

Lynette Osinubi, 2nd Year BLA Student

 CE+D

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College of Environment + Design UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

As an advocate for the field of landscape architecture, Lynette Osinubi is bringing knowledge of the field to high school students in urban areas. To read more, click on the “for more information” button below.

Lynette Osinubi’s interests in design and sociology led her to the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) program at the College of Environment & Design (CED). While in high school, Lynette’s visual learning style made mathematics her least favorite subject, and in fact had an instructor who discouraged her from applying to The University of Georgia (UGA) due to her grades in a mathematics course. As a result, her first year of college was spent at Clark Atlanta as a business major.

Even though she was enrolled in business courses, Osinubi found herself constantly sketching – not just what she saw, but improvements to the urban landscape around her. She realized that she could use her interest in design and outdoor spaces to improve quality of life via the built environment for those in urban areas. Lynette feels that growing up watching her mom – who is a social worker – improve the lives of others, has influenced her to want to do the same through her unique set of talents. The realization made Osinubi decide to transfer to UGA and declare landscape architecture as her major.

Once at UGA, Lynette found herself with a lot of questions but no one she felt comfortable turning to for answers. She had transferred from a historically black college to a university where she was now in the minority, and those around her seemed to have different views and priorities. Osinubi sensed that CED would benefit from a group dedicated to bringing together all landscape architecture students regardless of class year, academic background, or personal experience. Eventually, she approached an upperclassman, Cedric Smith, for advice, and he in turn suggested she speak with Associate Professor Jose Buitrago. Together they set

out to start an organization that would pull together the students of landscape architecture. In the spring 2011 semester, Multicultural Society of Landscape Architecture (MSLA) held its first meeting, led by Lynette (president) and Cedric (vice-president).

The goals of MSLA are varied – from promoting the field of landscape architecture to helping first-year students adjust to both their coursework and the social atmosphere at UGA. The students of MSLA feel that many people do not know about the field of landscape architecture and those who do have preconceived – and often incorrect – notions about what it means. Landscape architecture is also not well advertised as a possible career choice in high schools, and MSLA is talking with high schools in Athens and Atlanta about making presentations to their students. An extracurricular mentoring program in Atlanta, “*Doing it for the ‘Hood,*” has agreed to allow MSLA members to interact with their students in the form of presentations and projects once per month. Additionally, MSLA is beginning a Big Bro-Big Sis program that will pair first and second year BLA students with a mentor from the third year or above, both to provide academic help and to better integrate the class years socially.

In addition to her outstanding initiative in founding MSLA, Osinubi participates in the African Student Union (for which she recently served as a model in their fundraiser fashion show); My Sister’s Keeper, an organization for African American women at UGA; the Womenist’s Club; and Georgia Students of Landscape Architecture (GSLA), in which she serves as class representative for the second year BLAs.

Lynette has proved to be an exceptional student, earning the Robert J. Hill Scholarship for the upcoming 2011-2012 academic year. Mr. Hill served as a professor and undergraduate coordinator for the BLA program for almost 30 years, and was characterized as a fierce advocate for the program until his death. As such, the scholarship is given to a BLA student which high academic standing who exhibits a passion and advocacy for landscape architecture. Osinubi is a perfect match for this award, which she will receive at the College’s annual Honors Night in April.

Osinubi’s favorite course so far has been History of the Built Environment taught by Dr. Mark Reinberger and Assistant Professor Eric MacDonald. She feels that the course kept her engaged, while educating her on new subject matter and pushing her academic limits. While this was her favorite course, Osinubi emphasizes that she can’t choose a favorite professor at CED as they all bring great experiences from a variety of backgrounds. She believes that all of the instructors she has worked with thus far have been supportive and helpful as well as genuinely invested in their students. One stand out for her, however, is Assistant Professor Katherine Melcher, who Lynette feels helped her realize that passion and career can be one in the same.

Osinubi will use her passion in the future to be an advocate and a voice for those in urban neighborhoods that are often overlooked. She wants more people to know about landscape architecture and that it is not only a valid career option, but can improve the lives of those benefitting from the service. She says her goal is to change the image of the typical landscape architect, and all indications show that she is well on her way.

