

June 2010 - Volume 3

## > event wrap-up

### Off-Ramp Exhibition

On April 25th, 2010, The Dunes LLC hosted Off Ramp, an Earth Day fundraiser held to benefit AfH-DC. The highlight of this event was a one-day exhibit of AfH-DC's work, co-curated by members Michelle Bove and Rachel Schmidt. The venue was the Longview Gallery, a favorite with local artists for its edgy yet upscale urban vibe.

The AfH-DC exhibit featured video, photography and story boards highlighting our recent projects. The projects featured included the Akilah Institute, Rwanda; home rebuilding in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and a local project at DC's Cardozo High School. The exhibits highlighted AfH-DC's commitment to designing spaces that meet the practical needs of their communities, while ensuring their long-term viability and reducing their environmental impact. Support for the AfH-DC exhibit was provided by the Catholic University School of Architecture and Planning, DodgeChrome and MBC Color Graphics.

The Dunes LLC is a private organization whose goal is to support talented artists, musicians, designers, and innovative non-profits, by providing them unique exposure at exceptional events in some of the most amazing spaces in Washington, DC. "We chose the name 'Off Ramp' as a metaphor for our society's need to, literally, exit the path we are on; both in terms of how we understand our cumulative impact on the environment and what we are doing to manage it," said Ora Nwabueze, founder of The Dunes. He added that he picked AfH-DC as the beneficiary of the proceeds of this event because "they build things from the ground up with sustainability in mind."

A portion of all proceeds raised at this event will go towards AfH-DC's current project at Cardozo High School, the Parent Community Connector Center. This local initiative aims at getting more parents and community members involved with the school by creating a custom space to serve their needs. The hope is that this step will serve as a catalyst to bring much-needed change to the school.

Also trying to bring change to DC public schools is Lauren van der Pool, a vegan chef who has been a passionate advocate for healthier school meals. Off-ramp attendees had a chance to sample her vegetarian versions of cod bruschetta, filet mignon and burgers. In addition, they enjoyed musical performances by U.S. Royalty, Matthew Hemerlein and other DJs; jewelry by MiSHi; custom silkscreen designs by Truth among Liars, a DC-based artists' collective; and art by Mike Weber.

-Maya Srinivasan



(Above and below) Viewers enjoying the many displays at Off Ramp.



(Above) Michelle Bove hangs out with a young participant of Off Ramp.



(Above) Elizabeth Davis, director of the Akilah Institute speaks about her work, and her partnership with AfHdc.

## > project highlight Cardozo Highschool

Imagine a warm, inviting high school where parents can go to check their email or meet with a teacher to inquire about their children's progress.



(Above) Cardozo High School, where AfHdc will work to make a difference.

A place where parents can meet over a cup of coffee, discuss the joys and pains of raising teenagers, or to talk to a guidance counselor about future options for their children. A place where parents, students, Cardozo staff and community members can attend workshops, seminars, classes, and other events to gather information, learn a new skill, receive counseling or just some encouragement. Or even a place where a com-

munity of people inspires others to get involved in order to advance the success of students.

Thanks to a collaborative effort by 21CSF, SHAPPE (Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and Educators), Cardozo Senior High school teachers and students, parents and community

members, no one will ever have to merely imagine such a place. Welcome to the Cardozo Parent/Community Resource Center.

Born from years of frustration about dilapidated schools in DC, this project has gained lots of interest and momentum - from our initial client meeting this past January to our project kick off meeting last month.

The team members for this project are enthusiastic, talented, passionate and committed and have contributed many great and insightful ideas that have impressed the client (21CSF/SHAPPE).

After several weeks of assessing the clients' and parents needs and a few brainstorming sessions, the project team designed an excellent conceptual floor plan that was presented at the May 19th Cardozo PTO meeting. It was very well received by the clients, parents, teachers and the principal. Next on our agenda is to visit the GSA furniture warehouse, a well-stocked facility that houses quality pre-owned furniture, available to DCPS employees for use in their schools at no cost. Also, InterfaceFLOR has graciously agreed to donate carpet tiles for this project. Project completion is slated for the summer of 2010.

AFH-DC is honored and excited to be apart of this collaborative effort which we fondly call "Collaborating for Cardozo". With a great project team in place, we are confident that we will develop and implement a great design that will help to strengthen the connection between a school and its community. We're hoping that setting up this center will attract a greater degree of involvement with the school from the parents and community members, a factor proven to be vital to the success of any public school. This will help increase enrollment, which is crucial to obtaining the funding from the DCPS system that Cardozo High School badly needs.

Visit <http://www.thethirdteacher.com/blog/april-23-2010---collaborating-cardozo-dawn-hyman-guest-blogger>. A blog is sponsored by the book *The Third Teacher*, a collection of case studies showcasing real-life examples of schools that have used design in transformative ways.

For more information about Collaborating for Cardozo, please contact the Project Coordinators Dawn Hyman and Krupa Patel at [Cardozo@afh-dc.org](mailto:afh-dc.org).



(Left) AFH-DC members visit the Peace Garden with Cardozo PTO members.



(Right) The classroom which is to be transformed into the Parent Community Resource Center.

## > community design a showcase of three practices

In an effort to display excellent work related to community focused design, presented on this page are three design practices who embody the spirit of collaboration, creativity, and social empowerment. The projects below include activist installations, residential architecture, large scale projects, and urban planning exercises. Their work proves that non-profit and humanitarian efforts in architecture can indeed be at the forefront of innovation and design.

### >public architecture

1211 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA  
[www.publicarchitecture.org](http://www.publicarchitecture.org)



Public Architecture led the design and construction of "Scrap House," a temporary demonstration home, built entirely of salvaged material (above). Walls were sheathed with everything from street signs and shower doors.

Public Architecture is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose mission, through its national initiative "The 1%," [1] is to encourage and inspire architecture and design firms to donate at least 1% of their billable hours to the public good through pro bono work. Public Architecture has identified several public interest projects that tackle social issues, and then raises funding and support to realize them as model projects. Public Architecture acts as a catalyst for public discourse through education, advocacy, and the design of public spaces and amenities. Public Architecture was founded in 2002 by architect John Peterson, and is based in San Francisco.

All images and information courtesy of Public Architecture



In this act of guerilla art, the entire exterior of a burned house in Detroit was wrapped in 8,070 lineal feet of clear plastic—body bag (left).

### >detroit collaborative design center

4001 West McNichols Rd, Detroit, MI  
[http://arch.udmercy.edu/dc/design\\_center01](http://arch.udmercy.edu/dc/design_center01)

The Detroit Collaborative Design Center is a center for applied research in architectural design and neighborhood development. The Center is committed to design as a means for uplifting and dignifying the human person. Located in the University of Detroit-Mercy School of Architecture, the Design Center is a unique, multi-disciplinary, non-profit organization which is dedicated to renewing the city by revitalizing its neighborhoods.

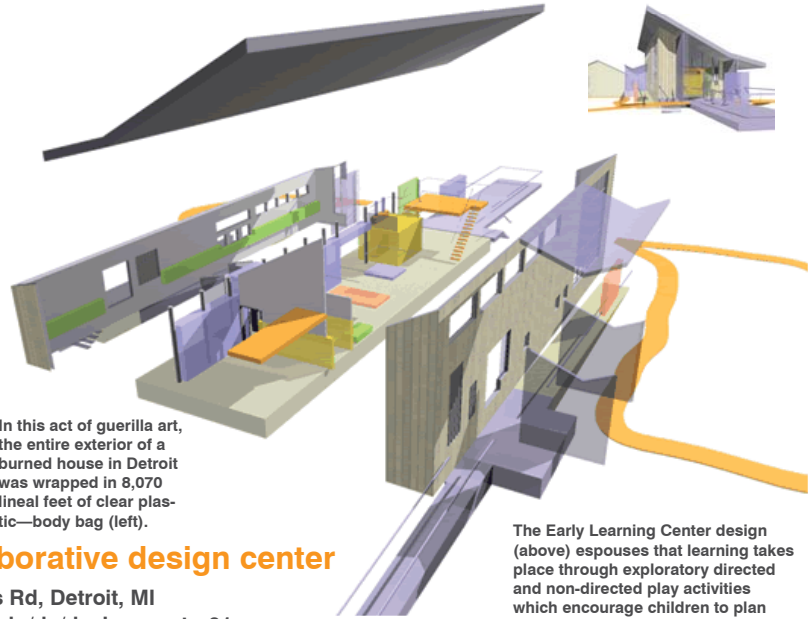
### >gulf coast community design studio

425 Division St., Biloxi, MS  
<http://www.gccds.org/>



The Patty's House (above) follows the model of a dog-trot, a southern vernacular house type. The design addresses the challenges of an elevated house. The house is thirteen feet off the ground to meet the FEMA advisory flood elevations. The house structure is innovative with a combination of concrete and pressure treated wood.

(Upper Right) The NAVASA (the National Alliance of Vietnamese American Service Agencies), Boat People SOS, the East Biloxi Coordination Center, and the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio held a community meeting on February 27 to present five scenarios for Oak Street that had been identified by residents and business owners. The left shows one of them, a plan to develop a Vietnamese District on the street.



The Early Learning Center design (above) espouses that learning takes place through exploratory directed and non-directed play activities which encourage children to plan and think.

The Design Center seeks to promote collaboration among community organizations, local governments and private developers to confront the social, economic and political realities which have for years contributed to the physical deterioration of urban Detroit.

All images and information courtesy of DCDC.



The Gulf Coast Community Design Studio (GCCDS) is a professional service and outreach program of Mississippi State University's College of Architecture, Art + Design. The GCCDS was established in Biloxi, Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina to provide architectural design services, landscape and planning assistance, educational opportunities and research to organizations and communities along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, revitalizing its neighborhoods.

The GCCDS works through close, pragmatic partnerships with local organizations and communities. In Biloxi, the GCCDS shares work space with a key local partner, the Hope Community Development Agency – a relationship that brings the office into direct and continuous contact with the community's needs and resources.

All images and information courtesy of GCCDS.

## > upcoming events

- July: Catholic University - School of Architecture and Planning Lecture Series, Koubek Auditorium**

  - Wednesday, July 14, 5:30pm, **Elizabeth Gray & Alan Organschi Gray Organschi Architecture, New Haven, CT**
  - Wednesday, July 21, 5:30 pm **Hilary Sample + Michael Meredith MOS, Ilc, New York, NY**
  - Wednesday, July 28, 5:30 pm **Michael Szivos + Jose Gonzales SOFTlab, New York, NY**
- Thurs. July 15 7:00- 8:30 pm The 2010 L'Enfant Lecture on Urban Planning and Design National Building Museum \$15 non-members**

## > AfH-DC Snapshots



(Above) Our members Joe, Steve, Gabby and friends at the Umueze School Fundraiser held in early 2008.  
(Below left) Mark laughing the night away. (Below right) Our triumphant banner!

## > ideas?

We welcome ideas and contributions!

We are also presently looking for another team member to join as early as the beginning of August.

Please send all inquiries to: [newsletter@afh-dc.org](mailto:newsletter@afh-dc.org)

The Capital Ideas Newsletter Team is:  
Maya Srinivasan, Julia Siple, Shurid Rahman.

**Thank you to everyone else who helped and contributed!**

## > opportunities

### -AfH-DC Organizational Assistant Needed-

As the organization has grown significantly over the last 3-4 years, so has the need for improved communication, both internally and externally. The Chapter desires to find an individual with good correspondence skills who would like to support our mission. The individual will have an opportunity to be part of a growing organization and will gain first-hand experience in developing its structure to effectively apply its mission locally and beyond.

Responsibilities include (but are not limited to) participating in member and board meetings to record meeting minutes and working with the Chapter Coordinators to facilitate email correspondence, both within the organization and outside of it. Experience is not necessary, but good writing skills and a desire to help will be a plus. We will be open to any creative input and suggestions.

The individual can work remotely for the most part, but will need to attend Chapter meetings on occasion (1-2 times a month). The average monthly commitment of time is likely to be 8 hours.

Please email Joe Fuentes at [jaf@afh-dc.org](mailto:jaf@afh-dc.org) for more information