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**Gidaazhoganikemin “WE MAKE A BRIDGE”: Landscape Architecture Practice as Social Bridge Building**

As landscape architects we fill many niches. Principle among our capacities is the oft-overlooked role we play as facilitators and cultural bridge builders. Might we not look to this quality to fulfill needs that linger in marginalized communities? Facilitation is a social asset in desperately short supply. The education and experiences which landscape architects encounter imbues us with a facility to work with disparate partners, communicate complex ideas, and respond with creative empathy across and beyond our particular specializations. The issues humanity faces demand that those who can bring understanding and cooperation to the fore must step forward and identify opportunities to do so, not wait for opportunities to present themselves.

Our paper explores the establishment of cultural engagement methods and describes the processes we employed during a first year Master of Landscape Architecture studio working with the Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe (FDL) and the University of Minnesota’s, Cloquet Forestry Center (CFC) in northern Minnesota, USA. The project tasked the students with developing conceptual and design development products for a bridge and multi-use trail to connect the two communities across a wetland and creek. This was a unique opportunity, to bring University of Minnesota students with limited exposure to Native American cultures, together with tribal members on their homelands to work jointly to help realize a long-term vision. A vision, that included not only building a practical physical connection between two neighbors, both interested in the protection and enhancement of the natural world, but also included the dream of increased collaboration and mutual respect between **the tribe and the CFC—to build a bridge, both literally and metaphorically between two cultures**. The outcome included dynamic design solutions but also a pedagogical model that seeks to prioritize relationship building as the bridge between cultures and shared needs.