

GRACE AARAJ

Architect, LEED AP BD+C

Fulbright Scholar

TEDx Speaker and Podcaster

grace.aaraj@gmail.com

EDUCATION

- 2012-2014 **Masters of Architecture**, A&AA - University of Oregon, Portland, USA (Fulbright)
Emphasis on sustainability and community engagement. Award-winning thesis project
Beyond the tent: Rethinking Response Architecture to Serve Refugees and Host Communities
- 2008-2012 **Bachelor of Architecture**, Institut des Beaux-Arts II - Lebanese University – Beirut, Lebanon

CERTIFICATES | CONTINUING EDUCATION

- 2019 Certificate in The Sustainable Development Goals – University of Copenhagen
- 2017 REACH mentorship program for business development – Dubai, UAE
- 2015-present LEED Accredited Professional in Building Design and Construction (GBCI#: 10977691)

LANGUAGES

Arabic (Native), **French** (TEF C1, C2). **English** (IELTS Band 8) and **Spanish** (A1)

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

2D Drawing: AutoCAD 2D, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, MS Office.
3D Modeling and BIM: AutoCAD 3D, Revit, Rhino, SketchUp.
Physical model making

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2021 **Podcaster** for the Design for Spatial Justice Initiative (to be released summer 2021)
- 2020 **Urban Decoder** for City of Culture Index, Youthful Cities (based in Toronto)
- 2015 – 2020 **Co-founder and Architect, ArchiBuild** | Beirut, Lebanon [archibuild-lb.com]
Managed Design-build for community and residential projects
Placed as finalist for Green Academy International competition in Bologna, Italy.
Lead design for Dunes Touristic Hub Oman – First place in invited competition (DTC Oman)
- 2015 – 2016 **Local Architect, Catalytic Action** | London, UK from Beirut, Lebanon
Contributed to design of Jeb Jannine Playground for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon– Beqaa
- 2015 – 2021 **AHLCO Contractors** | Beirut, Lebanon
Prepared bidding for the UNICEF project of 45 Public Schools in Lebanon for locals and refugees.
Participated in damage assessment and rehabilitation of historic buildings affected by Beirut Blast
- 2014 – 2015 **Architectural Designer, G70** | Honolulu, USA
Contributed to design First Hawaiian Bank Design Proposal – Honolulu, Hawaii
Designed a proposal for William S. Richardson School of Law at University of Hawaii– Manoa,
Lead and contributed to design of Sheraton Princess Kaiulani Hotel – First place competition
- 2014 **Architectural Practicum, Waterleaf** | Portland, USA and Jacmel, Haiti
Contributed to DD and CD sets for Haiti clinic with Waterleaf Architecture in Portland;
Organized workshops to meet with local communities (in French) and finalize design strategies;
Conducted site visit and documented materials selection and site conditions
- 2013 **Winner of international competition for healthcare clinic in Jacmel, Haiti**
Design entry by Grace Aaraj and Jacqueline Davis. Developed by Waterleaf Architecture in 2014.
- 2013 **Guest planner, Meiji University** | Tokyo, Japan
Co-designed and presented an urban design proposal for Nakano-ku urban interventions for Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics host. Part of the JASSO Japan Ministry of Culture grant for International Architecture and Urban Design workshop
- 2013 **Designer and Builder, Center for Public Interest Design CPID** | Titanyen, Haiti
Contributed to design of orphanage extension with shaded courtyards;
Participated with international team in building activities and on-site execution of project. Part of the Portland State University CPID project.

AWARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL WORK

- 2017 Finalist in Environmate Accelerator – Suliman S. Olayan School of Business, AUB and UNGC
- 2016 Finalist for YAC design competition for the Green Academy in Bologna, Italy (ArchiBuild)
Finalist in Switchmed Eco-Entrepreneurship– UNIDO, UN Environment, the European Union
- 2015 Winner team of invited competition for Kyo-ya Sheraton Princess Kaiulani Hotel (G70)
- 2014 Thesis exhibited at AIA Center for Architecture, Architects without Borders Portland, USA
Thesis exhibited for Made resilient Art Exhibit, Architecture for Humanity, Portland, USA
- 2013 Finalist Global Challenges, Local Solutions - Fulbright Seminar at Arizona State University
Winner team and People's Choice Award of international competition for Jacmel Clinic, Haiti

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 2020 - 2021 **Visiting Assistant Professor**, Design for Spatial Justice Fellow,
University of Oregon (Studio and Seminar on refugees)
- 2016 - 2021 **Trainer**, LEED Green Associate Exam Preparation Workshop for Professionals, AMIDEAST
Instructor, Architectural Studio 1,2,7 and 8 - Beirut Arab University (RIBA Accredited)
- 2019 **Co-Instructor**, College of Design, Roma Program - University of Oregon with Prof. Hajo Neis
Regina Coeli Inclusive Neighborhood – The Transformation of a Prison in Rome (Week 7/8)
- 2016 - 2018 **Instructor**, Design Studio 6 and Theory I & II - Lebanese American University (NAAB Accredited)
- 2018 **Lecturer**, European Cultural Academy for Venice Biennale Course “DIY Cities”
Trainer, Imagine Summer Arts Camp, “DIY Cities Junior”
- 2017 **Lecturer**, Beirut Design Week “DIY Cities: a pattern language for Beirut's Streets”
Lecturer, Amman Design Week “DIY Cities: a pattern language for Amman's Streets”

RESEARCH / CREATIVE OUTPUTS

- 2021 Curriculum for climate agency: Design (In)action, ACSA/EAAE conference (*in progress*)
- 2020 City of Culture 2020 index, published by Youthful Cities (Toronto) and Coventry City (UK)
- 2017 Camera Cronica, Lebanon Refugees and Urbanization, The Netherlands
Rethinking the interventions in the service of refugees and host communities pp.15-21
- 2016 Aaraj, G. and Ledbury, A. *Curriculum toolkit for a new generation of public interest designers*. In
Rethinking Architectural Education: Architecture and Planning Journal (ISSN 2281-1311) pp. 313-329
- 2015 -2017 Quarterly newsletters, Director of Communications for Fulbright Alumni Association of Lebanon
- 2014 Neis, H. and Aaraj, G. *Patterns and Streets in a Web of Life*. In *Second Future of Places*
Conference on Public Spaces and Placemaking. Stockholm: Ax:son Johnson pp.153-168
- 2012 Publication: Roadmap to Reopening Beirut's Pine Park commissioned by the City of Beirut for Nahnoo
Policy Paper: *Youth Economic Forum: 33 Ideas to Modernize Lebanon* submitted to Lebanese Parliament

INVITED PRESENTATIONS (*a selection*)

- 2019 AIAS UOregon, Eugene “*Practice in Architecture*”
- 2018 AIAS Lebanese American University “*the path to sustainability*”
PUARL International Conference, “*Interventions for Refugees in Lebanon*”, UOregon in Portland
- 2016 Fulbright MENA Conference, Cairo “*Natural Resources in architectural education*”
- 2015 AIAS UHawaii “*Career Development workshop*” and “*Portfolio Review*”
- 2014 TEDxUOregon 2014 “*Intersections: Diversity is Critical to Creativity*”
AIA Center for Architecture, Architects without Borders “*Architecture in the service of social needs*”
International Youth Leadership, Portland Public Schools System “*Creative thinking and languages*”
- 2013 Design Like You Give a Damn, Architecture for Humanity, San Francisco “*Public Interest*”
PUARL International Conference at UOregon in Portland “*Nakano Case Study*”
Construction Specifications Institute, Portland Industry Forum “*Is Architecture a Universal language?*”

GRANTS/ RESEARCH HONORS

- 2021 Faculty research implementation grant at the University of Oregon (3000\$)
- 2021 UOregon faculty development awards for user-centered spatial justice toolkit (5000\$)
- 2021 Center for Asia-Pacific Studies, The Jeremiah Lecture Series Award (500\$)
- 2020 Global Justice Award, University of Oregon for Adaptive Refugee Housing Collab (28,750 \$)
- 2019 Fulbright Alumni Development Grant for guest lecturing at the University of Oregon (2,500 \$)
- 2018 Funding from European Cultural Center for Venice Biennale Course workshop (est.3,000 \$)
- 2017 Funding from Amman Design Week for workshop during Amman Design Week (est.2,000 \$)
Funding from UNLEASH-Global Innovation Lab attending UN SDGs, The Netherlands (est.4,000 \$)
Lebanon Delegate to Youthful Cities Toronto funding for Global Cities Summit (est.3,500 \$)

- 2016 BinationaI Fulbright Committee grant for Natural Resources conference in Cairo (est.2,500 \$)
- 2013 Fulbright development grant for presenting at Design Like You Give a Damn(500\$)

SERVICE and VOLUNTEERING (*a selection*)

Volunteering is a passion for me. I give back to the community, mostly in services I haven't received as a student or apprentice. I actively volunteered over the past 11 years for activities planning and implementation for: architectural associations, historic preservation, youth empowerment, environment and public spaces, urban spaces and awareness. Activities spread over Lebanon, Portland, Honolulu and Haiti.

- 2021 Undergraduate students' admissions committee at the University of Oregon
- 2019 Member of the National US Fulbright Scholarship Selection Committee, Beirut – Lebanon
- 2019 Field researcher for the Lebanese craftsmanship insights for policy making, a pilot study
- 2015-2017 Co-organized Fifth Anniversary National Conference, Fulbright Alumni Association of Lebanon
Co-organized Fulbright community Meet and Greet
Co-organized Career Guidance Day for 500 public school students, Amideast
- 2014 Designed and delivered a workshop for the International Youth Leadership Conference for Public Schools System under the theme of creative thinking and languages.
- 2013-2014 Volunteer for the Portland Design Festival Architectural Home Tours guide
- 2013 Environmental volunteering for activities related to cleaning waterways in Phoenix, Arizona
- 2013 Volunteer for the Mid-century modern homes tour for Restore Oregon
- 2010-2012 Planned advocacy campaign for reopening the biggest closed park in Beirut. Prepared communication materials for interviews and advocacy.

ACADEMIC GRANTS

- 2014 Department of Architecture Scholarship for UOregon conference presentation (500 \$)
Fulbright funding for presenting at Architecture for Humanity in San Francisco (500 \$)
- 2013 Fulbright funding to attend Climate Change conference in Phoenix, Arizona (est.1,500 \$)
JASSO Scholarship Japan Ministry of Education for Meiji University Workshop (est.1,200 \$)
Center for Public Interest Design Portland State University for Haiti travel grant (2,000 \$)
Louis C. Rosenberg Architectural Scholarship University of Oregon travel grant (500 \$)
3MT Statewide Oregon Interdisciplinary Thesis Award, Public Choice Award (500 \$)
3MT University of Oregon Interdisciplinary Thesis Award, Public Choice Award (250\$)
- 2012 Recipient of Fulbright Foreign Student Award US Department of State (est.115,000 \$)

CURATION (*a selection*)

- 2015-2017 Fifth Anniversary National Conference of the Fulbright Alumni Association of Lebanon
Career Guidance Day for 500 public school students, Fulbright Alumni Association of Lebanon
- 2011 Science Days green space awareness booth, Ministry of Environment and Nahnoo

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Registered architect of the Order of Engineers & Architects (OEA), Lebanon (2016-present)
- U.S. Green Building Council, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (2015-present)
- Member of the Lebanese League of Women in Business LLWB (2016-present)
- Member of the Fulbright Association, Washington DC 2019-present
- Executive Committee member for the Fulbright Alumni Association of Lebanon FAAL (2015-2017)
- Associate member of the American Institute of Architects AIA (2014-2015)
- Student member of the Construction Specifications Institute CSI (2013-2014)