

# Expanding youth opportunity studio: Design research engaging community participants

Julia W. Robinson, Alysha C. Price<sup>2</sup>, Third Author<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Architecture, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>2</sup>Price Dynamid, Minneapolis, Minnesota

<sup>3</sup>Third Institution, City, State

**ABSTRACT:** A successful research-based design studio that includes community engagement is dependent upon pedagogy that serves both student and community participants. This case evolved from 2019 to 2020 based on lessons learned by the research team of students, faculty, community members and contributing critics. The 2019 *Preventing Youth Incarceration* studio addressed the needs of at-risk youth, including those in detention. The research-based studio explored adolescent development, mental illness, addiction, and trauma, addressing the county request for a spectrum of treatment facilities that are not institutional and meet the new concern for trauma-informed care (Olafson et al, 2014). Work with community members began in fall 2019, when the studio focused on North Minneapolis, a neighborhood of origin for many adjudicated young people, and affiliated with UROC, the university research center. A community consultant selected nine community members to work on the project, who received a stipend to cover their time and expenses. They served on reviews alongside design and incarceration professionals. In fall 2020, the studio continued, but due to COVID-19, held meetings online, rather than at the research center. The paper addresses the challenges of developing a design pedagogy that supports student learning while engaging community participants. It focuses on selection of participants, scheduling reviews, maintaining participation throughout the semester, and the challenges of working with community participants in in person versus online.

**KEYWORDS:** Community Participation, Studio Pedagogy, Youth, Incarceration, Remote Learning

## 1.0 THE DESIGN STUDIO AS A SITE FOR RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

Among the many approaches to architectural research, the design studio is valuable for exploratory research (Robinson 2019, Robinson & Christenson forthcoming). Exploratory research seeks to understand and define a particular question that is not fully formulated, in this case, “what can architectural design contribute to the problem of juvenile incarceration?” Exploratory research investigators need to be open to unexpected insights and to explore directions unforeseen at the beginning. These changes of directions in this project are reflected in the studio’s evolving name, first *Reconceiving Juvenile Incarceration* (Fall 2018), then *Preventing Juvenile Incarceration* (Fall 2019), and finally *Expanding Youth Opportunity* (Fall 2020).

In 2016, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties in Minnesota had jointly proposed a new juvenile incarceration facilities at Hennepin County’s existing suburban location. However, the community rejected the design as too large, too institutional, and too far from residents’ families (Smith, 2016). The architecture studio *Reconceiving Juvenile Incarceration* was a cooperative effort led by Julia Robinson of the University of Minnesota School of Architecture, Daniel Treinen of BWBR Architects, a firm experienced in justice facilities and behavioral design, and Angela Cousins, then juvenile facilities director for Hennepin County Department of Corrections and Community Rehabilitation (DOCCR). The studio’s charge was to consider replacing the existing Home School, in the context of developing a spectrum of care for adjudicated youth and for those at risk of incarceration. The first studio was in Fall 2018, with the subsequent studios in the next two fall semesters.

From the beginning, the studio research team of students and instructors investigated the full range of issues to be considered in designing for at-risk youth, to learn about mass incarceration, and to understand the existing juvenile incarceration system and alternatives. Each class read articles and books, watched videos, made site visits, learned from guest speakers, and had their work reviewed by design and incarceration and/or social service professionals.

Also consistently, the students completed design exercises designed to inform them about program and neighborhood, to explore architectural expression of positive, non-punitive attitudes, as well as to support their completion of an architectural design in the 15-week period of the class. Based on the approach of *programming as design* (Robinson & Weeks, 1984), the exercises consisted of 1. Preconceptions, 2. Precedent Analysis, 3. Neighborhood and Urban Analysis, 4. Program and Site, 5. Ritual and Place, 6.) Design-A-Room, and 7) Final Schematic Design. The goal was to use research as a basis developing a program and design of a facility that would serve at-risk and/or adjudicated youth in a spectrum of services.

## 2.0 COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DESIGN

Inclusion of stakeholders in design decision-making in architecture is used in several kinds of design practice especially community and urban design. Although participatory research began in the 2018 studio, the tragic death of George Floyd, and the racial disparities seen the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 have led to an increased concern with race, social justice and equity, in relation to the architectural profession, and an increased interest in accounting for voices outside the profession. While community-engaged or participatory design practitioners have employed various methodologies (e.g. Sanoff, 1990; Hester, 1990), and academics have developed pedagogies for lay participation in design studios (e.g. Hardin et al, 2006) there is no widely accepted methodology for design studio instruction with participation by lay people.

The approach taken here was based in the neighborhood of study. Northside neighborhood residents identified by the community consultant (see below for the process) met as a focus group, and then served on reviews of student work. Participants received \$50 gift certificates for participating for two hours. In 2019 neighborhood participants reviewed student work alongside professionals in the neighborhood at the research center, and in 2020 they engaged in reviews both with professionals and also as an independent group, meeting online due to COVID-19. Additionally in 2020, we had the opportunity to have a review with transition-age youth.

## 3.0 PROJECT HISTORY

The first year of the research, in the studio called *Reconceiving Juvenile Incarceration*, the goal was to develop architecture that would support non-punitive attitudes such as education, or normalization: “ We will investigate new approaches to program and design of facilities that move away from older attitudes of punishment, and toward the juveniles’ education, rehabilitation, transformation, and de-institutionalization.” (Robinson, 2018)..

During the research, several observations transformed our approach. First, a site-visit comparison between the county Home School, and an architectural award-winning adolescent treatment center showed not only great architectural contrasts (one being built in the 1960s, having concrete block walls and linoleum floors, and the other built of brick with plaster walls and carpeted floors ), but also greatly contrasting populations. The county facility, supported by the taxpayers, housed only youth of color, whereas the treatment center, paid with private health insurance, housed 95% Caucasian youth. Also, a DOCCR map showed that youth in the justice system came primarily from two areas of the city, both classified as “Areas of Concentrated Poverty where 50% or more of residents are people of color” (Metropolitan Council, 2014, 5:12).

Additionally, two class speakers, parents of incarcerated youth from these neighborhoods had similar experiences raising their families. As single mothers with several children holding two minimum-wage jobs, forced by housing cost to live in neighborhoods with crime and gangs, they couldn’t afford child care. Their children were looked after by family members inexperienced, and unprepared to deal with adolescents. This led us to see the community need not only for a spectrum of treatment for youth as requested by the DOCCR, but also the need for a spectrum of family care that started with a mother’s pregnancy, included child and family members throughout infancy, preschool, elementary, middle and high school, job training or college, and ended with independent living as a young adult.

Finally, our visit to the Home School made us aware of several problems with its location: 1) adjudicated youth had to leave their neighborhood schools to attend a focused, but narrow curriculum program at the site, 2) public transportation, the primary mode used by most parents, was unavailable, so visits were primarily available when a bus was provided, which would not necessarily work with a parent’s work schedule, and 3) when treatment was complete and the youth returned home, they had to leave established relationships with therapists, so consistency of care was disrupted.

These various observations led us to several conclusions. The first is that Caucasian youth who got in trouble were not sent to juvenile detention facilities. Rather than being categorized as *criminal*, they seemed to be considered *troubled*, and sent to treatment. The second conclusion, supported by research,(e.g. Looney & Turner, 2018) is that youths in neighborhoods with high levels of poverty levels and high proportions of populations of color are more likely to be involved with the justice system. The logical extension of these two observations is that the judicial system was subject to, and perpetuating institutionalized racism.

Along with these observations we discovered in our reading of literature that youth in the justice system were very likely to have been traumatized by experiences in their neighborhoods or families, and to experience problems with mental health (Ford et al, 2007; Dierkhising et al, 2013), and that traditional incarceration settings are not rehabilitative, but aggravate trauma (Lambie & Rendell) . Furthermore, recidivism, or repeated criminal activity is higher in youth that are incarcerated than in similar youth who were given treatment in

community settings (Underwood et al, 2006), and that experts advocate ending incarceration for youth altogether (McCarthy et al 2016, Shiraldi, 2020).

We concluded that adjudicated youth should be considered to be *troubled*, and given treatment in their communities rather than incarcerated as *criminal*. Therefore, in our 2018 studio, students focused on designs that addressed prevention of incarceration rather than improving the existing incarceration system, developing programs for after-school activities, job training, and families. While acknowledging its significance, we did not address the problem of violent youth. Our goal is expressed in the following comments.

“We must hold young people accountable for the wrongs they do, but at the same time we must treat them not as the criminals we fear they will become but as the contributors we wish them to be. Re-thinking youth imprisonment is one big step we can take toward that goal.” Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason, (Mason 2016)

When designing facilities in 2018, students chose sites in neighborhoods where Home School youth came from, identifying services that were available in the neighborhoods and designing their projects to fill in gaps in services. We realized our approach made possibly incorrect assumptions about the neighborhoods. The instructors decided that for the studio in fall of 2019, we would focus on North Minneapolis, and include community participation in our pedagogy. Student projects included community centers for family education, facilities for after-school activities, and for job training.

#### **4.0 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION YEAR 1 (STUDIO 2)**

Once again, in Fall 2019, Robinson, Treinen and Cousins taught the final undergraduate Bachelor of Science Studio, *Preventing Youth Incarceration*, with the goal of addressing at-risk youth, including those in detention. The focus on prevention was paired with trauma-informed care (Olafson et al, 2014), and included participation by community members. Understanding the community required adding an urban analysis exercise focusing on North Minneapolis, with the design pedagogy otherwise following the *programming as design* approach described in section 1.0.

**4.1 Community Engagement** Having decided to focus on the Northside, the project affiliated with University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC). Center leaders recommended Alysha Price as community liaison, who identified 9 participants and supported their participation. At an introductory meeting with the participants, led by the consultant and attended by the lead instructor, community members not only discussed their interest in at-risk youth, but also identified two neighborhoods to focus on, Hawthorne and Folwell. We provided a transcript of the residents' comments to the students. Of the seven reviews of work that were held that year, five included the community participants (at their choice) alongside professionals. These sessions took place at UROC during the second half of the studio class, from 3:30-5:30, which meant that the community reviewers did not attend the entire review. Gift card stipends were given to participants at the end of meetings. Neighborhood participants were also invited to join the students in the site visits, as a part of the whole group learning together (three participated).

**4.2 Research.** Similar to 2018, in 2019, students completed readings, watched videos, participated in talks and panel discussions with experts (designers, youth detention and treatment center personnel), and visited three sites (The Hennepin County Adult Correction Facility and Juvenile Detention Center, and the Hazelden Center for Adolescent Addiction Treatment. Additionally, the class visited neighborhood facilities including the Northside Health Clinic. As a part of the research and design approach, speakers and project reviewers included professionals such as architects and people working within youth facilities for treatment and incarceration, many of whom from the BIPOC community. Community participants were invited to attend the site visits (three joined the class for site visits). At the clinic, we were hosted by Brandon Jones, who gave an inspiring talk about the programs offered, noting that is transition-age youth need attention. Young people, post high school may be at loose ends when they no longer have the structure of a school day. Unlike those with college as a four-year transition to adulthood, for youth in the Northside, adulthood may be signaled by prison or pregnancy. This led to a focus on design for transition-age youth in this and the subsequent studio.

**4.3 Student Projects.** Community participants informed the 2019 student projects about developing programs and choosing sites. Concerned about the lack of options for older youth other than sports, they especially advocated for arts programs. Projects addressed primarily transition-age youth (photography collaborative, restorative justice, transition from incarceration, garden and food service, construction job training), after school activities (teen music center, family bonding center, teen social center), and therapy (music therapy, animal therapy, sports therapy). In response to advice, students chose sites along a primary commercial street, or in the undeveloped area near the river.

**4.4 Organization of Reviews.** With 11 student projects (two projects had teams of two) to be reviewed in four hours for professionals, and two hours for community participants, scheduling was a challenge, solved by having several simultaneous reviews. That required a large number of reviewers and community participants. Over the semester, ten community members and twenty-four professionals participated in reviews (3 from the county, 9 practicing designers, 5 university researchers and 7 university faculty members). Of the professional reviewers, six were people of color, and five resided in the neighborhood.

Three review teams were each led by one instructor, and student work was reviewed by two of the three teams. Professionals participated all afternoon, and community members joined for the second half from 3:30-5:30, after a break. Having reviews held at the university research center, required time for students to set up and take down the work. The space accommodated posting all the student work at once, although it was crowded. Individual students and teams had 20 minutes to present their work. Having students reviewed by two teams required short review times. The afternoons often felt rushed, and it was difficult to keep within the time framework.

**4.5 The Recruitment Strategy for Community Participants.** In 2019 with a goal of ten community members, we successfully recruited nine. Participants, ranging in age from 25 to 60 years old, five female and four male, were encouraged to share their personal and professional knowledge of the Northside community in an open dialogue focus group and design reviews.

Community Consultant, Alysha Price targeted African American families who were parents of adolescent and teenage youth and/or worked within an organization that served this population. In addition to geographic connection, she also targeted community members who felt strongly about ending generational cycles of incarceration. Four participants were single mothers due to their child's father being incarcerated. These mothers shared a fear of their children being targeted, stereotyped, or pressured into a similar lifestyle. A community elder was recruited to help provide context and carry forth stories of community pride and empowerment. Having an elder helped to understand historical community changes, not just spatially, but how the spirit of the community had become less communal than it had been in the early 1960's and 70's.

It was imperative that the community members have a personal connection to North Minneapolis and could speak from an authentic place. Because each participant had family experience with incarceration, they were concerned to prevent youth from following in the footsteps of their family members or fathers.

#### **4.6 Lessons learned in 2019**

*Student-Community Meetings-* In-person focus group and reviews were engaging, allowing students to connect and witness community members' non-verbal energy and excitement about the community.

*Selection of Participants-* The cross cultural and generational experience that the project provided was outstanding. Students spoke to the value of meeting and learning from the community members.

*Retention-* Retention of community participants was not 100% due to the time of the class. This seemed to interfere with sports schedules of the participants that were coaching, especially males.

*Participant Cohort-* Although the group developed a sense of being a cohort, we thought the having regular meetings, versus diverse participation options would reinforce the cohort. We also thought that combining participants on reviews with professionals might have detracted from developing a sense of cohort.

*Communications-* Communication was often hard to track, with email messages coming to participants both from the lead studio instructor and from the consultant. – The many choices for participation in site visits and reviews caused confusion.

*Mixing Community Members & Professionals-* Combining professional and community participants may have reduced the impact of community voices.

*Meeting Location-* Holding meetings at UROC, located at the heart of the community, was a good choice.

*Length of Presentations/ Team Projects -* Having student work seen by two review teams resulted in reviews 20 minutes in length. Students successfully presented work in 10 minutes, but 10 minutes of comment time was difficult to maintain, with reviews often running over time, and difficulty maintaining the schedule.

*-* Having many students work as individuals created a large number of projects to review. With three instructors it was manageable, but challenging to assure students access to community reviewers. - Projects completed by student teams were generally more developed and responded more robustly to exercises and to research than projects by individuals

*Scheduling -* Holding reviews on Friday afternoon was a problem since on unlike other days, the research center was not open in the evening, and had a closing time of 6:00pm sharp.

#### **5.0 STUDIO PARTICIPATION YEAR 2 (STUDIO 3)**

In Fall 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, only Robinson taught the studio, this time called *Expanding Youth Opportunity*. Focusing on transition-aged youth, we aimed at providing housing, job training,

education, and other activities that invest in youths' future. These focus on prevention was again paired with trauma-informed design included participation by community members, and followed the *programming as design* approach.

**5.1 Community Engagement.** Instruction and participation were remote and online. Our single facility site visit was virtual, to the Home School although we visited the neighborhood in-person, guided by local activist/architectural firm owner/ Jamil Ford The design pedagogy was largely similar as described above, including the sketch model exercise using materials kits provided to the students, but using digital models for other three-dimensional representations. While a few initial exercises were individual, beginning with week 6 of the 15-weeks students worked in teams of two. This was especially important because we had one functioning instructor.

Based on 2019, we simplified participation, reducing meetings/ reviews to three. The first meeting again included only community members. With their permission, and to capture the rich comments, we recorded the Zoom meeting. Supplanting a meeting between students and community, students reviewed and discussed the recorded meeting. We also did not include participants in educational experiences, or provide a choice of reviews. Instead, they participated on three reviews: a formal neighborhood analysis review with professionals, and two informal reviews on program and site with only community participants, designed to reinforce the participants' group, and to focus on their voices. Communications were also simplified. The consultant handled all informational message. After each review, gift cards were distributed by post to participants by the principal investigator/ design instructor.

**5.2 Neighborhood Focus.** In 2020 simplification included focusing on only the Hathorne neighborhood. The east part of the neighborhood is along the river, but divided from the larger neighborhood by a four-lane highway. It has a large commercial street to the south and a heavily trafficked road to the north. To the west and north are other neighborhoods with similar demographics. Although we again affiliated with UROC, working remotely meant that we did not use the facility.

**5.3 Research.** Working remotely meant a greater focus on readings and videos than previously. We documented the in-person visit to the neighborhood in real time using a phone, and video recording, since not all students could attend, Those absent felt this gave them a good sense of the tour and the place. Our virtual visit to the Home School took place using computer and phone, presented by a facility employee and Cousins. We again had talks, this time on Zoom with architects of youth and transition facilities, as well as administrators of housing for transition-age youth, and transition facilities, several of whom who also served on reviews. For reviewers, we followed a similar protocol to 2019, including experts of color: designers, administrators and government officials knowledgeable about youth facilities. This group included neighborhood professionals recommended by our consultant. Similar to 2019, students investigated neighborhood services, identifying existing facilities for youth and gaps in services to fill. Additionally, we included three transition-age youth who reviewed student projects late in the semester to assure they would be attractive and appropriate for young people. Ideally, this would have happened earlier.

**5.4 Student Projects.** Although the majority of community participants struggled with remote participation, and many were unable to join our last two reviews, students received extensive feedback about their work from those that did participate and from several neighborhood practitioners. Students learned about the challenges facing transition-age youth, such as finding housing, homelessness, and the need for therapy, jobs, mentoring and job training. As a result, the projects included job training and entrepreneurship center for music, culinary arts, mechanical arts and performance, entrepreneurship education, commercial youth center), homeless youth (housing and job training, community kitchen and emergency housing), therapy (community-oriented therapy, housing for youth with mental illness and trauma) and a community justice center run by youth. Following to the advice of community reviewers, projects were located on the primary commercial street, in a former school they renovated, and on a site along the river.

**5.5 Organization of Reviews.** To make reviews less rushed, in 2020 we reduced the number of student projects by having students work in teams of two. Most formal reviews included only professionals, and new, informal reviews included only community participants, Formats of reviews, developed in discussion with students, varied more than previously. Typically, there were two simultaneous reviews, with four student teams receiving feedback in each afternoon. When community members participated, they joined in the second half of the afternoon. With time allowed for set-up, a break, and a half-hour summary at the end of the afternoon, this allowed each team to have 45 minutes per review. But when community participants informally reviewed work as a cohort in the last two hours of class, anticipating attendance problems, we organized two groups of four student projects. In forty minutes both teams presented in the first 20 minutes and reviewers commented on both teams for 25 minutes.

Because attendance at reviews is unreliable, it was important to have a large number of reviewers and community participants. Over the semester, ten community members and comparable to previous years, twenty-two professionals participated in reviews (three from the county, nine practicing designers, five university researchers and seven university faculty members). Six of the professional reviewers were people of color, and five were neighborhood members.

**5.6 The Recruitment Strategy for Community Participants.** The 2020 recruitment goal was ten community members, of which we successfully recruited nine, to participate in open dialogue and design reviews. Again, participants were encouraged to share their personal and professional knowledge of the Northside community. Participants ranged in age from 35 to 45 years old and were all female.

Community Consultant Price ran a campaign on social media outlets Facebook & Instagram, targeted toward residents of North Minneapolis who wanted to revive their community through designing safe places for youth enrichment. Those interested were asked to complete a survey of their availability and to share why they wanted to participate. This generated the interest of 20 individuals who were narrowed down based on availability and ability to commit to the 3 months of engagement.

This year recruitment included community members in positions of ownership or leadership within the community, therefore with a different community investment than in 2019. Interested in programming and access, participants sought to address lack of resources to initiate needed community change, and to create opportunities for people of color to have positions of power. Engaging youth in community decisions was central to change. Of the participants, two are owners of home-day care businesses, one is the executive director of a community organization serving only North Minneapolis, one member works for Minneapolis Public Schools, four members work in youth-serving organizations, and one member disclosed her child is involved in the current community gang violence. She participated to give a voice to mothers who don't know how to save their children. In addition to the community participants, the consultant recruited professionals from the area to enhance the quality of the class instruction experience. These individuals offered a robust understanding of the community needs, and of what is already being done. The community professionals assisted with field trips, gave presentations and participated in reviews.

Finally, participation by three transition-age youth reviewers (two staff and a resident) was enabled by an administrator of housing for transition-age youth, one of the professionals identified by the consultant.

### **5.7 Lessons learned in 2020**

*Student-Community Meetings-* Fewer meetings and reviews improved tracking of meetings.- Students learned about the neighborhood and about residents' circumstances. Participants helped choose sites and enhance programs.

*Selection of Participants-* More developed selection methods generated a narrower range of community participants with limited internet access. -Consultant-recruited community professionals who had access to good internet equipment provided local information in addition to community participants. - Ideally design for transition youth should include their participation from the beginning. Transition-age youth are legally of majority, alleviating many problems with their participation. Even late in the semester, inclusion of youth in the project was valuable.

*Retention-* The pandemic created problems for Participation and retention of community participants was affected by the pandemic: lack of in-person participation, poor internet connection, illness, need to look after children, and lack of a quiet place to participate - It is difficult to retain a cohort of community participants when participation is spread over 3 months

*Participant Cohort-* Because of poor internet connectivity, participants did not attend consistently and there was no sense of cohort overall. Nevertheless those who did participate, committed to the project.

*Communication-* Limiting direct email communication with participants to the consultant, allowed for smooth and consistent messaging with no confusion.

*Mixing Community Members & Professionals-* Having reviews with only community participants allowed focus on their ideas. One community participant voluntarily joined the final review with the professionals. Not having community members on the final review inhibited good closure to the project

*Meeting Location-* Not being able to meet in-person was as a barrier to participation. While internet connectivity was a problem for several participants, usually reconnection took place. However, difficulty with connections affected participation.

*Length of Presentations/ Team Projects* – Having fewer projects due to student teams, made reviews more manageable and allowed more in-depth feedback. Quality of projects remained equivalent.

*Scheduling* - The class schedule of 3:30-5:30 inhibited community participation for males. A schedule outside of class time would be better: 4-6, 4:30-6:30 or 5:00-7:00.

## **6.0 LESSONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

**6.1 Recruitment** Although the neighborhood comprised several racial groups, our recruitment process identified exclusively Black residents as participants, likely because our consultant had excellent community ties within that group. Since the youth in county detention are by far predominantly Black, we retained our consultant and the process of selection in the second year. However, in future work with the North Minneapolis, we will develop a more diverse group of community participants. Recruiting male participants was difficult because they were less likely to have time available during class hours. Thus, the second group of community participants did not include any males, although we were fortunate to have male local professionals identified through the consultant who contributed their perspective on neighborhood issues. The number of participants is another issue of concern. Obviously with a larger number of people comes more potential diversity of race, age and experience. Commitment to work over a three-month period was another a challenge to participation, especially for people in difficult economic situations, whose participation may be especially valuable (parents with young children, and for 2020, those with limited technology and difficulty connecting to the internet, etc.). However ideally feedback on classwork occurs throughout the 15-week semester. This raised the question of whether it would be better to focus on a few participants who could commit to the project rather than a larger number assuming some might drop out. Another consideration was whether a larger stipend than \$50 for two hours would encourage more commitment.

**6.2 Retaining Participants.** In 2019 retention was high. The group of nine was diverse in terms of age and gender, and the students and community participants met in person at the university research center for discussion and reviews. The community members could choose which reviews to join in the middle of the semester, but all but one joined in the final review. We wondered if we could have developed more of a sense of cohort if they met together each time. When we met remotely in 2020, again with nine of participants, the group was less diverse, with all females, and no one over age 45. While participation in the first meeting was relatively good, with eight attending, only four participants met with the students after that. Meeting over the internet had one advantage in that people didn't have to travel to get to the research center, but there were significant technical and practical problems. Because of pandemic, many were supervising children during the reviews. Most participants used telephones to join the meetings, and to maximize good connection or to find a quiet place, chose to meet in their cars, often with children in the back seat. In the middle of a review, connections were sometimes lost and then reconnected. This frustration likely contributed to the substantial loss of participants at 56%. Provision of appropriate technology to participants might alleviate that problem, although the pandemic created a combination of difficulties that may have been impossible to overcome. Despite all the barriers, those who participated provided excellent information to the class.

**6.3 Reviews, Group Identity & Scheduling.** To maintain interest and also to allow sufficient time to give feedback on student work, we found that a two-hour block of time was optimal, and meeting later in the day was best, so we chose the second half of class time, 3:30-5:30 for meeting with community members. A related issue is whether meetings/ reviews between students and community participants should include only students and community members, or whether it should also include professionals.

In 2019, community members met once by themselves and once at the start of the semester with students. They subsequently participated on two to four reviews with professionals. They were invited to choose one, two, or three interim reviews and to attend the final review, which distributed participation for interim reviews across four possible dates,. Almost all community members attended the final review. In 2020, participation in the remote meetings was organized differently. We limited the number of meetings overall and included all community members in each community review. The first review was a formal review with professionals, and the last two were informal reviews for only students and community members. This responded to two intentions, one, to fully hear the community voices prior to the design-decision-making represented by formal presentations, and two, to encourage participation by developing group identity. The meetings without professionals in 2020 enhanced the ability of community members to give feedback. In 2020 the final review was not a part of their stipend participation, but community members were invited to attend without a stipend. Two planned to participate. In the end the pandemic made it possible for only one to join the final review.

The initial in-person meeting with students before reviews enhanced the connection between students and community members in 2019. Having participants sign-up for different reviews spread their feedback throughout the semester, but complicated managing participation. The trade-off wasn't worth it. Having all community members attend the final review in person in 2019 provided a celebratory end to the semester that was very satisfying to all. Because the pandemic influenced participation in 2020 – the Black community in North Minneapolis was especially hard-hit- we will not know whether our new proposed structure would have been more successful in a normal year. It does not seem that the lack of retention of participants was affected by the structure or timing of the reviews, but by technology, COVID-19 and child care needs.

**6.4 Proposed Future Approach.** Observations from the two semesters, indicates the value of a recruitment plan that would identify participants committed to the project that represent the racial and ethnic groups in the community. At the same time, having a smaller group of participants (five to six), would make it easier to maintain connection, communication, and thus retention. Continuity throughout the semester, would benefit from having more meetings (four to five) spread over the period of the class, and continuing with the present \$50 stipend. Meetings and reviews at the end of the afternoon worked well, although evening meetings might be even better. A good plan would include four two-hour meetings: an initial meeting with only students and participants, two informal reviews with exclusively community members and students, and final reviews with professionals. Ideally all of these meetings would be in-person and held in a community setting. Meetings on internet require technology available to all. In sum, for future community participation, I would have fewer participants (five to six), would have more meetings (four to five), and would continue with the present stipend, knowing that with more meetings, the total remuneration would be higher.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Including community members in the studio requires a budget (for recruiting and managing participants and for paying stipends) and a well-organized plan. In this case, when we also incorporated a large number of voluntary professional reviewers, arranging reviews required a much larger effort than a typical design studio. Nonetheless, the inclusion of community members in the studio was of great value, and well worth the investment. The students learned deeply about the neighborhood history and existing situation. They learned about their White privilege and the challenges faced by Black people in a segregated neighborhood on a daily basis from first-hand observation. Students received excellent feedback on their projects in relation to program development and site selection that greatly enhanced their decision-making skills. The community participants appreciated the concrete proposals made by the students that addressed needs they had identified. The architectural designs allowed them to re-envision their neighborhoods as places where their needs could be addressed, and as a good and beautiful place to live.

## REFERENCES

- Dierkhising, Carly B., Susan J. Ko, Briana Woods-Jaeger, Ernestine C. Briggs, Robert Lee, and Robert S. Pynoos. 2013. "Trauma Histories among Justice-involved Youth: findings from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network," *European Journal for Psychotraumatology*, 4:10, Taylor & Francis website.
- Ford, Julian D., John F. Chapman, Josephine Hawke, and David Albert. 2007. "Trauma Among Youth in the Juvenile Justice System: Critical Issues and New Directions", National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice website, June.
- Hardin, Mary C., Richard Eribes & Charles Poster (Eds). 2006. *From the Studio to the Streets: Service-Learning in Planning and Architecture*. Sterling VA: Stylus
- Hester, Randolph T. Jr. 1990. *Community Design Primer*. Ridge Times Press.
- Lambie, Ian & Isabel Randell. 2013. "The impact of incarceration on juvenile offenders," *Clinical Psychology Review* 33 (2013) 448–459
- Looney, Adam, and Nicholas Turner. 2018. *Work and opportunity before and after incarceration*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Mason, Karol V. 2016. "The Pitfalls of Youth Incarceration," Office of Justice Programs blog, December 8. <https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/archives/blogs-2016/2016-blog-youth-incarceration.htm>
- McCarthy, Patrick, Vincent Schiraldi, and Miriam Shark. 2016. "The Future of Youth Justice: A Community-Based Alternative to the Youth Prison Model." *New Thinking in Community Corrections Bulletin*. Washington.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2016.NCJ 250142.
- Metropolitan Council. 2014. *Choice, Place and Opportunity: An Equity Assessment of the Twin Cities Region* (Report to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). <https://metro council.org/planning/projects/thrive-2040/choice-place-and-opportunity.aspx>
- Norouziannour, Hirbod. 2020 "Teaching architecture through community engagement; strategies for service learning in architectural education," AIA journal. *American Institute of Architects*, June, 18(2):68-71
- Olafson, Erna, Jane Halladay Goldman, Carlene Gonzalez, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Reno, Nevada. "Trauma-Informed Collaborations Among Juvenile Justice and Other Child-Serving Systems: An Update," *OJJDP Journal of Juvenile Justice*, 5:6, Spring, 2016, 1-13.
- Paton Joni, Crouch William, Camic Paul. *Young Offenders' Experiences of Traumatic Life Events: A Qualitative Investigation*. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 2009;14(1):43–62.
- Robinson, Julia W. 2019. Preventing Youth Incarceration; Studio-Based Research," *Future Praxis: Applied Research as a Bridge Between Theory and Practice*, ARCC 2019, Toronto. <https://www.arccjournal.org/index.php/repository/article/view/603/477>
- Robinson, Julia W. and J. Stephen Weeks. 1984. *Programming as Design* (monograph). Minneapolis: School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota.
- Robinson, Julia W. 2018. Syllabus: Architecture 5212: Reconciling Juvenile Incarceration. Unpublished text.
- Robinson, Julia W. and Michael Christenson. Forthcoming. "Design Studio as Research Site: Generating Hypotheses and Test Cases," in In Delong, M., Fisher, T., Hokanson, B., Asojo, A. & Strohecker, C. (Eds.), *Collegial Design: Thinking and Making at a Community-Engaged University*, Minneapolis, MN: College of Design, University of Minnesota.
- Sanoff, Henry. 1990. *Participatory Design: Theory & Techniques*. Raleigh, NC:
- Schiraldi, Vincent. 2020 *Can We Eliminate the Youth Prison? (And What Should We Replace it With?)(Executive Session in the Future of Justice Policy)*. New York: Columbia University Justice Lab. <https://squareonejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CJLJ8234-Square-One-Youth-Prisons-Paper-200616-WEB.pdf>
- Smith, Kelly. 2016. "Dozens rally against plans to create joint Hennepin/Ramsey juvenile facility," *Star Tribune*, December 6, <http://www.startribune.com/dozens-rally-against-plans-to-create-joint-hennepin-ramsey-juvenile-facility/405127716/>
- Underwood, Leo A., Kara Sandor von Dresner & Annie L. Phillips. 2006. Community Treatment Programs for Juveniles: A Best-Evidence Summary," *International Journal of Behavioral Consultation and Therapy* Volume 2, No. 2, Spring, 2006, p286-304

## ENDNOTES



---

<sup>1</sup> Other aspects of this studio-based research project have been discussed in several papers including Robinson, 2019, and Robinson & Christenson, forthcoming).