



DESIGNER NEWSLETTER

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Upcoming Designer Training - Summer 2023

The Texas Tech Coalition for Natural Learning is pleased to announce the 3rd annual Virtual OLE! Texas Designer Training.

OLE Designer Training Summer 2023 *VIRTUAL*

Thursday, July 20, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Friday, July 21, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

*Must attend both days

Trained OLE Designers work with childcare centers to provide designs for outdoor learning environments that satisfy the OLE! Texas philosophy and best practice indicators. Participants who complete all parts of the training, including the course evaluation, will be eligible for 12-24 hours of Continuing Education Professional (CEU) Hours depending on the training option selected. The training options are detailed in the scholarship recipient application, selection and procedure flow chart.

To apply for the training please visit the Coalition for Natural Learning Website:

https://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/coalition_for_natural_learning/Resources/training_registration.php

Scholarship Application:

https://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/coalition_for_natural_learning/Resources/Designer_Network/designer_scholarship_application.php

Please contact lori.guerrero@ttu.edu with questions.

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OLE! TEXAS
OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

*OLE! Texas is an initiative of the Texas Department of State Health Services in partnership with other state agencies, universities, and organizations across Texas. For more information and a full partner listing, visit dshs.texas.gov/ole.



TEXAS TECH
UNIVERSITY





PBK and Edgeland continue to assist Early Childhood Education Centers transform their Outdoor Learning Environments in Houston



OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT SCHEMATIC DESIGN

- 1) 10 PLAY AND LEARNING SETTINGS
 - 1a) 4-Square
 - 1b) Hopscotch
 - 1c) Mud Kitchen
 - 1d) Sensory Play - Mirror
 - 1e) Acoustic Play
 - 1f) Sensory Play - Texture
 - 1g) Sand Box
 - 1h) Play Equipment
 - 1i) Play Equipment
 - 1j) Gathering Garden
 - 1k) Painted Mural
- 2) Looping Pathway
- 3) Shady Setting
- 4) Natural, Loose Materials
- 5) Portable Play Equipment
- 6) Gross Motor Activities
- 7) Sufficient Trees
- 8) Fruit Trees
- 9) Shrubs, Vines, Grasses
- 10) Hanging Vegetable Garden
- 11) Outdoor Classroom
- 12) Outdoor Storage

KOLLEGE 4 KIDZ



Outdoor Learning Environment
KOLLEGE 4 KIDZ
ACRE HOMES, HOUSTON, TEXAS





Texas Tech Graduate Students, Angelle Hamon and Elizabeth Turner, contribute to OLE! Texas workshops and CNL research



Angelle Hamon is in her final year of the Environmental Design Master's program at Texas Tech University. She works as a research assistant under Dr. Lori Guerrero, researching how regional differences such as weather or terrain alter outdoor spaces and outdoor play across multiple childcare institutions. Her role includes completing literature reviews, traveling to childcare centers across the country to collect data, and creating detailed site maps showing play settings and features while examining their regional differences.

What has been your biggest takeaway working with OLE! Texas: Angelle describes her biggest takeaway from the Coalition for Natural Learning as "seeing how healing and restorative outdoor spaces are for children and how they transform their ability to think creatively and gain independence at a young age. I've witnessed firsthand how quality natural environments open up the doors to discovery and positive challenges and I'm so glad I've been able to experience that through the Coalition."

Plans after graduation: Angelle will be joining Corgan's Dallas Studio as a Project Specialist.



Elizabeth Turner is a graduate student in the Department of Design pursuing her Masters of Science in Environmental Design. Turner is a member of the Texas Tech Coalition for Natural Learning (CNL) and has worked with Dr. Gaines and the design team to help conduct design workshops for childcare centers and assist in research related to OLE! Texas. In this process, the CNL travels to the childcare center and meets with all of the stakeholders including educators, administrators, community members and more to create a schematic design, or rough draft, of the outdoor learning environment. "Having access to invigorating outdoor environments allows for greater socialization skills and brain development for children," Turner said. "With a proper outdoor learning environment, the stress of finding creative ways to play and entertain is taken off the shoulders of the caregiver." Elizabeth also oversees the CNL's website and external relations.

What has been your biggest takeaway working with OLE! Texas: One of the biggest takeaways from working on the OLE! Texas initiative has been the power of collaboration. Approaching Outdoor Learning Environments with an integrative approach is unique and effective. I've been able to take the collaboration skills I've learned through working with OLE! Texas and apply them to a variety of other design projects.

Plans after graduation: Elizabeth will be joining Perkins&Will's Dallas studio as a Designer I in Healthcare.

For more information visit: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/dod/> or https://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/coalition_for_natural_learning/

Texas Tech's Landscape Architecture Department is teaching the next generation about the importance of Landscape for Learning



The Landscape for Learning (LARC 6416, taught by Dr. Muntazar Monsur) students in the Department of Landscape Architecture, Texas Tech University were involved in a community design project as part of their coursework for Spring 2023 where they developed a masterplan and detailed designs of several zones for an outdoor courtyard space of TTU's Center for Early Head Start (EHS).

The focus of the project was to create a set of guidelines for designing an outdoor play and learning environment for below 3 children (infants and toddlers). Early childhood, especially the first three years of life plays a critical role in lifelong learning, health, and well-being. This is the age range of rapid brain development (more than 1 million neural connections per second!). Also, as children at this age spontaneously learn from their surrounding environments, learning more about early childhood environments and behaviors is an opportunity for designers to reimagine what kind of environment would best facilitate children's curiosity, exploration, sensory stimulations, healthy and active behaviors, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) learning, social/emotional learning, and other developmental needs. Students worked closely with the EHS community and designed an outdoor play and learning environment that nurtures below 3 children's unique developmental activities and behaviors and at the same time create a stimulating environment for teachers/caregivers with ample opportunities for them to relax and engage in nature-based teaching, learning, and play activities with children.

A community presentation was organized on March 6, 2023, at the EHS multipurpose room. 40-50 teachers, caregivers, and EHS staff attended the community presentation. The event was highly engaging, interactive, and conversational. Teachers and caregivers were excited to learn about the design and gave meaningful feedback from their own experiences of managing and caring for below 3 children. The Landscape for Learning class is now working on a written article compiling the research and feedback they gathered during the process.

The Texas Tech Landscape Architecture department offers both an undergraduate and graduate level degree in Landscape Architecture that are LAAB Certified. For more information visit: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/larc/>





Designer Profile: Jared Horsford



How long have you been involved with the Coalition for Natural Learning and OLE!

I initially participated in the OLE! Texas designer training workshop in the summer of 2021, and proceeded to assist with five different projects with CNL in the year that followed.

What motivated you to become involved?

As a former student, and then colleague, of the late Dr. Charlie Klein, I was aware of, but not terribly familiar with the work of the OLE! Texas program. When Dr. Muntazar Monsur joined our faculty, my interest in the topic was piqued. As a child, I was fortunate to play in nature regularly, and I wanted to engage with design practice that ensured more kids have that opportunity. I have loved learning about the research around outdoor play and learning for early childhood and am excited to continue seeing the mission of CNL and OLE! Texas extend their reach and impacts for more children.

Several OLE! Project that Jared has contributed to:





Dr. Charles Klein's Legacy Continues On

The Department of Landscape Architecture (DoLA) celebrates the works and memories of their long-term faculty member Dr. Charles Klein. In his 20-year journey at Texas Tech University, Dr. Klein established a legacy of integrated teaching, research, and services for advancing the discipline of landscape architecture (LA). To many of his colleagues in the department, he was a mentor and a friend – a wonderfully kind person. He had planned to retire in January 2021 to enjoy life, travel, visit his grandkids, and keep working hands-on to make playful outdoor learning environments for children. Unfortunately, Dr. Klein died of COVID late afternoon on the day of Christmas in 2020.



Not only a passionate educator in LA, Dr. Klein also had significant contributions in advancing landscape research to improve human health and wellbeing through design. His notable contributions in federal grant writing in LA included two USDA grants and three Texas DSHS grants on children's healthy outdoor learning environments. Starting in 2017, Dr. Klein co-developed the OLE! Texas initiative and worked tirelessly for improving early childhood environments through his research, teaching, and services to promote healthier, more active Outdoor Learning Environments (OLEs). As PI on a USDA Grant, he led the Greenscape Design Studio that employed students as interns to design water conserving landscapes for Lubbock area residences.

LEGACY FUND OPPORTUNITIES:

In partnership with family, the Department of Landscape Architecture honors the life of Dr. Charles Klein with the creation of donation opportunities. We welcome your support to continue the legacy of Dr. Klein into the future.

Dr. Charles Klein Legacy Fund

The Legacy Fund will provide resources in support of the research interests and passions of Dr. Klein. Projects that support Outdoor Learning Environments and playscapes will benefit from contributions.

Dr. Charles Klein Legacy Scholarship

The Legacy Scholarship fund will provide monetary resources directly to students within landscape architecture.

