allocation. 	<p>14%</p>

OUR MISSION & VISION

To inspire and prepare creators of environments that enrich people, places, and our planet.

OUR VALUES

Aligned with the University of Arizona

Integrity

Be honest, respectful and just.

Compassion

Choose to care.

Exploration

Be insatiably curious.

Adaptation

Be open-minded and eager for what's next.

Inclusion

Harness the power of diversity.

Determination

Bear Down.

CAPLA INSPIRED VALUES

Excellence

Strive to do your best work.

Collaboration

Work across disciplines and communities.

Stewardship

Use resources ethically, fairly & humanely.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



Ryan E. Smith
School of Architecture Director
and Professor of Architecture

I am proud to lead an award-winning faculty and a vibrant student body that is the School of Architecture at the University of Arizona. As a U of A graduate myself, I am honored to continue the legacy of design educational excellence.

Located in the unique Sonoran Desert region, the school addresses grand social and environmental challenges of today through architectural education and research. During this past year, the school undertook a successful National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accreditation visit resulting in the Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture programs receiving a full accreditation term.

The Master of Science in Architecture, a research degree, has grown by 75% this year due to student matriculating from other programs in the college and the new Master of Urban Planning dual degree.

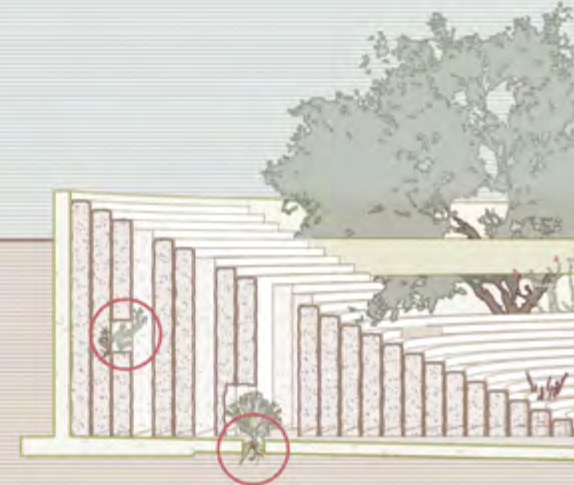
The studios are buzzing, student clubs are thriving, and our community partners are inspiring. From what I see in our students, the architecture profession future is bright and optimistic.

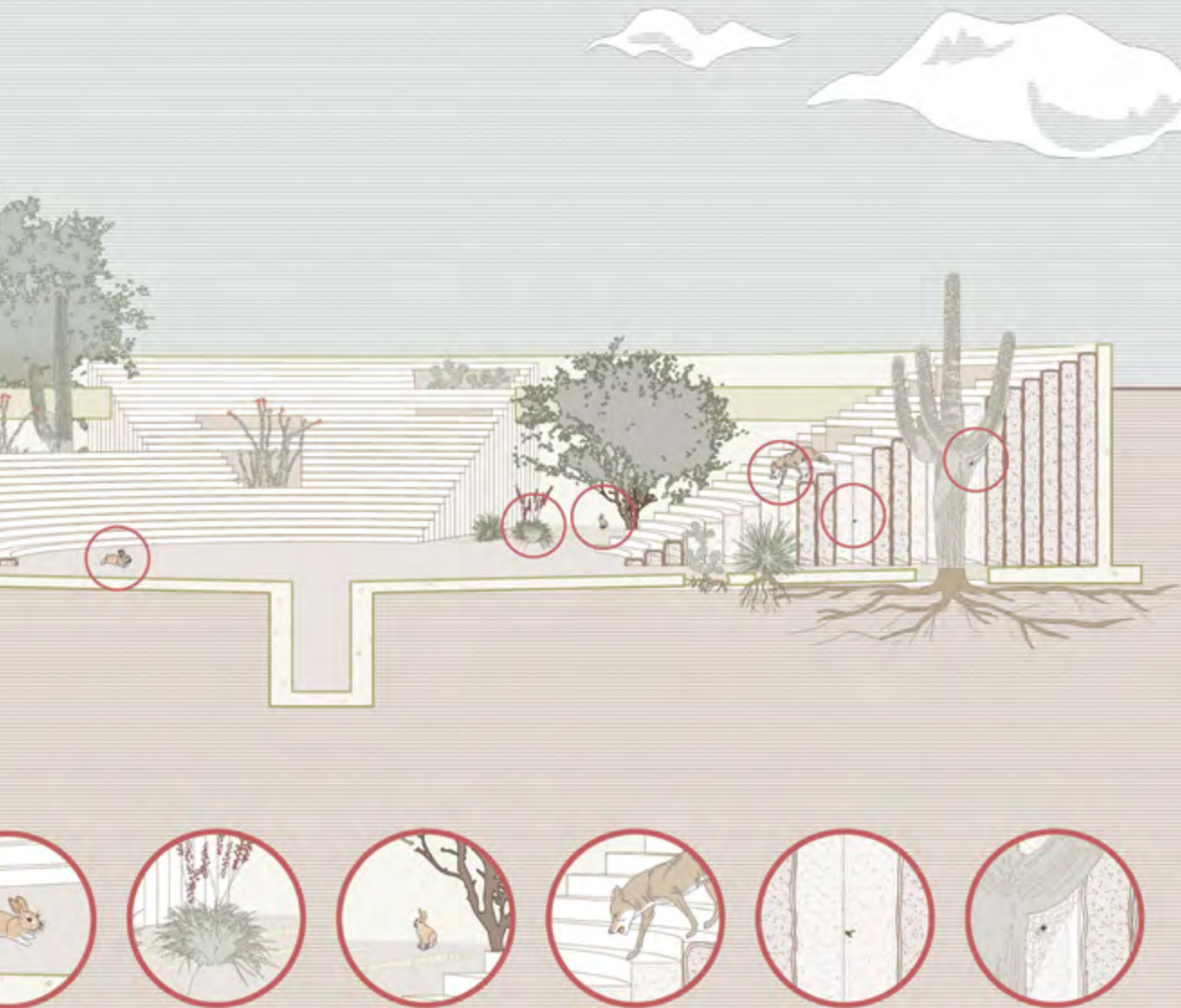
The School of Architecture looks to further advance through initiatives that inspire future designers through engaging student experiences and empowering faculty.

Opportunities include expanding access to our summer architecture camp, creating equitable travel experiences for all students, supporting teaching assistantships that foster mentorship and enhance curriculum delivery, strengthening faculty through professional development, and identifying partnerships to build endowed support for critical areas like energy, water, and materials. Together, we can shape a more inclusive and innovative future for architecture and design.

We invite partners like you to connect, engage, and learn more on how you can be part of these exciting opportunities.

RECLAIMING THE SONORAN DESERT DESIGNING SPECIES PLAYGROUND





Design Build students present their work on the final row house project.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE FACULTY AS OF FALL 2024

FACULTY BREAKDOWN

CAREER TRACK	14
NON-TENURE ELIGIBLE	22
TENURE ELIGIBLE	1
TENURED	9
TOTAL	46

FACULTY BY GENDER

FEMALE	17	37.0%
MALE	29	63.0%

Lecturer Christopher Tucker's Abiotic Studio asked students to explore disrupted, post-industrial landscapes as evolving systems / Student Work: Samantha Salvador Dimas

SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING



Lauri Macmillan Johnson
School of Landscape
Architecture and Planning
Director and Professor of
Landscape Architecture

We had a successful and productive year in all our programs. Faculty, staff, and administrators were innovative in nurturing student success, expanding our research impact, and deepening our community outreach and engagement.

In Real Estate Development, faculty members Jim Marian, Daniel Kuhlmann, and Atticus Jaramillo have taken the lead in initiating a series of workshops with real estate professionals, alumni, and students. The topics have included: *what do we want our graduates to know; how we can advance internship and mentoring opportunities; and how can we collaborate with our professional community* to prepare students for innovation and responsible practice.

Last year, the Master of Real Estate Development was reviewed and the suggestions are now the basis for strategic planning. In 2027, the Master of Science in Urban Planning will undergo its accreditation review. Preparing these reports facilitates reflection and encourages innovation.

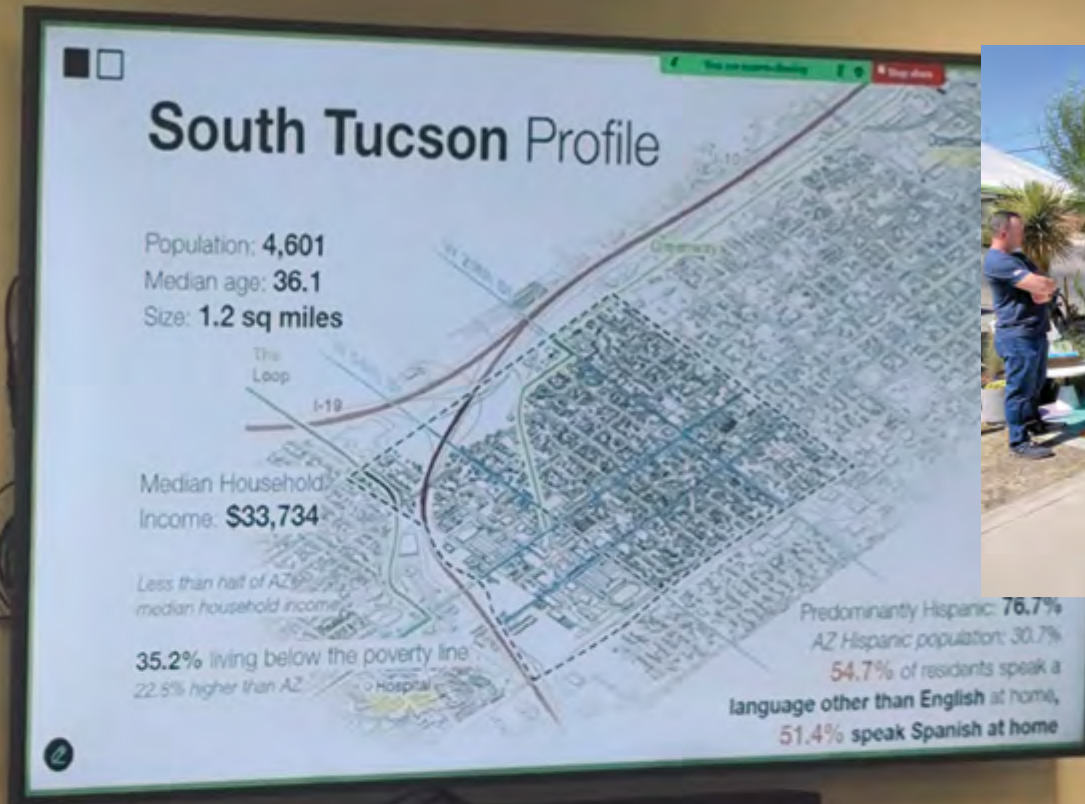
Looking forward we envision all our programs becoming even more engaged with alumni and industry professionals. Our faculty research trajectories will sustain momentum, and this collective work will continue to impact the world. Service-learning and community engagement is our school's flagship, and this too will rise even higher.

The School of Landscape Architecture looks to advance initiatives that inspire future designers, planners and developers through engaging student experiences and innovative faculty research.

Key opportunities include expanding scholarships to attract, support, and retain a diverse student body; strengthening research and professional development through funding for projects, travel, fieldwork, and outreach; and enhancing alumni and industry engagement to grow mentorships, internships, and collaborative visioning for the future workforce.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to our collective success. It is a great privilege to serve as the director of the School of Landscape Architecture and Planning.

(right) Urban Planning student Stephanie Brennan presenting the group's capstone project in May.



Master of Landscape Architecture student Ashley Danforth exhibits a repurposed curbside parking space for Park(ing) Day near the Mercado San Agustin in Tucson.

SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING FACULTY

AS OF FALL 2024

FACULTY BREAKDOWN

CAREER TRACK	11
NON-TENURE ELIGIBLE	10
TENURE ELIGIBLE	4
TENURED	7
TOTAL	32

FACULTY BY GENDER

FEMALE	15	46.9%
MALE	17	53.1%

AWARDS + ACCOLADES

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Teresa Rosano Receives Dual Honors at the 2025 AIA Arizona Design Awards

The 2025 AIA Arizona Design Awards recognized architectural excellence across the state, and Associate Professor **Teresa Rosano**, '94 B.Arch, received two of the evening's highest honors: the AIA Arizona Architects Medal and a Community Design Award for a student-led capstone project.

The Community Design Award honored the Tucson Hope Factory Micro Shelter Village, a project created through the Community Design & Action Capstone Studio under the instruction of Rosano and research coordinator Greg Veitch in Fall 2024/Spring 2025.

Rosano said the Architects Medal carries deep personal significance.

"Receiving the Architects Medal feels incredibly meaningful to me," she said. "It's a recognition of the path my career has taken, a journey I describe as unfolding in two acts: Act One - Practice, where I learned to create architecture, and Act Two - Education, where I've learned to share that experience with students."

She added that the night became even more meaningful when her students were honored with the Community Design Award. Rosano said celebrating with students, colleagues and community members was a standout moment.

(right) Teresa Rosano and Greg Veitch with students at the AIA Arizona Design Awards, celebrating their Community Design Award win.

WATCH » 2025 Arizona Medal: Teresa Rosano, AIA



“These awards are a testament to the exceptional work going on in our studios, research labs, and communities, demonstrating critical, innovative, and practical solutions to education and practice.”

– Ryan Smith, Director,
School of Architecture

School of Architecture Faculty Recognized for Excellence at the 2025 AIA Arizona Design Awards



Christopher Tucker Honored with AIA Design Pedagogy Award

Lecturer **Christopher Tucker** received the AIA Design Pedagogy Award for his Abiotic Studio, a fourth-year course that challenges students to confront the ecological realities of the Anthropocene. The studio asks students to read disrupted landscapes as evolving systems, consider more-than-human perspectives and reimagine post-industrial sites as places of reconciliation and adaptation.

“This recognition reflects the goals and values I bring to teaching at CAPLA: inviting students to engage deeply with societal and ecological challenges, foregrounding more-than-human perspectives and preparing them with skills to navigate complex and contested conditions of place wherever they go,” Tucker said.

(above) The Design Pedagogy Award recognizes excellence in architectural education.



Jesus Robles Exhibits Work at the Venice Biennale and Earns AIA Arizona Honor

Assistant Professor of Practice **Jesus Robles**, co-founder of the award-winning Tucson studio DUST, was selected to exhibit work at the Biennale Architettura 2025 in Venice — one of the world’s most prestigious showcases of architecture and design.

His firm’s installation, Wildlife Pavilion, represents the Tucson Audubon Society within the U.S. Pavilion’s exhibition, Porch: An Architecture of Generosity.

The project draws attention to the ecological richness of southern Arizona’s Patagonia Mountains and highlights issues of biodiversity, conservation and environmental stewardship. Robles said the recognition affirms DUST’s ongoing commitment to design rooted in landscape, culture and community.

DUST architects encased organic material in nine hand-poured clear resin boxes, resting on a blackened, topographic relief of southern Arizona. Each box showcased items selected for their material, symbolic, mythological, poetic, and cultural meanings. The installation was called "Ofrescas: Between Earth and Sky."



Two School of Architecture faculty honored with National ACSA Awards

In January 2025, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) recognized two School of Architecture faculty whose work exemplifies excellence in teaching, leadership, and community-engaged design.

Laura Carr, senior lecturer and co-founder of the Native Peoples Design Coalition (NPDC), has been awarded the AIA/ACSA Practice + Leadership Award.

This honor highlights “best practice” examples of highly effective teaching, scholarship, and outreach. Carr’s work with the NPDC centers on advancing resilience and belonging in the built environment for Native American and Indigenous communities across Arizona.

ACSA also recognized **Teresa Rosano**, associate professor of practice, with its prestigious Distinguished Professor Award, which honors educators who have had a profound and nurturing influence on students.

(above) School of Architecture faculty Teresa Rosano (left) and Laura Carr (right) during the 2025 Architectural Education Awards, which honor architectural educators for exemplary work in areas such as building design, community collaboration, scholarship, and service.

SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Ladd Keith named 2025 Planner of the Year, Distinguished Scholar

The Western Planner organization has named School of Landscape Architecture and Planning Associate Professor **Ladd Keith** its 2025 Planner of the Year, honoring his pioneering leadership in climate-responsive planning and community resilience across the American West.

The award recognizes planners who demonstrate fortitude, skill and advocacy for the profession. It was presented during the Western Planner Conference in Bend, Oregon in October.

“It’s an honor to be recognized by the planning profession for this award, especially during a period when national priorities have shifted away from addressing climate change and its impacts,” Keith said.

Keith was also named a 2025 Distinguished Scholar by the University of Arizona and was recognized during the university’s Luminaries Outstanding Faculty Awards in October.

Keith directs the university’s Heat Resilience Initiative. One of his research areas focuses on reducing the dangers of extreme heat in rural, border and tribal communities across Arizona and New Mexico through the Climate Assessment for the Southwest (CLIMAS), a NOAA Climate Adaptation Partnerships program.

WATCH » How Arizona Scientists Are Tackling Extreme Heat

Featuring Associate Professors Ladd Keith and Kristi Currans & Master of Science in Urban Planning Graduate Student Alekzander Ryan



On the same day as being named the 2025 Planner of the Year, Ladd Keith, center, was recognized by CAPLA Dean Nancy Pollock-Ellwand, left, and U of A Provost Patricia Prelock, right, during the University of Arizona's Luminaries Outstanding Faculty Awards.



CAPLA faculty guide Santa Cruz River closer to national designation



Assistant Professor
Mackenzie Waller

A regional coalition led in part by University of Arizona assistant professor of landscape architecture Mackenzie Waller is working to reconnect Southern Arizona communities with the Santa Cruz River and secure federal designation for portions of the river as an Urban National Wildlife Refuge.

As principal investigator on a new \$600,000 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant, Waller is guiding efforts to formalize a community-driven plan that protects the river's ecology while strengthening its role as a cultural and recreational resource.

Waller emphasizes that the project is fundamentally about rebuilding relationships—between people, place, and long-standing ecological knowledge.

"This is an opportunity for communities to be part of thinking about what type of relationship they want to have with the river," she said. "The university has a role to be a really good partner and provide all of this knowledge that can be paired nicely with the community knowledge, the traditional ecological knowledge that's already here in place for us."

If successful, the designation would make the Santa Cruz the first urban national wildlife refuge in Arizona and one of only a few in the Southwest.

The plan spans a 90-mile stretch from the U.S.–Mexico border to the Pima-Pinal county line and brings together dozens of partners, including local governments, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, and residents.

(above) Working to protect the Santa Cruz River, Assistant Professor Mackenzie Waller guides plans for its Urban National Wildlife Refuge designation.

SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

The University of Arizona's Strategic Imperatives—centered on belonging, holistic learning, and access—come to life every day at CAPLA, where students excel through hands-on, community-driven work. From nationally recognized design excellence to student-led sustainability initiatives, CAPLA empowers learners to apply their skills in ways that shape real communities.



As part of ARC471/571 Arid Region Urbanism, students visited and stayed at La Hacienda Feliz in Agua Prieta, Sonora, a small town near the U.S.-Mexico border.

Building a brighter future at the U.S.-Mexico border

Tucson architect and CAPLA alumnus **Bob Vint**, assistant professor of practice in the School of Architecture, has donated his time and expertise to design *La Hacienda Feliz*, a new volunteer dormitory for the Rancho Feliz Charitable Foundation in Agua Prieta, Sonora.

The facility supports the foundation's long-running program that brings U.S. student and community volunteers to the border region to build safe, clean homes for families living in colonias.

Designed in collaboration with Agua Prieta architect Luis López Escárcega, the neo-traditional courtyard complex includes dormitories, private rooms, a dining hall, meeting spaces, and a museum of border culture.

Building on this work, the School of Architecture will continue its partnership with Rancho Feliz by expanding student engagement through an upcoming Alternative Spring Break opportunity.

Students in Vint's Arid Region Urbanism seminar experienced border realities firsthand during an overnight stay at La Hacienda Feliz, where they visited colonias, met residents, and assisted with food distribution.



Architecture students earn top honors in BuildingsNEXT Student Design Competition

Three student teams competed in the 2025 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) BuildingsNEXT Student Design Competition, with two teams earning Honorable Mention—the highest recognition awarded in this year’s competition.

Competing against 122 teams from 93 institutions across 27 U.S. states and 19 countries, CAPLA architecture students traveled to Golden, Colorado, to present their designs in three categories: Multifamily Building, Open Commercial, and Education Building.

Together, they created a visionary “Resilience District” on the University of Arizona campus focused on senior living, wellness, and education.

“Our continued success in this competition reflects our commitment to energy in architecture studies, the strength of our students', and the leadership of faculty like David Brubaker,” said Ryan Smith, director of the School of Architecture. “David’s leadership in the Solar Decathlon studio has shaped an incredible learning environment for our students.”

Over the past five years, CAPLA student teams have built a track record of success in DOE competitions, earning multiple finalist and winner distinctions, including the prestigious Design Challenge Grand Winner title in 2024 and 2022.

Three architecture teams participated in the U.S. Department of Energy BuildingsNEXT Student Design Competition and two came away with Honorable Mentions--the highest award designation in this year's competition.



MARIGOLD EDUCATION CENTER

Education Building - Team Marigold
The University of Arizona
U.S. Department of Energy BuildingsNEXT Team Showcase

Shih-Eun, Moon-Chang, Kendall-Love, Taylor-Hin, Caroline-Bauer-Dalmeida, Dylan-Toddle

Education Building Division –
Marigold Education Center

SCAN TO VIEW PROJECT »



ROSEMARY COMMONS

BUILDINGS NEXT 2025

U. ARIZONA - RESILIENCE DISTRICT PROJECT - ROSEMARY COMMONS - DESIGN - UNIVERSITY

Multifamily Building Division – Rosemary
Commons | *Honorable Mention*

SCAN TO VIEW PROJECT »



OPUNTIA WELLNESS CENTER | DESERT RESILIENCE DISTRICT

BuildingsNEXT Competition 2025
Open Commercial Division

Jay-Chiu, Daniel-Fill, Samu-Morales, Marissa-Honigberg, Wendy-Sanchez, Francisco-Zavala

Open Commercial Division – Opuntia
Wellness Center | *Honorable Mention*

SCAN TO VIEW PROJECT »



Master of Landscape Architecture students lead sustainability research

A team of students from CAPLA is combining research, collaboration and community outreach to advance sustainable stormwater solutions on campus, thanks to a grant from the Campus Sustainability Fund for \$45,000 over three years.

The project, titled “Green Infrastructure Leadership and Engagement,” focuses on developing a comprehensive on-campus database for green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). Led by Master of Landscape Architecture students **Ashley Danforth** and **Xavier Fernandez**, the interdisciplinary effort is designed to help quantify the environmental and plant-health benefits of GSI, especially in response to climate challenges like extreme heat and drought.

“As landscape architecture students, we frequently consider challenges like drought, extreme heat and sustainability in our projects,” Fernandez said. “Time and again, we’ve seen green stormwater infrastructure emerge as an effective, practical means to help address these issues.”

The grant-funded project brings together students, faculty and professionals from across campus. Through workshops and public engagement, the team hopes to share findings with both university stakeholders and the greater Tucson community.

(top left) From left, Bo Yang, associate dean of research, works alongside Master of Landscape Architecture students Annamaria Pongratz and Xavier Fernandez to calculate a water basin’s dimensions outside of the University of Arizona’s Old Main building.

(bottom left) Image of a 3D scan of similar water basins around the University of Arizona campus, which the group is processing with Geographic Information Systems (GIS).





Urban Planning students win state-wide award for City of South Tucson Project

A team of Master of Science in Urban Planning (MSUP) students received the Arizona Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA)'s Best Student Planning Project Award for their work with the City of South Tucson.

“This project focused on identifying opportunities to empower our community and strategies to control land, keeping it in the hands of our residents to prevent displacement from future development,” said Roxanna Valenzuela, mayor of South Tucson.

The award-winning capstone, “Community Investment Strategy Toolkit for the City of South Tucson,” was developed during the 2024–2025 academic year in partnership with city leaders. The project focused on five key areas for guiding community investment: community identity, local economy, housing, heat resilience and safe, equitable transportation.

“Professor **Arlie Adkins** organized the project and served as the main connection with the City of South Tucson,” said **Romina Narvaez**, who accepted the award on behalf of her cohort. “The city was interested in updating its general plan, and our role was to provide a starting point for that process.”

Students collaborated with city officials and residents, grounding their recommendations in the lived experiences of South Tucson community members.

“Walking the streets, taking photos, documenting infrastructure and sitting down with community members reminded me why I wanted to become an urban planner,” Narvaez said. “It wasn’t just research—it was a chance to listen and learn from people who love where they live.”

The project team included: **Romina Narvaez, Athba Alradaan, Anna Schrauth, Kirsten Sinelli, Michael Garcia, Mahin Mehnaz, Shashank Marade, Stephanie Brennan, Siavash Habibi, Nigel Black** and **Annika Risser**.

**WATCH » Class of 2025
Master of Science in Urban Planning
City of South Tucson Capstone Project**



RESEARCH THAT SHAPES THE FUTURE

The University of Arizona's Strategic Imperative for research emphasizes advancing inquiry that improves lives, strengthens communities, and addresses society's most pressing challenges. At CAPLA, this commitment is reflected in faculty and student research that tackles real-world issues—from heat-resiliency strategies and sustainable design solutions to shaping policy and guiding urban growth.



Bo Yang
Associate Dean for Research
and Professor of Landscape
Architecture and Urban Planning

Message from Bo Yang

CAPLA's research enterprise continues to demonstrate robust growth, with a solid 72% increase in research expenditures from FY24 to FY25, reaching \$2.2M. In context, CAPLA's sponsored research has grown by 150% from FY2021-FY2025, with current funding totaling \$7M. Despite the drastically changing funding landscape at the federal level, CAPLA researchers continue to secure competitive grants and contracts and provide student support at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- (1) CAPLA colleagues' participation in the University's Big Idea Challenge competition, resulting in three finalists and one awardee, with topics spanning urban heat, health, and housing;
- (2) Grassroots Innovation Seed Grants that support new projects transforming design methods in Sonoran ecologies, equipping designers with business acumen, and assessing social policy for housing and mental health;
- (3) Student teams undertaking projects to address sustainability topics on campus and in Tucson communities; and
- (4) Publications in leading journals in the built environment. From 2023-2025, CAPLA researchers published four books, more than 80 articles, and delivered over 45 presentations at academic and professional meetings, as well as media showcases.

In particular, junior faculty play an important role in expanding partnerships across campus, with industry, and with government agencies, further solidifying CAPLA's leadership in built environment research, innovation, and engagement.



CAPLA students help advance smart tree-watering research for a hotter Arizona

Master of Landscape Architecture students Annalise Hummel, Christian Aguilar Murrieta, and Cordell Lee helped shape the future of heat resilience through award-winning research on smart tree-watering techniques.

As part of the research team at the University of Arizona Campus Agricultural Center, the students have been deeply involved in studying more than 80 tree saplings planted across multiple test plots.

Their analyses contribute to a broader understanding of how strategic watering can improve plant survival, expand urban shade, and conserve water—key needs in Arizona’s increasingly hot and arid cities. The collaboration with Arizona State University includes developing machine-learning models that show how these techniques can be scaled for municipalities, counties, and community partners statewide.

The project’s findings will be shared with public agencies, policymakers, community organizations, developers, and municipal leaders through upcoming workshops.

This work is supported by ABOR’s Regents’ Grants program, which fosters cross-university collaborations on critical environmental and societal issues across the state.

Bo Yang, associate dean for research and professor of landscape architecture and urban planning, describes smart tree watering processes for Arizona’s urban environment.

Credit: Chris Richards, The University of Arizona



A NEW KIND OF PARTNERSHIP

University of Arizona, South32 Collaborate to Strengthen Communities and Protect Biodiversity

A major mining effort in Southern Arizona is advancing community resilience, economic growth and environmental protection—with significant early guidance from the University of Arizona, including the College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture.

Supported by a \$300,000 investment from South32, university researchers from CAPLA, the School of Mining and Mineral Resources, the College of Engineering, and the Eller College of Management are conducting a comprehensive resource analysis for Santa Cruz County, home to the Hermosa mine project.

CAPLA faculty are leading assessments of community services and local government systems, with seven CAPLA researchers contributing expertise from the outset.

"They [South32] want this to be a model for modern mining," said Bo Yang, associate dean of research and principal investigator on the project.

Yang noted that the study will provide the foundation for a Community Protection and Benefit Agreement between local municipalities and South32.

"The municipalities want to have no loss of biodiversity, and they want Hermosa to reduce their water usage by 75% compared to conventional mining," he said. "They also want to go to 100% renewable energy."

CAPLA project manager Sandra Bernal added that the team will develop a gap analysis and ideal growth plan informed by the company's financial commitments.

(top left) From left, Kenneth Kokroko, assistant professor of landscape architecture, Pat Risner, president of Hermosa Project, South32, Bo Yang, associate dean of research, Deborah Himself, academic director, Eller Executive Education, and Sandra Bernal, lecturer.

(top right) Bo Yang and Sandra Bernal presenting to the South32 leadership team, including Pat Risner, the president of the Hermosa Project, and municipal leaders from Patagonia, Nogales, Rio Rico, and Santa Cruz County.

[DOWNLOAD AND READ THE REPORT »](#)





Tucson's SunLink streetcar connects the University of Arizona, downtown, and the Mercado District. New research co-led by Professor Emeritus Arthur C. Nelson finds the system has exceeded expectations in economic and equity outcomes.

Tucson's Sun Link Streetcar



Professor Emeritus
Arthur C. Nelson

When Tucson's SunLink streetcar opened in 2014, it hoped to bridge the city's core, connecting the University of Arizona, Banner–University Medical Center, downtown and the Mercado District.

More than a decade later, a new study reveals that the streetcar has transformed the city's growth, economy, and equity landscape.

"Tucson's streetcar has lived up to if not exceeded expectations," Nelson said. "It is one of the best-planned systems in the nation by connecting a major medical center with one of the nation's largest universities, then connecting major commercial corridors to downtown and the convention center as well as the Mercado redevelopment area across the Santa Cruz river."

The study, co-led by Arthur C. Nelson, professor emeritus of urban planning and real estate development at CAPLA, and Daniel Lawlor, data analyst with the City of Tucson's Department of Transportation and Mobility, is the first comprehensive analysis of how the streetcar has shaped Tucson's development since its launch.

Their research, completed in 2024, will be published this spring in the Harvard Law & Policy Review.

Between 2014 and 2021, the streetcar corridor accounted for about half of the city's population and housing growth, according to Nelson. It also added roughly a third of a billion dollars in household income annually after inflation, generated hundreds of jobs and a quarter of a billion dollars in new wages and saw more than 40 percent of corridor residents commuting by something other than a car, compared to 20 percent citywide.

[DOWNLOAD AND READ THE REPORT »](#)



CAPLA Faculty Drive Innovative Solutions to Extreme Heat

CAPLA faculty Sandra Bernal, Altaf Engineer, and Ladd Keith are leading members of the Heat and Health Resilience Innovation Consortium (HHRIC), which received \$250,000 over two years through the inaugural Big Idea Challenge from the University of Arizona Office of Research and Partnerships.

Out of 72 proposals, only six teams were awarded funding.

The consortium is co-led by Amelia L. Gallitano-Mendel and Freya Spielberg of the College of Medicine – Phoenix, who developed the proposal and oversee the project. Bernal also serves as project lead for one of HHRIC’s innovation initiatives, which brings together experts from medicine, public health, engineering, and climate research.

Bernal explained that the project aims to create community-centered solutions to Arizona’s growing extreme heat threat, with the potential to influence how communities worldwide prepare for heat events.

HHRIC is organized into four innovation teams addressing wearable biosensors, health system algorithms, AI-powered education, and movable cooling structures. Bernal and Engineer co-lead the Built Environment Innovations Team, developing solutions such as CHILL-IT Health Oasis, a solar-powered movable cooling and medical station, and Kiosk Care, a compact telemedicine and medication unit for rural and under-resourced areas.



The Heat and Health Resilience Innovation Consortium (HHRIC) is comprised of interdisciplinary faculty representing areas like public health, medicine, engineering, and architecture

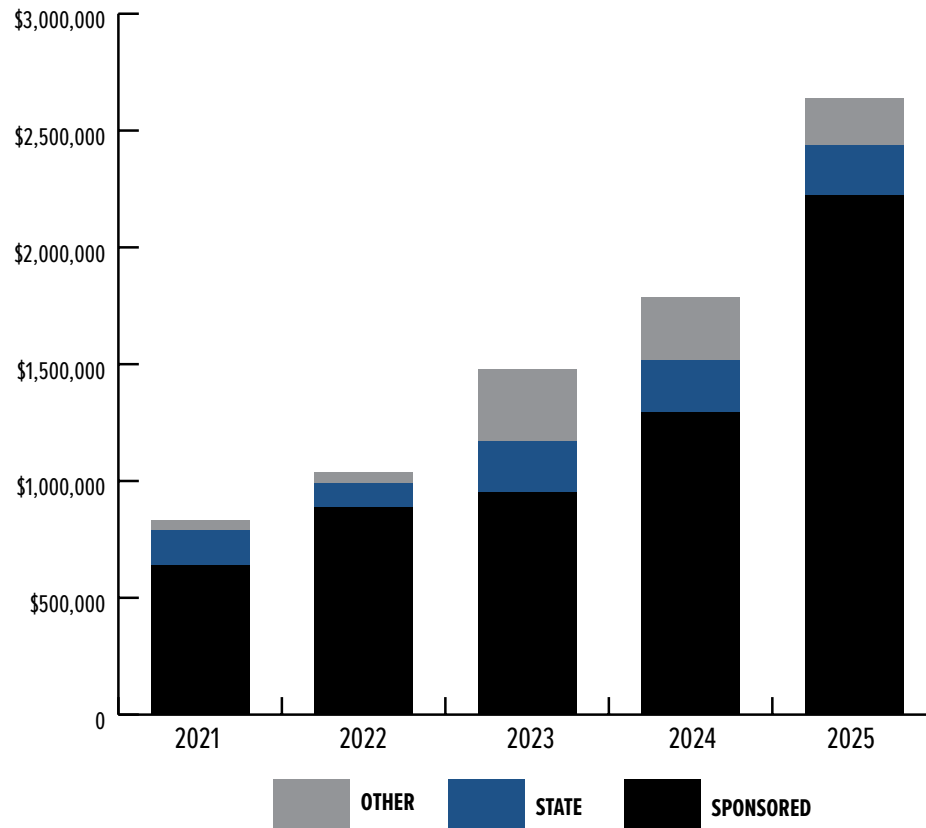
Photo Credit: Leslie Hawthorne Klingler



Sandra Bernal, a lecturer in the School of Landscape Architecture and Planning, co-leads the Built Environment Innovations team, presents on possible heat interventions like a Chill IT Health Oasis and Kiosk Care.

RESEARCH GRANTS AND AWARDS

RESEARCH EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE FY 2021-2025



NOTES:

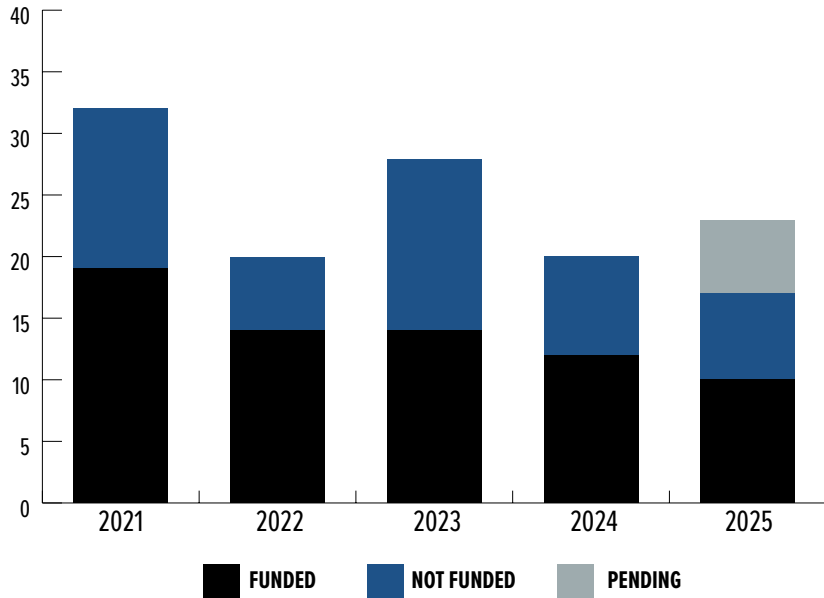
- 1.) Cost Sharing activity is STATE funded but relates to Sponsored Project accounts.
- 2.) Sponsored activity is based on projects housed under CAPLA as the home department for the funding.
- 3.) The Office of Research and Partnerships (ORP) is an institutional unit at the University of Arizona.

RESEARCH EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE

FUNDING SOURCE	FISCAL YEAR				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
SPONSORED					
DIRECT COST	491,874	676,596	730,334	888,283	1,505,744
INDIRECT COST	146,564	211,820	223,730	405,154	716,741
TOTAL SPONSORED	638,438	888,416	954,064	1,293,437	2,222,485
STATE					
COST SHARING	44,951	15,501	98,263	19,805	307
FACULTY STARTUP	105,177	85,680	117,427	98,672	75,277
PROVOST INVESTMENT INITIATIVES				104,250	138,974
TOTAL STATE	150,128	101,181	215,690	222,727	214,558
OTHER					
CAPLA GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES	6,520	36,980	45,256	37,037	11,858
DRACHMAN INSTITUTE (NON-SPONSORED)	13,907	11,495			
ORP FACULTY STARTUP	7,500				
ORP RESEARCH INITIATIVES	17,810	1,230	16,736	15,000	12,764
TECH RESEARCH INITIATIVES			223,806	220,825	176,721
TOTAL OTHER	45,737	49,705	285,799	272,862	201,342
GRAND TOTAL	834,302	1,039,302	1,455,552	1,789,025	2,638,386

NEW PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS BY FISCAL YEAR SUBMITTED

WHERE CAPLA IS LEAD PI UNIT, FY 2021-2025



PROPOSAL STATUS	FISCAL YEAR SUBMITTED				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Funded	19	14	14	12	10
Not Funded	13	6	14	8	7
Pending	0	0	0	0	6
TOTAL	32	20	28	20	23
Funded Rate (%)	59%	70%	50%	60%	59%

NOTES:

1. The above proposals exclude any proposal where CAPLA isn't the lead PI unit but is involved with the proposal.

2. Funded Rate (%) in the above table is based on the following formula:
 = Funded / (Funded + Rejected/Withdrawn/Deactivated)

SELECT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

JOURNALS

- Journal of Climate Change and Health*
- Agriculture and Food Security*
- Agriculture, Food Systems & Community Development*
- Circular Economy & Sustainability*
- Journal of Political Science Education*
- Architectural Design*
- Journal of Urban Affairs*
- Housing and Society*
- Journal of Real Estate Practice and Education*
- Environmental Research Communications*
- International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*
- Urban Studies*
- Designing the Future City: International Expositions, 1851-2025*

BOOK CHAPTERS, PROCEEDINGS AND REPORTS

- Rural heat health disparities: Evidence from the U.S. National Emergency Medical Services Information System*
- Dominant smallholder farming system typologies in southcentral Uganda: implications for food security*
- Socio-cultural benefits of a collaborative urban agriculture initiative designed for vulnerable populations in Tucson, Arizona*
- Community-based circular food systems and sustainable development synergies in semi-arid cities: Evidence from Tucson, Arizona.*
- Using strategic games to illustrate environmental policy concepts for undergraduates*
- Striving for Rural Heat Resilience: A Systematic Literature Review*
- Health and employment among young adults receiving federal housing assistance*
- Can upzoning promote housing affordability? Perspectives from market actors*
- Buying and Selling: Exploring Residential Landlords' Acquisition and Disposition Decisions*
- Association between relative surface temperature and urban park visits during excessive heat*
- The Value of Access of Urban Greenspace: A Comparison Study of User Perceptions of the Naval Cemetery Landscape*
- George Fred Keck's House of tomorrow at the 1933-34 Chicago World's Fair*
- Modern Exposition Fairgrounds: Visions of the Future / Legacies of the Past*
- Extreme heat vulnerability of manufactured housing in arid urban environments*

THE DRACHMAN INSTITUTE

Since 1986, the Drachman Institute has been the community-focused research and outreach arm of CAPLA.

The institute's mission is supported through four core initiatives.

ARIZONA RESEARCH CENTER FOR HOUSING EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY AND HOUSING EQUITY LAB

- Mission: Investigate the role of policy and design in the production, preservation, and protections for housing equity.

NATIVE PEOPLES DESIGN COALITION

- Mission: Form a collective vision to plan and design the built environment in ways that support Native American and Indigenous Sovereignty.

DRACHMAN DESIGN BUILD COALITION

- Mission: Promote and facilitate the design and construction of affordable housing for low-income and underserved populations in Arizona.

URBAN RESILIENCE LAB

- Mission: Advance a sustainable and resilient built environment able to adapt and respond to the critical environmental and social equity challenges of cities.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COMMUNITIES TO CREATE OPPORTUNITY

Community engagement is central to CAPLA's mission. Through partnerships with local governments, Native Nations, nonprofits, and industry across Arizona, CAPLA faculty and students apply design, planning, and research expertise to address real-world challenges—from climate resilience and housing to mobility, water, and equitable development.

Students developed renderings of the 8-by-12-foot micro-shelter and shared their plans with community stakeholders like the Tucson Hope Factory, the City of Tucson, and St. Francis Shelter Community.



Architecture students design, build shelter to serve Tucson's unhoused

Sixteen CAPLA students concluded their Community Design and Action Capstone Studio by designing and building a full-scale prototype of an 8-by-12-foot micro-shelter intended to support unhoused individuals in Southern Arizona.

Developed over the course of the academic year, the project reflects CAPLA's commitment to community-engaged, empathy-driven design.

The micro-shelter was created through a partnership among CAPLA's Drachman Institute, the School of Architecture, the City of Tucson, St. Francis Shelter Community, and the Tucson Hope Factory. The studio was co-taught by Teresa Rosano, associate professor of practice, and Greg Veitch, research coordinator at the Drachman Institute, who guided students through both community engagement and design implementation.



CAPLA students spent the academic year designing and building this prototype of an 8-by-12-foot micro-shelter designed to serve un-housed people. The project was part of a partnership with local organizations to lay the groundwork for a network of similar shelters across Southern Arizona.

Photo by Kyle Mittan / University Communications

Students worked closely with service providers and unhoused community members, conducting interviews, touring local facilities, and studying micro-shelter villages in other cities. That feedback informed key design elements, including built-in storage, natural materials, and daylighting. The final 96-square-foot prototype accommodates sleeping, work, and storage needs, and was designed for scalability within a future shelter village.

“The students were also focused on the whole site scale for the community,” Veitch said. “So, even though it might not be reflected physically, we designed this to fit into a larger village and with scalability in mind.”

The shelter was designed to be dismantled and assembled by volunteers, ensuring adaptability, affordability, and long-term impact—demonstrating how CAPLA students translate academic learning into meaningful service for the region.



The students' interviews with unhoused and formerly unhoused people helped them understand their frequent needs for more storage space. The students tried to address that with a wall of shelving and closet space.

Photo by Kyle Mittan / University Communications



Drachman Institute celebrates community partners, impact

The Drachman Institute held the inaugural Community Outreach and Impact Celebration, honoring community partners and showcasing impactful student and faculty work.

The event brought together more than 200 attendees, including representatives from municipalities, tribal nations, nonprofit organizations, and community groups across Arizona.

Designed to recognize the value of collaboration between the university and local communities, the event highlighted the Drachman Institute’s role as a connector—linking academic creativity and insight with real-world challenges through design and planning.

The event was organized by Courtney Crosson, director of the Drachman Institute, with support from CAPLA faculty and staff. Funding support was provided by GLHN Architects & Engineers, Inc., which designated a portion of its previous gift to the Drachman Institute for the purpose of launching this annual recognition event.

(above left) Drachman Institute Director Courtney Crosson (front, left) and representatives from GLHN Architects and Engineers partnered together to celebrate 28 community partnerships for their contributions to impactful projects. (above right) From left, Andrew Gashwazra, director of Hope Community Development, and Laura Carr, senior lecturer. The community partners recognized during the celebration were nominated by CAPLA faculty.

Photos by Kate Gardiner / UAHS BioCommunications

WATCH » Highlights of Inaugural Community Outreach and Impact Celebration



AWARDEES

- Scott Aldridge**, Program Manager, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, University of Arizona
- Kimberly Baeza**, Permit and Regulatory Compliance Officer, Pima County Wastewater and Reclamation
- Selina Barajas**, Arizona Program Manager, Mountain
- Eric Barrett**, Owner and Principal, ARC Studios
- Christina Bell**, Executive Director, Wassaja Carlos Montezuma Center for Native American Health, University of Arizona
- Jasmine Chan**, Capital Projects Administrator, Tucson Parks & Recreation
- Nelson Cody**, Community Development Manager, Tuba City Community Development Manager
- Luke Cole**, Program Director, Sonoran Institute
- Paul Davis**, Marketing Director/Division Manager, AGM Container Controls, Inc.
- Charles Dunn**, Executive Director, Tucson Hope Factory
- Barbara Eiswerth**, Executive Director, Iskashitaa Refugee Network
- Andrew Gashwazra**, Director, Hopi Community Development
- Josue Licea**, Planning Director, City of South Tucson
- Koren Manning**, Interim Director, Planning and Development Services, City of Tucson
- Dyron Murphy**, President, Dyron Murphy Architects, P.C.
- Joaquin Murrieta**, Cultural Ecologist Director, Watershed Management Group
- Jacob Prietto**, Principal Hydrologist, Pima County Regional Flood Control District
- Perri Pyle**, Branch Manager, Pima County Public Library
- Daniel Rodriguez**, Senior Vice President, Community Development Banking, Global Commercial Banking, Bank of America
- Luis Salgado**, Green Infrastructure Project Manager, Watershed Management Group
- Paula Schlusberg**, Board of Directors, Sustainable Tucson
- Elizabeth Soltero**, CEO, Sunnyside Foundation
- Esther Sternberg**, Research Director, Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Arizona
- Phil Swaim**, President, Swaim Associates
- Matthew Tafoya**, Director, Innovation Center, Navajo Technical University
- Jerrick Tsosie**, Designer, Dust
- Elliot Welch**, Project Manager, Tucson Parks & Recreation

DRACHMAN INSTITUTE LAUNCHES COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Drachman Institute launched the Drachman Community Engaged Scholars Program, a new initiative that connects students with faculty mentors to work on projects that serve local communities.

Funded through Drachman sources, the program provides each scholar with five hours a week of faculty-mentored work on community-engaged research or coursework. In addition, students meet monthly with Drachman faculty and staff to build their skills in community engagement.



(right) Kenny Wong, Courtney Crosson, Evie Stillgebauer, Jayani Natarajan, Lamika Ortet, Sandra Bernal.
Second row: Helen Erickson, Dennis Nichols, Linus Friendman, Ana Ponce, Kristi Currans, Sheehan Wachter.
Not pictured Paul George-Blazevich.

Meet the Inaugural Community Engaged Scholars Cohort

HOUSING POLICY AND ZONING REFORM

Linus Friedman

Faculty Mentor: Bill Mackey

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Evie Stillgebauer

Faculty Mentor: Kristi Currans

DOCUMENTING COMMUNITY STORIES

Ana Ponce

Faculty Mentor: Sandra Bernal

DESIGNING WITH ECOLOGY

Jayani Natarajan

Faculty Mentor: Sheehan Wachter

ADVANCING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Paul George-Blazevich

Faculty Mentor: Daniel Kuhlmann and Kenny Wong

PRESERVING CULTURAL SITES

Dennis Nichols

Faculty Mentor: Helen Erickson

SUPPORTING DRACHMAN'S MISSION

Lamika Ortet

Faculty Mentor: Courtney Crosson

ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

CAPLA’s teaching, research, and service initiatives benefit from the diverse support of community partners across Tucson, Arizona, and beyond. We are deeply grateful for their engagement, which enriches the experiences of our students, faculty, and staff and enhances our facilities.

329

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS, professional organizations, educational institutions, firms, community organizations and government/public agencies



NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Professional Organizations

- ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Educational Institutions

- University of California, San Diego
- University of Rhode Island

Design, Engineering, and Construction Firms

- Solis Engineering Co.
- Yellowstone Landscapes

Allied Industries

- Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Steel Jupiter
- Sustainable Development Strategies Group
- Urban Transportation Group (Germany)

Community Partners

- Miami Unified School District
- Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Russel Sage Foundation
- The Land with No Name Sanctuary
- Watermark Retirement Communities
- Wood River Land Trust

Government/Public Agencies and Utilities

- Arizona Department of Transportation
- First Things First, Santa Cruz County
- Nogales Public Works Department
- Nogales Police Department
- Holy Cross Hospital Nogales
- Mariposa Community Health Center
- Nogales Community Food Bank
- Patagonia Senior Center
- Rio Rico High School
- Rio Rico Medical & Fire District
- Santa Cruz County Health & Human Services
- Santa Cruz County Information Technology
- Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Management
- Santa Cruz County Public Works
- Santa Cruz County Sherriff’s Office
- Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools
- Santa Cruz County, Arizona
- Santa Cruz Elementary District
- Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35
- Sonoita Elgin Fire District
- The Cyclist’s Menu
- Town of Patagonia
- Tubac Fire District
- Tucson Department of Transportation and Mobility
- Tucson Parks and Recreation Department
- Tucson Planning & Development Services Department

TO VIEW A FULL LIST OF PARTNERS, PLEASE SCAN THIS QR CODE. »



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS RISES TO THE CHALLENGE



Laura Hollengreen
Associate Dean for Academic
Affairs and Associate
Professor of Architecture

The past year has been a dynamic and challenging one for Academic Affairs, given the changing nature of government-university relations and uncertainty for many on campus. As always, our effort within the CAPLA community is to provide calm reassurance, assistance when necessary, and inspiration to move forward in teaching and learning with energy and optimism.

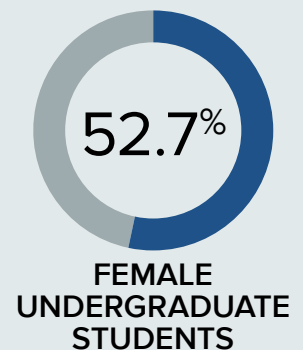
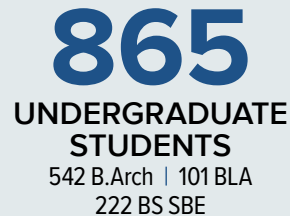
I had the pleasure of being on sabbatical in Germany and France in AY 2024-25 and wish to thank my colleagues Lisa Schrenk and Beth Weinstein for taking on parts of the Academic Affairs workload in my stead, managing everything from faculty workload documentation to advising support to inaugural “Pedagogy Chats” for faculty, and much more.

No matter what, we at CAPLA are committed to dynamism, intensive engagement, professional growth, and substantial service. In 2025, we celebrated numerous faculty and students who won national, state, and university awards in the past year. With entrepreneurial spirit, we launched and recruited for the BS in Real Estate. We worked strategically to support hardworking and ambitious students, to enlarge our scholarship/externship offerings and job placement opportunities, and to strengthen relationships with all stakeholders.

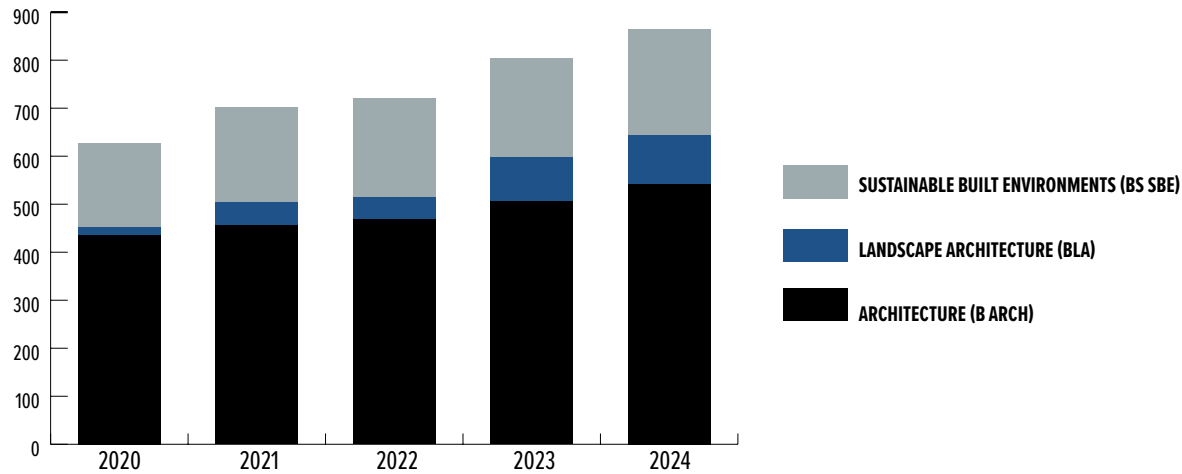
CAPLA alumni find their way into diverse and sometimes surprising settings, assuming positions of authority and, in the process, showcasing the excellent education they received in CAPLA. CAPLA staff are full partners in these endeavors. I am grateful to Undergraduate Advising Coordinator Julie Reed and B.Arch advisor Jacob Klemm for their herculean efforts on a temporarily understaffed team.

At the end of AY2024-25, we hired a new recruiter, Alessandra Lizotte, and two experienced new undergraduate advisors, Matthew Emory and Neti Gupta. With these critical hires, the team is back at full force. Gretchen Luhr, Graduate Programs Coordinator and Graduate Advisors, has spearheaded new and effective communications with graduate faculty Program Chairs and supported students with sensitivity. CAPLA has proven to be an excellent incubator for new staff and faculty and I am proud of our ability to attract top talent.

Whether it is new academic programming, faculty promotions, enthusiastic service to the university and scholarly/professional bodies, or CAPLA student applications to top graduate schools and firms, we face the future with hard work and fresh ideas. The alternative? Not our style!



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY PROGRAM FALL 2020-2024



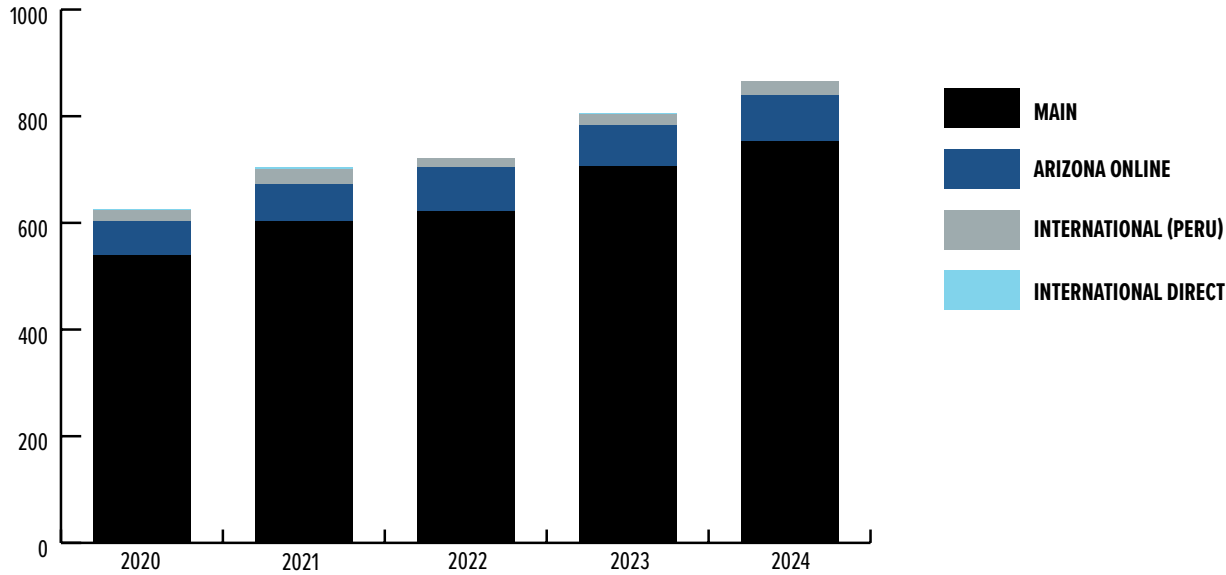
	FALL SEMESTER				
ACADEMIC PLAN	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
ARCHITECTURE (B.ARCH)	436	456	468	506	542
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE (BLA)	16	48	47	93	101
SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS (BS SBE)	174	199	206	206	222
TOTAL	626	703	721	805	865
Year Over Year Change (Headcount)		77	18	84	60
Year Over Year Change (%)		12.3%	2.6%	11.7%	7.5%

NOTES:

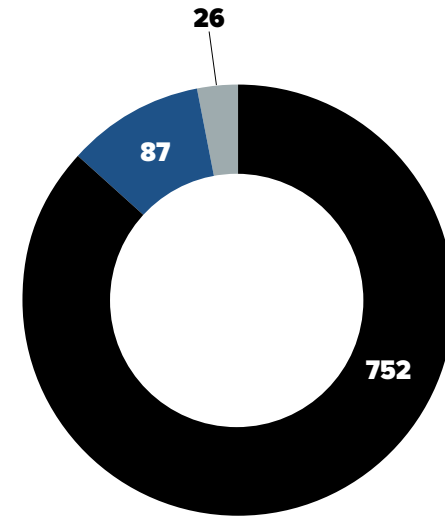
- 1.) Data based on Fall Census date for each year (21st calendar day of fall semester).
- 2.) In fall 2020 Pre-Architecture and B Arch were reorganized, resulting in the phaseout of the Pre-Architecture designation.
- 3.) The growth in SBE enrollment is mainly due to the Arizona Online campus program (from 62 students in fall 2020 to 87 students in fall 2024) and the UPC Lima International microcampus program, which began in spring 2020.
- 4.) In Spring 2023 the Landscape Architecture program saw a large number of students transfer into the program that resulted in total student enrollment of 67 as of Spring Census Date (not captured above for Fall 2022).



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY CAMPUS FALL 2020-2024



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY CAMPUS FALL 2024

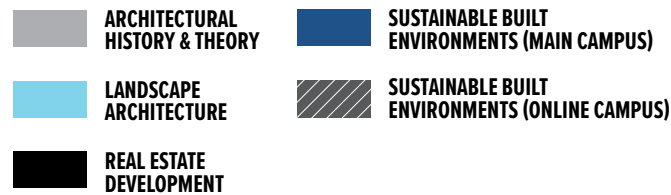
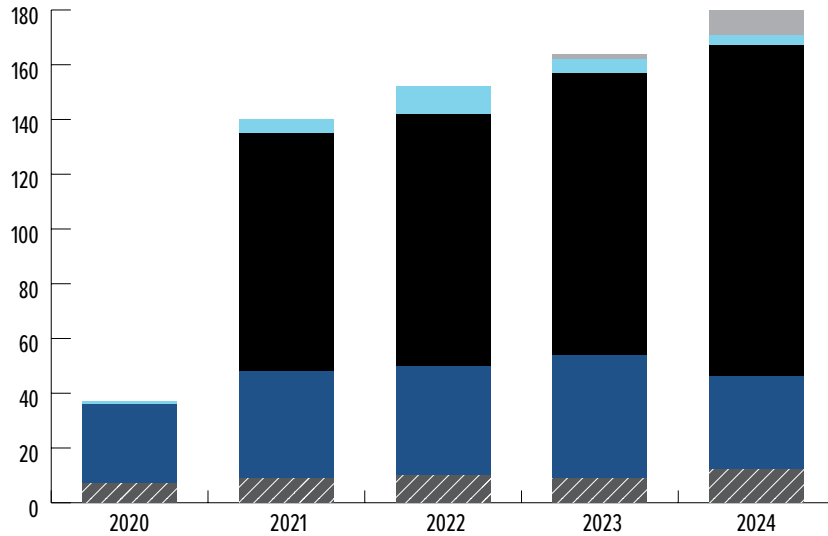


CAMPUS	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
MAIN	540	602	621	706	752
ARIZONA ONLINE	62	70	83	77	87
INTERNATIONAL (PERU)	21	29	17	21	26
INTERNATIONAL DIRECT	3	2		1	
TOTAL	626	703	721	805	865
Year Over Year Change (Headcount)		77	18	84	60
Year Over Year Change (%)		12.3%	2.6%	11.7%	7.5%

NOTES:

1. Data based on Fall Census date for each year (21st calendar day of fall semester).
2. The International Direct campus is for Arizona students taking fully online coursework from outside the U.S., but not through Arizona Online.

UNDERGRADUATE MINORS FALL 2020-2024

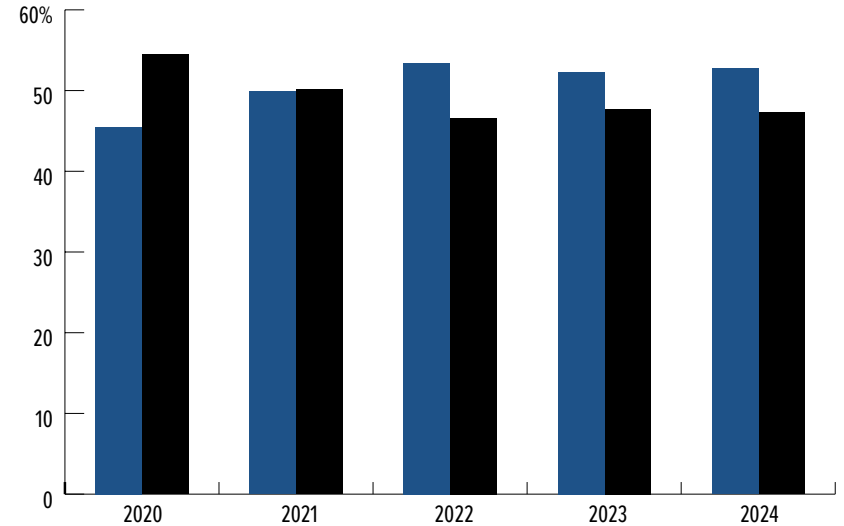


MINOR	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY & THEORY				2	9
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	1	5	10	5	4
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT		87	92	103	121
SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS (MAIN CAMPUS)	29	39	40	45	34
SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS (ONLINE CAMPUS)	7	9	10	9	12
TOTAL	37	140	152	164	180

NOTES:

1. Data based on fall census date for each year (21st calendar day of fall semester).
2. The Minor in Landscape Architecture launched in Fall 2020 and the Minor in Real Estate Development launched in Spring 2021.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT REPORTED GENDER FALL 2020-2024



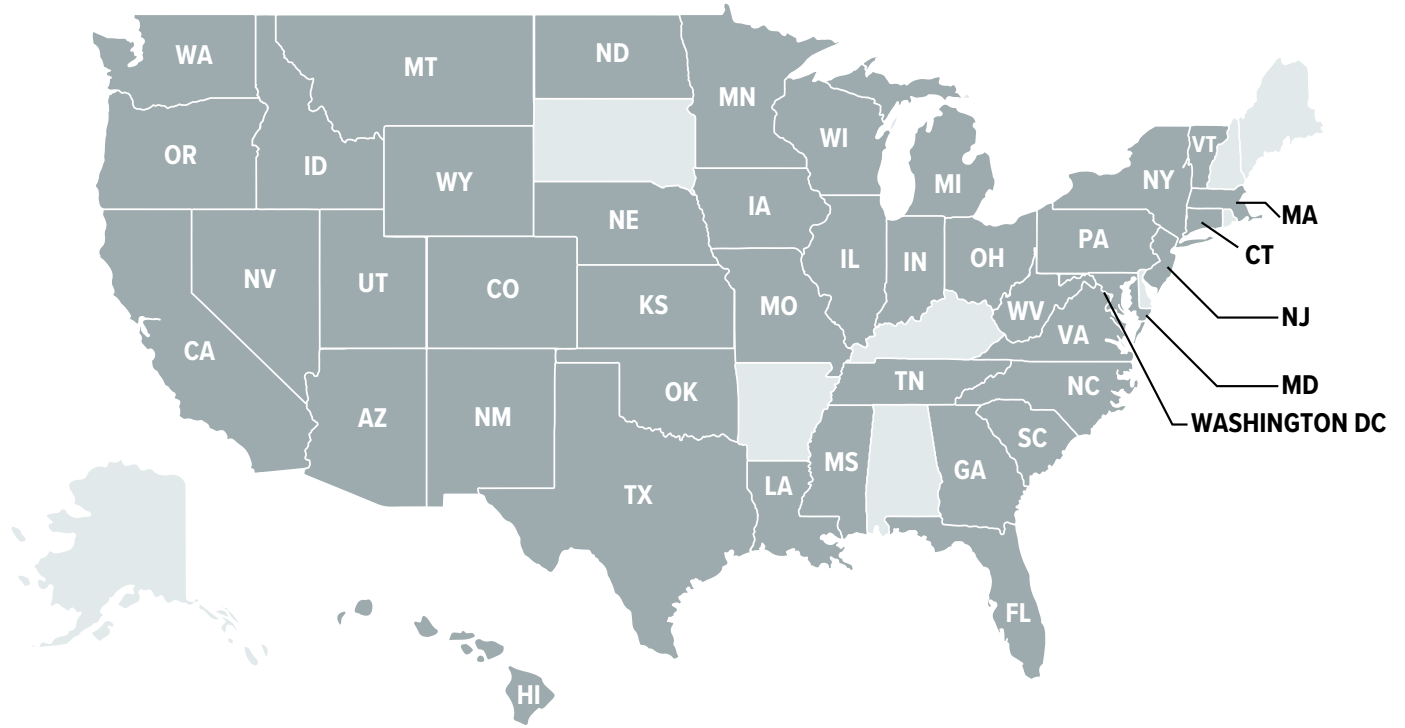
GENDER	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
FEMALE	45.5%	49.9%	53.4%	52.3%	52.7%
MALE	54.5%	50.1%	46.6%	47.7%	47.3%

Note

1. Data based on census date for each year (21st calendar day of Fall semester).

Undergraduate Home State and Country Fall 2024

In Academic Year 2024-2025, our diverse undergraduates came from **44 states** and U.S. territories (including Arizona) and **30 countries** (including the United States).



STATES

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|
| Arizona | Massachusetts | Oklahoma |
| California | Michigan | Oregon |
| Colorado | Minnesota | Pennsylvania |
| Connecticut | Mississippi | South Carolina |
| Florida | Missouri | Tennessee |
| Georgia | Montana | Texas |
| Hawaii | Nebraska | Utah |
| Idaho | Nevada | Vermont |
| Illinois | New Jersey | Virginia |
| Indiana | New Mexico | Washington |
| Iowa | New York | Washington, D.C. |
| Kansas | North Carolina | West Virginia |
| Louisiana | North Dakota | Wisconsin |
| Maryland | Ohio | Wyoming |

COUNTRIES

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Angola | Myanmar |
| Azerbaijan | Nigeria |
| Brazil | Peru |
| Canada | Philippines |
| Cayman Islands | Republic of Korea |
| Chile | Saudi Arabia |
| China | South Africa |
| Colombia | Syrian Arab Republic |
| Ghana | Taiwan |
| India | Turkey |
| Japan | United Arab Emirates |
| Jordan | United Kingdom |
| Kuwait | United States |
| Mali | Uzbekistan |
| Mexico | Viet Nam |

U.S. TERRITORIES/ OTHER

- Armed Forces Overseas High School
- American Samoa

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Shaping Resilient Leaders for a Sustainable Future

Now more than ever, the world needs resilient design, development, and planning leaders who possess the expertise and innovation to navigate rapid environmental and cultural change. As communities and regions face increasing challenges, the ability to adapt and thrive becomes essential in building a sustainable future.

With diverse research, practice, and teaching perspectives, CAPLA faculty empower our graduate students in architecture, landscape architecture, real estate development, and urban planning to lead with resilience and vision in an uncertain future.

5

GRADUATE DEGREES

- Master of Architecture
- Master of Science in Architecture
- Master of Landscape Architecture
- Master of Real Estate Development
- Master of Science in Urban Planning

4

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

- Heritage Conservation
- Real Estate Development Analysis
- Real Estate Development Finance
- Real Estate Development Practice

38

graduate research and
teaching assistants



70

GRADUATE DEGREES GRANTED
in Fall 2024, Spring 2025 and Summer 2025

13 M.Arch | 4 MS.Arch | 7 MLA
35 MRED | 11 MSUP



24 STATES

Represented in the CAPLA
graduate student body

14 COUNTRIES

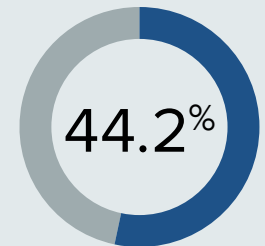
Represented in CAPLA
graduate student body



163

GRADUATE STUDENTS

32 M.Arch | 3 MS.Arch | 24 MLA
79 MRED | 25 MSUP



**FEMALE GRADUATE
STUDENTS**

A GIFT TO CAPLA THAT PAYS INCOME TO YOU?

Yes. U of A's Charitable Gift Annuity Program.

With the University of Arizona's Charitable Gift Annuity Program, you'll gain:

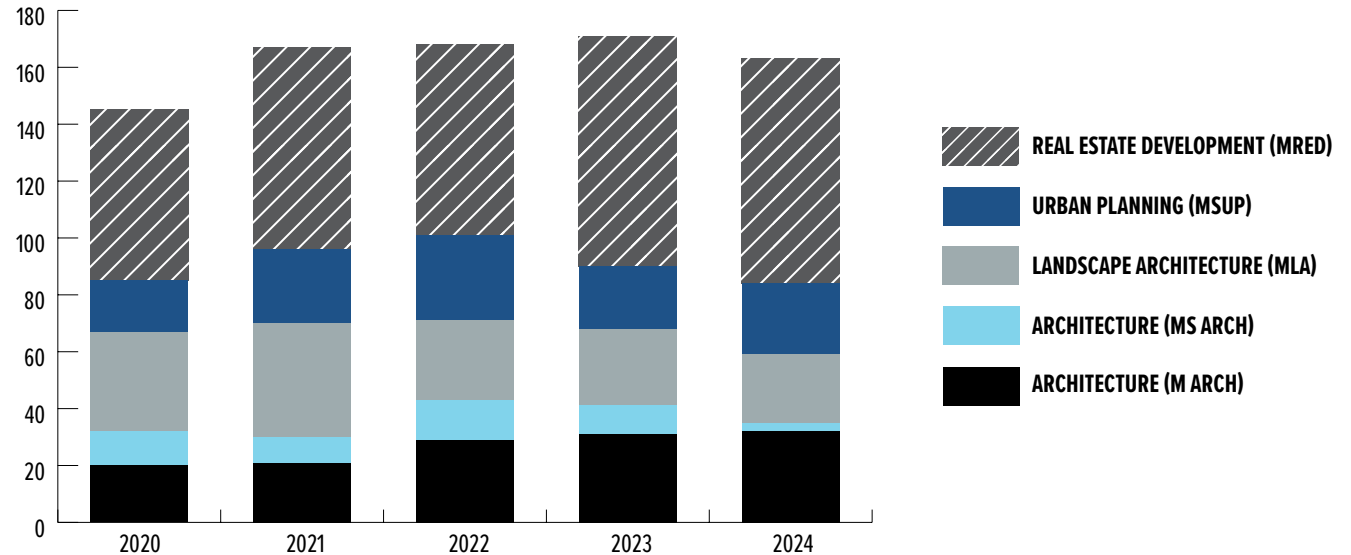
- **Steady Income:** Receive fixed, dependable payments for life.
- **Generosity with Purpose:** Support CAPLA and secure your financial future.
- **Tax Advantages:** Enjoy significant tax benefits while making a difference.
- **Peace of Mind:** Invest in a legacy that lasts.
- **True Impact:** Through your participation, we can achieve remarkable milestones in advancing our mission. Your Charitable Gift Annuities have powered initiatives that matter.

Ready to pay it forward, while paying yourself?

Contact Emilio Romero to discuss the power of planned giving to support the college and secure your legacy at the University of Arizona.

emilio.romero@uafoundation.org

GRADUATE STUDENTS BY PROGRAM FALL 2020-2024



	FALL SEMESTER				
ACADEMIC PLAN	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
ARCHITECTURE (M.ARCH)	20	21	29	31	32
ARCHITECTURE (MS.ARCH)	12	9	14	10	3
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE (MLA)	35	40	28	27	24
URBAN PLANNING (MSUP)	18	26	30	22	25
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT (MRED)	60	71	67	81	79
TOTAL	145	167	168	171	163
Year Over Year Change (Headcount)		22	1	3	-8
Year Over Year Change (%)		15.2%	0.6%	1.8%	-4.7%

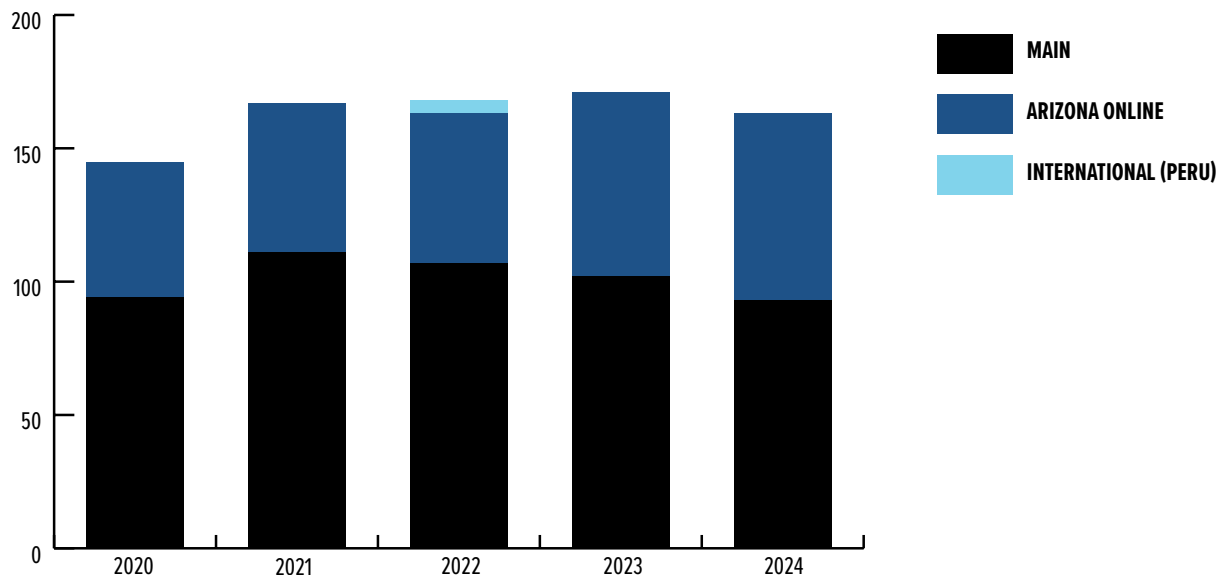
NOTES:

1. Data based on fall census date for each year (21st calendar day of fall semester).

2. The growth in MRED enrollment is mainly due to the online campus program (from 51 students in fall 2020 to 70 students in fall 2024).

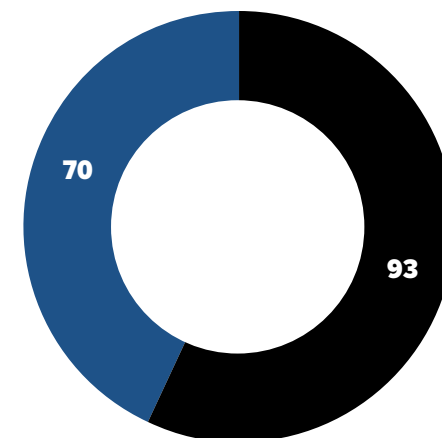
GRADUATE STUDENTS BY CAMPUS

FALL 2020-2024



GRADUATE STUDENTS BY CAMPUS

FALL 2024

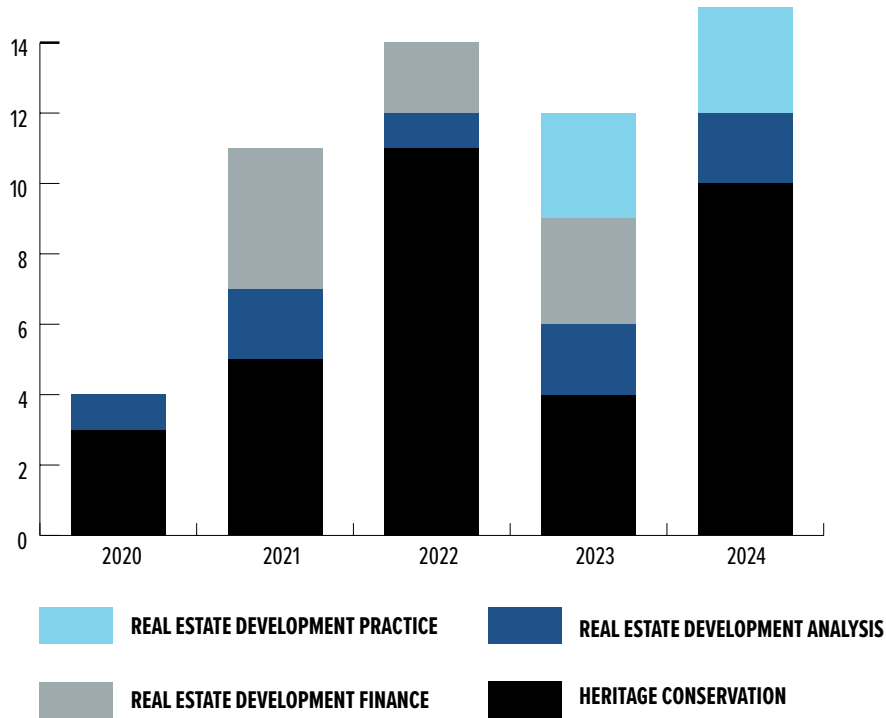


CAMPUS	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
MAIN	94	111	107	102	93
ARIZONA ONLINE	51	56	56	69	70
INTERNATIONAL (PERU)			5		
TOTAL	145	167	168	171	163
Year Over Year Change (Headcount)		22	1	3	-8
Year Over Year Change (%)		15.2%	0.6%	1.8%	-4.7%

NOTES:

1. Data based on Fall Census date for each year (21st calendar day of fall semester).

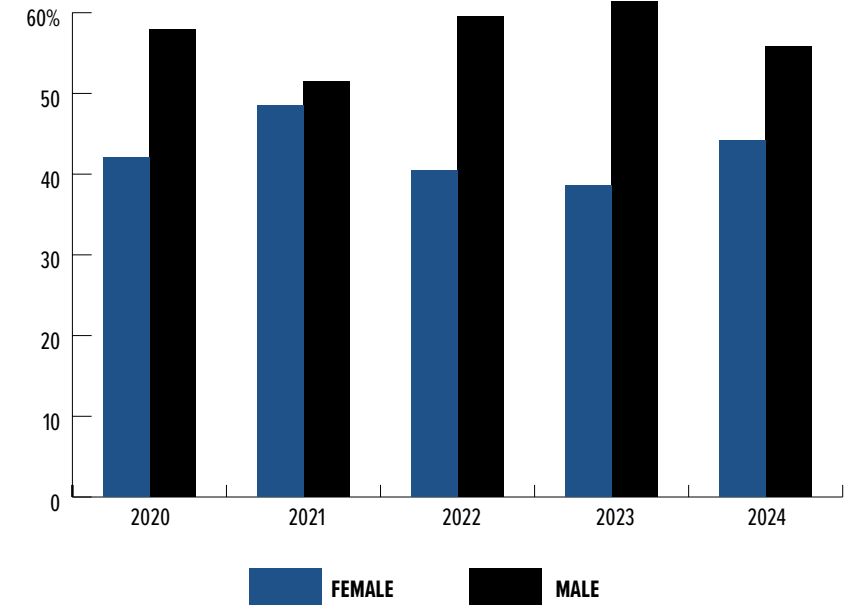
GRADUATE CERTIFICATES FALL 2020-2024



GRADUATE CERTIFICATE	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
HERITAGE CONSERVATION	3	5	11	4	10
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS	1	2	1	2	2
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT FINANCE		4	2	3	
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE				3	3
TOTAL	4	11	14	12	15

NOTE:
1 Data based on Fall Census date for each year (21st calendar day of Fall semester).

GRADUATE STUDENT REPORTED GENDER FALL 2020-2024

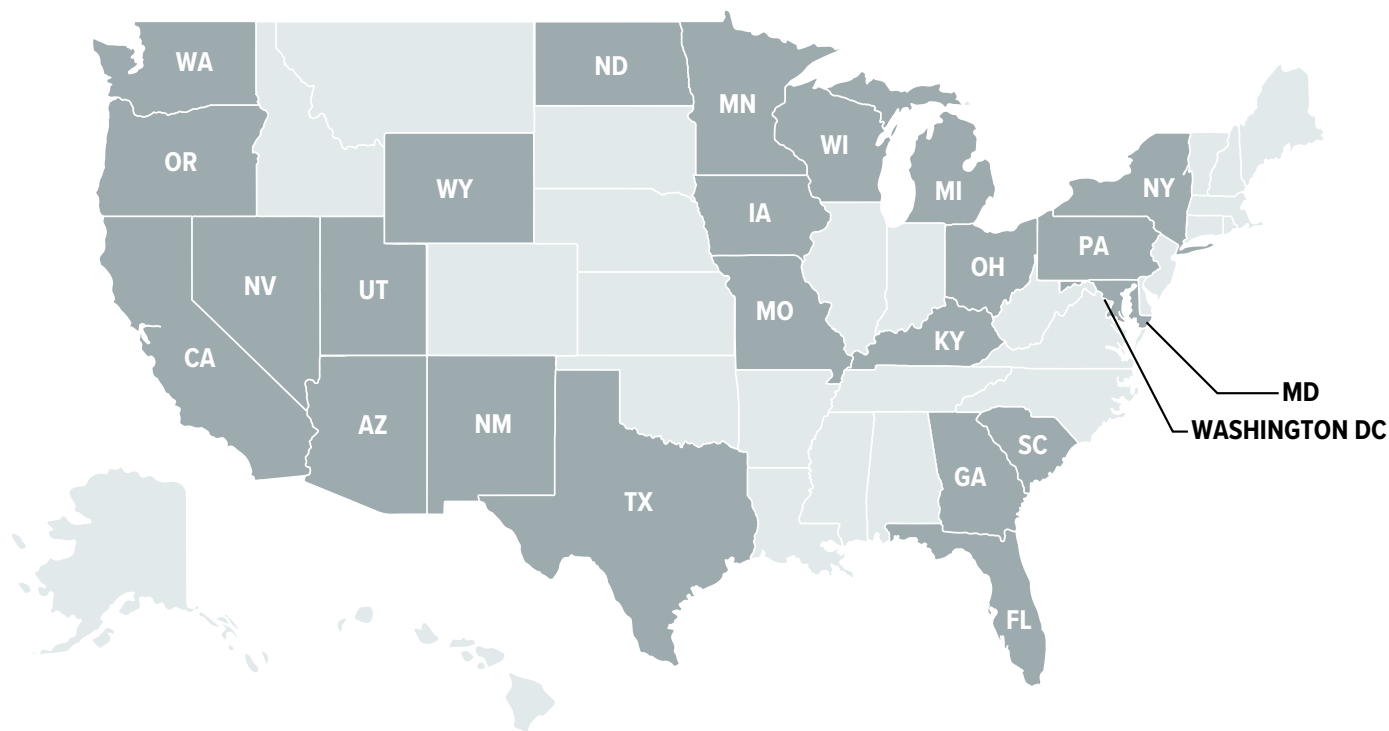


GENDER	FALL SEMESTER				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
FEMALE	42.1%	48.5%	40.5%	38.6%	44.2%
MALE	57.9%	51.5%	59.5%	61.4%	55.8%

NOTE:
1.) Data is based on Fall Census Date (21st Calendar day of Fall Semester).

Graduate Home State and Country Fall 2024

In Academic Year 2024-2025, our diverse undergraduates came from **24 states** and **14 countries**.



STATES

Arizona
California
Florida
Georgia
Iowa
Kentucky
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota

Missouri
Nevada
New Mexico
New York
North Dakota
Ohio
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina

Texas
Utah
Washington
Washington, DC
Wisconsin
Wyoming

COUNTRIES

Armenia
Bangladesh
Canada
China
Ethiopia
Ghana
India
Iran

Kenya
Kuwait
Mexico
Peru
South Korea
Spain

ALUMNI, HOW ARE YOU BUILDING A BETTER WORLD?

Share your news,
projects, time and more!

ALUMNI NOTES »

New job? Earned a promotion? Won an award? Share your achievements with us and help build a new "Class Notes" page on our website. Interested? Send your updates to capla@arizona.edu.

BEAR DOWN NETWORK »

beardownnetwork.com/groups/11/feed

Joining the CAPLA Bear Down Network Group is a great opportunity to connect with fellow alumni, expand your professional network, and stay engaged with the University of Arizona community.

WILDCAT MENTOR SOCIETY »

wms.arizona.edu

The Wildcat Mentor Society is a transformative program that connects alumni with U of A's thought leaders of tomorrow in mutually beneficial mentorships. Learn more and apply to join.

ALUMNI

Our CAPLA alumni embody curiosity, creativity, and resilience, thriving across diverse industries while driving excellence in the design, planning, and development of our built environment.

Our Community
Grows



5,410
ALUMNI



ROBIN SHAMBACH, '85 B.ARCH

CAPLA 'Alumni of the Year'

The College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture is proud to recognize Robin Shambach, B.Arch '85, as its 2024 Alumna of the Year.

A dedicated architect, mentor, and advocate for diversity in the profession, Shambach has made a lasting impact on both the built environment and the CAPLA community.

With more than 38 years of experience in architecture, she has demonstrated exceptional leadership and a deep commitment to public and educational design. As a founding member of BWS Architects, she has played a key role in shaping the firm's success, contributing to projects that enhance learning environments and public spaces across Arizona.

In an industry still grappling with issues of sexism, racism, and classism, Shambach has navigated these challenges while empowering those around her.

Ryan Smith, director of the School of Architecture, emphasized that the award not only acknowledges professional achievements but also celebrates the lasting impact alumni have on the college, school, and university.

"I can't tell you how many countless reviews I've stepped into, and Robin is right there," he said. "In particular, she has been impactful in the local community by advocating for women who are underrepresented in leadership positions in the profession—and our own students recognize her efforts and feel empowered."

Alumni of the Year | 2025-2026

We posthumously celebrated Donald Lee Baker, '14, Master of Real Estate Development, as our Alumni of the Year in February.



CAPLA Dean Nancy Pollock-Ellwand and Robin Shambach. The University of Arizona Alumni of the Year Award recognizes individuals for their professional achievements, public service, advocacy for education, volunteerism, and contributions to students, their college, and the university.

Photo by Chris Richards / University of Arizona Foundation



CAPLA, JONES STUDIO LAUNCHES GRAND CHALLENGES LECTURE SERIES

Thanks to a gift from Phoenix-based Jones Studio, a new Grand Challenges Lecture Series was launched by the School of Architecture.

The Grand Challenges Lecture Series aims to engage students, faculty, and the broader professional community with thought leaders across disciplines who are actively shaping the future of architecture and society. This series will confront some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges facing our communities and the built environment today.

“We want to inspire optimism and curiosity in students by connecting them with remarkable individuals who bring unique passions and perspectives to their work,” says Brian Farling, AIA, principal at Jones Studio. “By sparking dialogue, encouraging research, and advancing design thinking, we hope to begin answering the question, ‘How can we change the world?’”

Oscar Lopez, Assoc. AIA, a senior lecturer in the School of Architecture, has been chair of the CAPLA School of Architecture Lecture Series for the past three years.

“Through thoughtful lectures and meaningful exchanges, the series aims to spark optimism and curiosity in future architects, equipping them to approach grand challenges with the ingenuity and passion needed to drive positive change in the architecture profession.”
– Eddie Jones, FAIA, founder and principal, Jones Studio

“Partnering with Jones Studio came naturally as they consistently address greater issues as part of their work and culture, it’s in their DNA,” Lopez said. “Whether it’s issues that address the border, water, or community, Jones Studio does not shy away from taking a critical stance.”

The inaugural lecture was kicked off by Ronald Rael, as he spoke about his groundbreaking initiative, “Mud y Robots,” a project that merges the ancient art of earthen building with the latest in additive manufacturing technology to create sustainable housing solutions with the potential to transform our planet.

(above) Ronald Rael, architect and professor at the University of California Berkeley, was inaugural speaker for the Jones Studio Grand Challenges Lecture.

Based in Tempe, AZ, Jones Studio is an architecture, design, and public art studio. Jones Studio Principals Brian Farling, AIA, and Eddie Jones, AIA, visit CAPLA often to guest lecture and participate in studio reviews.

ALUMNA HELEN J. KESSLER, '75 B.ARCH, ESTABLISHES TRAVEL FELLOWSHIP ENDOWMENT



Helen Kessler

The College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture is pleased to announce the establishment of the Helen J. Kessler, FAIA International Travel Fellowship, created by alumna Helen J. Kessler '75 B.Arch.

The endowment will support student travel experiences that broaden perspectives, build confidence, and deepen understanding of architecture and the built environment across cultural contexts.

Kessler, FAIA, LEED Fellow, WELL AP, recently celebrated her 50th class reunion, traces the origins of this gift to her passion for traveling, experiencing diverse cultures, and her formative years at the University of Arizona, including her year studying in London.

Kessler is the principal of HJKessler Associates and brings more than 40 years of experience in systems thinking, sustainable design, energy efficiency and renewable energy to her work. She is an internationally recognized green building consultant, facilitator and educator and is currently focusing on living systems thinking and regenerative development.

Her decision to create a travel scholarship is rooted partly in her own international study experience. During her fourth year, she completed a year of architecture study in London, an experience that left a lifelong impression.

"You do something like that, it opens up your world," she said. "When I think about my architecture schooling... if you were to ask me to pick some of the highlights, they would all be in London."

Kessler has long supported student travel at CAPLA through contributions to the Albanese Family Travel Scholarship, inspired by Dean Emeritus and friend Chuck Albanese.



Alumna Helen Kessler attributes a study abroad trip to London as leaving a "lifelong impression" during her time as an architecture student.

ADVANCEMENT

FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

\$308,393

REALIZED GIFTS +
DEVELOPMENT REVENUE +
NEW ENDOWED COMMITMENTS



152

Total Gifts Made

CAPLA Endowment **TOTAL \$8,606,865**

CAPLA	\$2,363,670
DRACHMAN INSTITUTE	\$2,294,846
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE	\$2,939,401
SCHOOL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	\$1,008,945

Planned Gifts

Ending Fair Market Value: \$8,606,865

(as of 10/31/2025)

Beginning Fair Market Value: \$5,866,046

(as of 7/1/2019)

Net Change in Fair Market Value: \$2,740,819

Percentage Increase of 46.7%



CAPLA Futures Council

The CAPLA Futures Council serves as an advisory board to CAPLA Dean Nancy Pollock-Ellwand, providing insight on challenges faced by the college and university as well as trends in higher education, the professions and the broader community.

Richard K. Begay Jr.

Partner, SPS+ Architects

Billie Faircloth

Associate Professor, Cornell and Atkinson Scholar
Senior Faculty Fellow at the Cornell
Atkinson Center for **Sustainability**

Lawrence D. Frank

Professor of Urban Studies and Planning,
University of California, San Diego
President, Urban Design 4 Health

Larry Head

Professor of Systems and Industrial Engineering and Director,
Transportation Research Institute, University of Arizona

Kendra Hyson

Co-Founder and President, The Urban Studio

Diane Jacobs

Principal, Holly Street Studio

Richard R. Johnson

Senior Executive Director for Sustainability and
Professor of Practice in Environmental Studies, Rice University
CAPLA Futures Council Chair

Brian Olosov

Executive Director, Financial Service Consulting, Carlton Fields

David Ortega

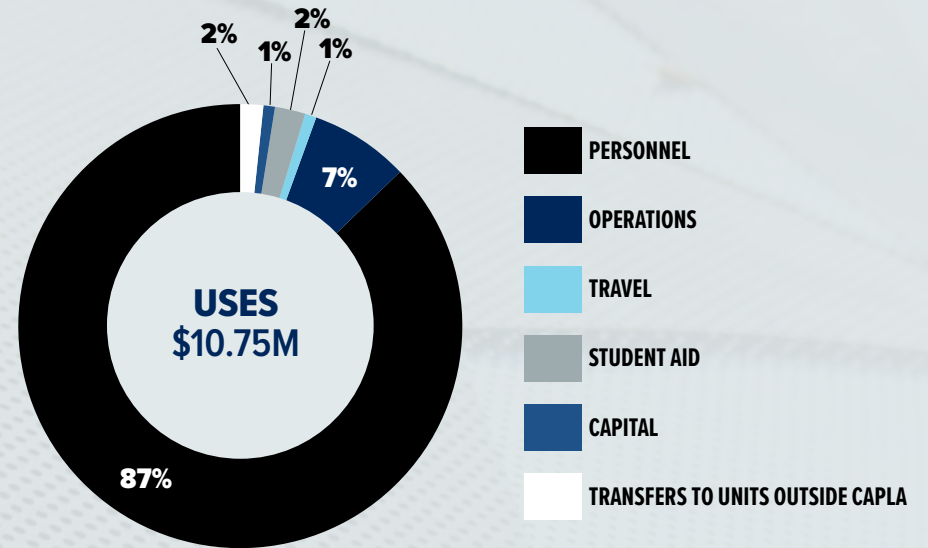
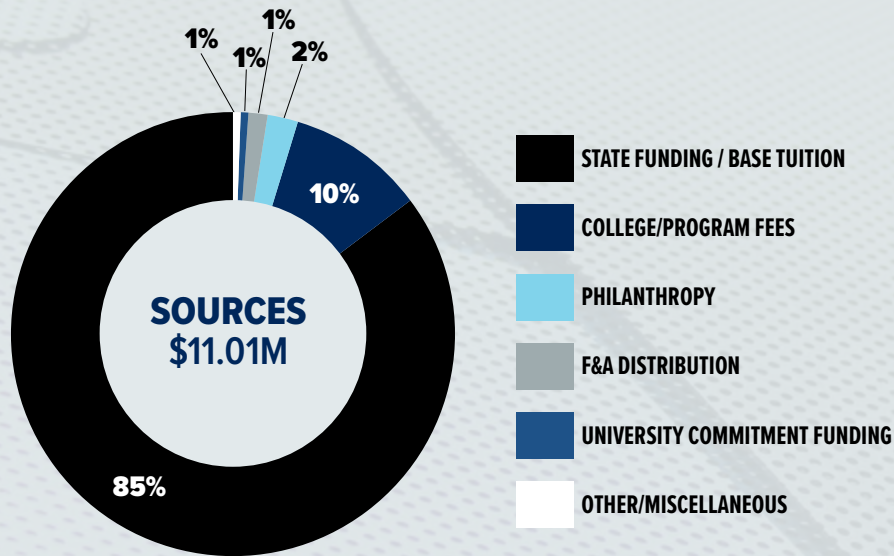
Architect and Former Mayor, City of Scottsdale

Angela Watson

President & CEO, Shepley Bulfinch



INCOME STATEMENT



SOURCES

STATE FUNDING / BASE TUITION	\$9,380
COLLEGE/PROGRAM FEES	\$1,114
PHILANTHROPY	\$244
F&A DISTRIBUTION	\$129
UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT FUNDING	\$66
OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS	\$82
TOTAL	\$11,015

USES

PERSONNEL	\$9,349
OPERATIONS	\$789
TRAVEL	\$102
STUDENT AID	\$240
CAPITAL	\$71
TRANSFERS TO UNITS OUTSIDE CAPLA	\$201
TOTAL	\$10,752

1) Not listed above regarding USES is a Non-Operating transfer from CAPLA back to the University for \$2.05M regarding final payment for the bridge loan tied to the CAPLA West building renovation project.



HAVE YOU PROVIDED FOR CAPLA IN YOUR WILL?

PLANNED GIVING

is the art of designing charitable gifts so that you realize your philanthropic objectives while minimizing your after-tax cost.

You can expect some or all of the following benefits when you provide for CAPLA in your will:

- Income tax and/or estate tax savings
- Avoidance of capital gains tax on a gift of long-term appreciated property
- Life income for yourself and/or others
- Increased cash flow
- Reduced costs and time in estate settlement

Ready to make a long-term plan to support CAPLA?

Contact Emilio Romero to discuss the power of planned giving to support the college and secure your legacy at the University of Arizona.

emilio.romero@uafoundation.org

CONNECT WITH CAPLA

As a CAPLA alum, industry partner or community leader, your experience can have a major impact on our students—providing insight and inspiration as they prepare to build their future. Connect with us to:



1 PROVIDE CAREER ADVICE

Serve as an information resource and guide for a CAPLA student or alum.



2 HOST STUDENTS OR ALUMNI

Host a group of CAPLA undergraduate or graduate students or alumni at your place of business to help students learn more about careers and specific industries, as well as to network.



3 EMPLOY OUR STUDENTS

Open the door for a CAPLA student to obtain an internship or a full-time job at your firm.



4 SERVE AS AN EXTERNSHIP HOST

Allow a CAPLA student to shadow you so they gain an understanding of your field and the world of full-time work.



5 BE A GUEST SPEAKER

Share your experiences and insights in the classroom, at a student organization meeting or at a college-wide event.



6 MENTOR OUR STUDENTS OR YOUNG ALUMNI

Help guide CAPLA students or alumni through choices as they develop interests and expertise and start taking steps towards life after graduation.



7 SERVE AS A PANELIST

Interact with groups of CAPLA students and other professionals by offering your insights and experiences as part of industry-specific panels.



8 PARTNER WITH CAPLA ON DESIGN-BUILD

Take advantage of our faculty expertise and student ambition for approved design-build projects.



9 TAP INTO CAPLA RESEARCH

Utilize CAPLA faculty research or design expertise for a business or community project through the Drachman Institute.



10 PAY IT FORWARD

Your tax-deductible gift can make an impact on a student, assist with faculty research and help develop programs within the college.

Visit capla.arizona.edu/connect to get involved today.