



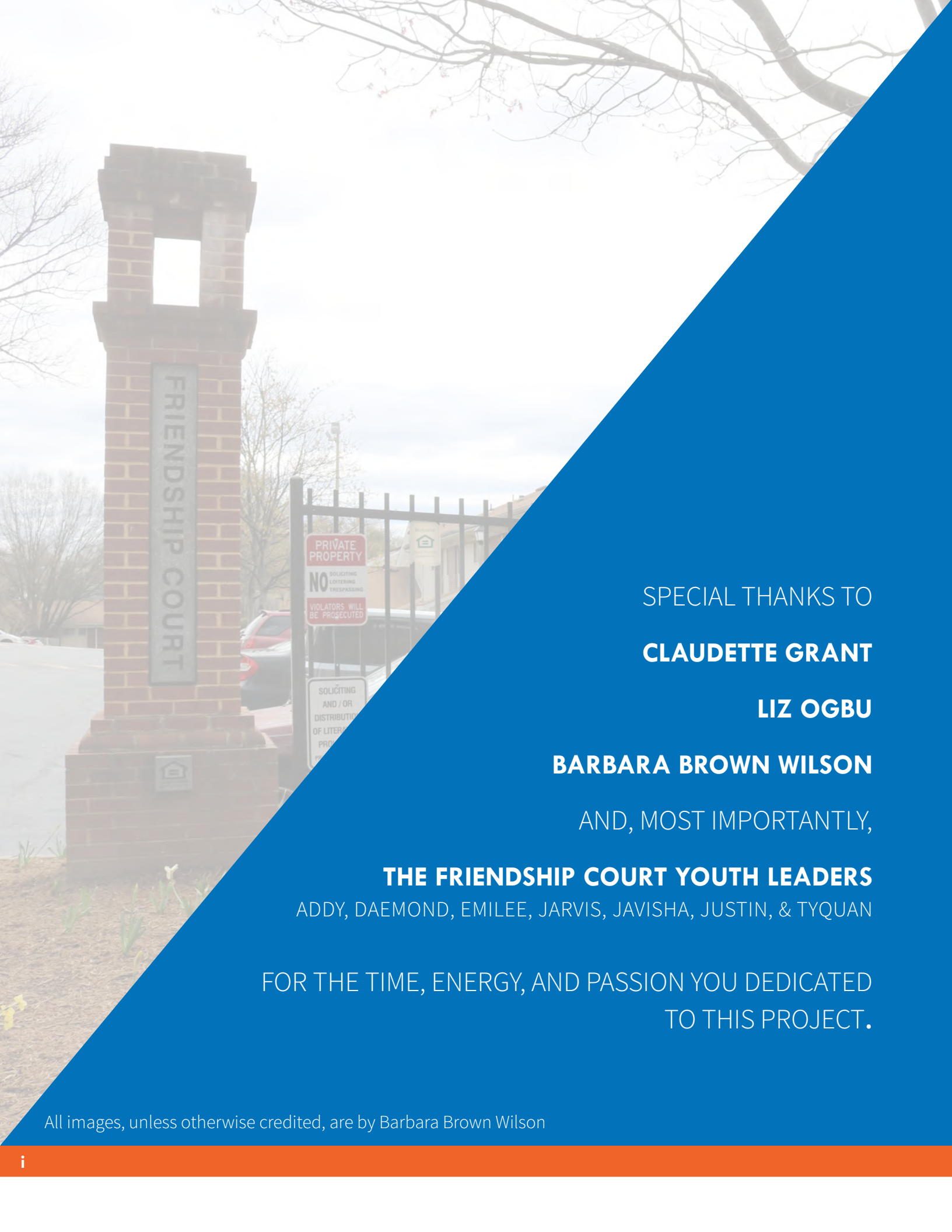
# EVALUATION:

Developing “quick wins”  
through youth-driven design



## FRIENDSHIP COURT

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
SPRING 2017



SPECIAL THANKS TO

**CLAUDETTE GRANT**

**LIZ OGBU**

**BARBARA BROWN WILSON**

AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY,

**THE FRIENDSHIP COURT YOUTH LEADERS**

ADDY, DAEMON, EMILEE, JARVIS, JAVISHA, JUSTIN, & TYQUAN

FOR THE TIME, ENERGY, AND PASSION YOU DEDICATED  
TO THIS PROJECT.

All images, unless otherwise credited, are by Barbara Brown Wilson

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report serves as an ongoing chronicle of the collaborative, youth-driven, human-centered design program at Friendship Court. The Youth Leadership Development Program (YLDP) joined forces with students and faculty at UVA's Curry School of Education and the School of Architecture to create a supportive platform for improving the quality of life of residents during the redevelopment of Friendship Court. The partnership and leadership program started in 2016, and will continue through 2018.

Specifically, this document focuses on evaluating the engagements, workshops, and progress made through one facet of this program: a partnership between the YLDP and the Urban Planning Applications Course, "Ecological Democracy," between January and May 2017. Barbara Brown-Wilson developed and led the course, and Liz Ogbu served as a visiting professor. The purpose of this collaborative effort is to "co-power" the youth living in Friendship Court by helping them communicate their feedback, and take agency over important elements of the redevelopment process through "quick wins." These "quick wins" are short-term design solutions, proposed by the youth, meant to solve a youth-identified problem. Especially during a long, phased redevelopment process, "quick wins" provide the youth with a sense of excitement and accomplishment, while also teaching them how to use basic strategies and tools to continue community improvement and advocacy into the future.

Beginning in January, the students at UVA and the youth at Friendship Court engaged in a biweekly dialogue, with the purpose of building trust and strengthening the partnership. With a strong relationship formed, the two teams then would meet weekly or biweekly in focus groups, design workshops, and proposal pitches to address potential "opportunity areas" for improvement. The teams discussed design challenges within the Friendship Court community, potential areas for improvement, and possible design solutions. Said workshops included mapping exercises, brainstorming sessions, using intuitive design tools to visualize possibilities, and reflecting about the design and evaluation process--all meant to stimulate conversation and creativity.

Lastly, this report seeks to describe and evaluate the "opportunity areas" and "quick wins" developed and refined over the course of this process. There were originally five opportunity areas that emerged out of the collaborative design workshops; these were then narrowed down to two, based on feedback and a vote from the youth leaders. These two opportunity areas were then developed into potential quick win design solutions through several design brainstorming sessions--both independently by the UVA students, and in collaboration with the youth leaders. While human-centered design should ultimately create solutions that work well for everyone involved the process, and provide opportunities for those being directly impacted by the design to express their perspective and concerns, this type of design takes longer than the traditional design process and requires flexibility from all parties involved. Although there is no physical design progress to show at the time of this report, the past three months have yielded community- and trust-building, and have successfully helped the youth leaders establish strategies for continued progress and community advocacy that they can use long after the program ends.



## PROJECT PARTNERS

Meet our team: a group of youth leaders from Friendship Court, a multi-disciplinary class of UVA students, and facilitators from both Friendship Court and faculty through UVA's Architecture School.

## YOUTH LEADERS

FACILITATOR: Claudette Grant  
*Images by Cary Oliva*

"I joined the Youth Leadership Program..."



**ADDY**

...to have a say in the redevelopment process."



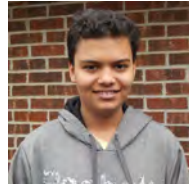
**DAEMOND**

...to make a difference, because I care about my community."



**EMILEE**

...to be aware of the redevelopments so I could adjust to them."



**JUSTIN**

...to not see damaged property."



**JARVIS**

...to meet new people, and to make our community better."



**JAVISHA**

... to have better days, and to make everybody happy and not unsafe."



**TYQUAN**

... to give the neighborhood kids a clear understanding of what's happening in the redevelopment."

## UVA PLAC 5812: ECOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY

### INSTRUCTORS

Prof. Barbara Brown Wilson

Liz Ogbu

### DESIGN TEAM

Ekin Arin  
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## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Garrett Square Apartments were built in 1978 to house families in need of affordable housing. In 2002, Piedmont Housing Alliance (PHA) and the National Housing Trust/Enterprise Preservation Corporation (NHTE) came together to purchase the apartments from the original owners, preserving the Section 8 units. Through Low Income Housing Tax Credits, local partnerships, and additional fundraising, PHA and NHTE renovated the 150 housing units, renaming them "Friendship Court." PHA committed to designating the units as "affordable" for 30 years. NHTE serves as the current property manager.


In 2018, PHA will completely redevelop Friendship Court to become a mixed-income, mixed-use community. The redevelopment will occur over the course of three years, and in phases to ensure that no residents are displaced during construction. The new site plans to incorporate space for local businesses and early childhood education, and seeks to "connect Friendship Court--physically, economically, and socially--to the rest of Charlottesville in a way it has never been connected before." (Master Plan)

Especially given Charlottesville's history of urban renewal and displacement, many Friendship Court residents are justifiably skeptical of the intentions within the redevelopment. To truly understand what residents want and need in their communities, the redevelopment team recognized that their process needed a more human-centered, in-depth, and holistic outreach strategy.

Charlottesville holds tremendous opportunities for its citizens; but often, those opportunities are restricted to those with access. According to an investigation by the New York Times in 2015 called "The Best and Worst Places to Grow Up," Charlottesville has one of the lowest social mobility rates in the country. This trend has serious implications for the over 250 children who call Friendship Court "home."

Given the need for meaningful resident engagement; and the importance of serving the children who will become the future of Friendship Court, Charlottesville, and beyond, the redevelopment team created a Youth Leadership Development Program. The goal of this program is to "empower young future leaders as owners of their own master plan and design processes."

To achieve that goal, a group of twenty youth from Friendship Court participated in a comprehensive, multidisciplinary series of workshops on sustainable land use. This program sought to help the youth become "citizen



scientists” who could confidently contribute to the design of the redevelopment, and eventually initiate projects of their own. The curriculum covered topics like mapping skills, food systems, community engagement, transportation modes, and street design. Through the program, the youth also received training in planning, research, advocacy best practices, and professional development skills.

The Youth Leadership Development Program (YLDP), developed by Barbara Brown-Wilson, Claudette Grant, and Liz Ogbu, uses the knowledge the youth gained as a foundation for social action. The YLDP is to provide a platform for the youth to identify opportunities for improving the quality of life for residents within Friendship Court; and to co-power the youth through mentorship, resources, and coordination. In addition to their sustainable land use curriculum, the youth have participated in financial management courses, resume writing workshops, interview preparation sessions, and field trips.

To create a formal framework for “resource allyship” between Friendship Court and the University of Virginia, Barbara Brown-Wilson and Liz Ogbu created a class within UVA’s Planning Department called “Ecological Democracy.” First coined by Randolph Hester, “ecological democracy” posits that community resilience “can be built through direct contact with the social and ecological processes that impact the build world, and that communities are stronger when co-powered to drive decision-making processes themselves.” The class brings together students from Architecture, Urban Planning, Political and Social Thought, and Environmental Studies programs—both graduate and undergraduate. Throughout the course, these students met on a weekly basis to review course content, develop design solutions, and learn best-practices for human-centered design. Biweekly, the class engaged the YLDP in workshops, planning meetings, and evaluation sessions to brainstorm design solutions. The overall goal for the class was to “further understand different roles in supporting communities to increase their own social and ecological resilience.”

In the future, the redevelopment team will work with residents to create a resident-led accountability dashboard to measure equity impacts of this project pre- and post-development--developing a successful community-led redevelopment process that results in a happy, stable, mixed income community that improves the lives of all existing residents.

# DEFINING TERMS

Throughout our methodology, you will see terms that are specific to our design, leadership, and learning philosophy. Below are quick definitions to help you better understand our work

## HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

A process that employs understanding the lived experience of residents through ethnography to better understand a user's personal needs that have yet to be satisfied, and how those needs should be incorporated in the design solution. Human-centered design solutions bridge and strengthen the relationship between the products of the design process, and those living with them.

## QUICK-WIN

Short-term design solutions meant to solve an immediately identified problem affecting quality of life. Especially during a long, phased redevelopment process, "quick wins" provide the youth with a sense of excitement and accomplishment, while also teaching them how to use basic strategies and tools to continue community improvement and advocacy

## OPPORTUNITY AREA

A problem, lack of resources, or obstacle that presents the opportunity for a human-centered design solution. An "point of improvement."

## CO-POWERMENT

Unlike empowerment—which implies that the "empowering" party gives their power to a less-powerful entity—co-powerment begins with the premise that both parties are equal in both power and expertise. Consequently, co-powered solutions are equal partnerships that actively engage both parties in an effort to achieve a shared goal.

## RESOURCE ALLY

A partner—often with a great deal of fiscal, social, and knowledge-based resources—who can use their position to support a project's needs.





## METHODOLOGY

Over the span of four months, University of Virginia students facilitated a series of community workshops to engage in collaborative design at Friendship Court. The two-hour workshops brought together seven youth leaders from Friendship Court to work alongside UVA students and community-engaged designers Barbara-Brown Wilson and Liz Ogbu. Through transect walks, mapping exercises, community dialogues, design brainstorming sessions, and youth-led photography, the youth and the UVA students developed a rapport that allowed for a deeper level of collaboration and a better understanding of how the youth wanted to improve their community.

# METHODOLOGY: THE TIMELINE

## JANUARY 31

- Introduced youth leaders to UVA students
- Established long-term goals as a group
- Started on-going dialogue to drive collaboration for the rest of the semester.
- Youth shared interests with the UVA students, and described the kinds of activities that excited them the most.

## FEBRUARY 6

- Youth identified public spaces that play important roles in daily routines.
- Discussed aspects of the community they liked (green spaces and the basketball courts) and frustrations (closed gates within the community, fence surrounding it, lack of seating at bus stop, flooding in green space).

## OUTCOMES ACTIVITIES

### SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

- Dinner: youth, UVA students discussed hopes for the project and unique experiences they bring to the group.
- Break -Out Discussions: youth and UVA students discussed daily life.
- Questions: “What do you like to do outside school? Who do you play with? What do you play?”

### SESSION 2: LEARNING BY WALKING

- Youth and Garnette Cadogan, Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, led UVA students on walk through throughout Friendship Court and surrounding community.
- Cadogan pointed out indicators of race and socioeconomic status within sights and sounds of street, demonstrated how a heightened awareness of the physical environment can alert us to the hidden characteristics of a neighborhood.

## FEBRUARY 21

- Noted frustrations with bus stop, relationship with Friendship Court and greater community.
- Justin: identified varying perceptions of safety in different parts of Friendship Court, and appreciated stillness of courtyards at night, when none of the youngest children were there.
- Expressed the desire to see the courtyards used as spaces of relaxation.
- Justin and Daemond identified basketball courts as space for more seating, shade, and lighting; and drew potential designs.

## FEBRUARY 27

- UVA faculty and architecture students learned from the youth's experiences, and heard first-hand accounts of impact of community-engaged design.
- Youth recognized for leadership and welcomed into the School of Architecture.

### SESSION 3: MAP YOUR LIFE

- UVA students facilitated discussion and mapping exercise to learn more about daily life at Friendship Court.
- Youth leaders provided aerial maps of Friendship Court and surrounding community, asked to describe a typical day .
- UVA students took note of the public spaces the youth most often interacted with, as well as any positive or negative associations that characterized each space.

### SESSION 4: COMMUNITY LECTURE

- Youth and UVA students gathered at Architecture School for talk led by Liz Ogbu.
- Youth's first official visit to the A-School.
- Youth provided a chance to speak about experiences in the YLDP at Friendship Court.
- Youth offered insight on their first moments of collaboration with UVA students.

# METHODOLOGY: THE TIMELINE

## MARCH 14

- Basketball courts out of scope; courtyards emerged as place for improvement.
- Jarvis: more shade and seating. Tyquan: equipment only for very young children, rules enforced in the courtyards prohibit yelling. Pointed out where shelter and seating could enhance bus stop.
- Youth described frustrations with fence separating Friendship Court from Downtown Charlottesville.
- Tyquan: more private spaces for youth to gather with something to do. Javisha: remove fence and open gates. Emilee: grow thyme in the garden.
- Opportunity Areas that emerged: altering or removing fence, redesigning the courtyards, creating a relaxation space, enhancing the garden and green space, addressing relations between Friendship Court and the greater Charlottesville community, and improving the bus stop.

## MARCH 28

- Youth selected two final opportunity areas: alteration (or removal) of the fence, and redesign of the courtyard-relaxation areas.
- Three categories (fence, courtyard, and relaxation) won. The youth then suggested combining courtyard with relaxation.
- Youth's responses indicated desire to get to know one another and to learn from different experiences of each group member as an ultimate goal, indicating that time spent collaborating was as important as the end product itself.

## OUTCOMES ACTIVITIES

### SESSION 5: CHOOSING OPPORTUNITY AREAS

- Youth led UVA students around their community to help them conceptualize public spaces throughout Friendship Court, and better understand youth's relationships with each space.
- Jarvis led group around basketball courts and showed spaces where seating, picnic tables, and a water fountain could improve the community.
- The UVA students then had the chance to see one of the youth's apartments. Jarvis welcomed the group into his space, and pointed to frustrations with the darkness of the space and the paint options. Tyquan: carpeting instead of the linoleum floors.

### SESSION 6: SELECTING FENCE AND COURTYARDS

- Brainstorming Activity: UVA students placed possible opportunity areas on large Post-Its around the room and youth to brainstormed quick-wins for each area within two-minute intervals. After discussion, youth then voted on favorite opportunity areas.
- Evaluation team provided a mid-semester check-in. Group facilitators asked: What do you hope we can accomplish in our work together? What are your goals for the projects that we will work on together? Who in your community should be helped by this project? What do you want to learn during our time together?

## APRIL 4

- Relaxation/Courtyard: Emilee, Justin, Tyquan: playground improvements (removing red chains, better slides, better mulch).
- Fence: Jarvis wanted a multi-purpose design solution. Javisha took notes, recognized that all members wanted fence removed.
- Youth concluded that “the point” of quick wins are to improve quality of life for residents, even if only temporary. After this clarification, conversation continued excitedly and explored different opportunities for the courtyard.
- Youth interested in building a climbing wall on the fence, movie screen, or a vertical garden on fence.
- Addi and Javisha: expected more tension and disagreement during the engagements (both among the youth and between UVA student and FC community).
- Tyquan: “I just want to see something put into the ground.” Youth wanted a physical product to show for their work.
- Evaluation structure will incorporate values youth prioritized: teamwork, friendship, and self-efficacy. Jarvis: "where everyone does their best, and can contribute their best to make the project the best and make themselves the best they can be."

## SESSION 7: QUICK WIN DESIGN

- Youth leaders came to A-School and workshopped quick wins for the two opportunity areas. Evaluation team facilitated this workshop; distributed a questionnaire to develop youth-driven evaluation framework.
- Separate brainstorm for fence and courtyard teams. Workshop included multimodal, phased structure so youth had opportunities to find their “niche” in design, presentation, note-taking, and synthesis.
- UVA students encouraged youth to think more deeply about the universality of quick wins, and whether people of all ages would be able to enjoy ideas
- Youth presented their ideas. Jarvis proposed each group create a list of top priorities, and then come together to compare goals.

## APRIL 7

- Specific fence location for alteration identified.
- Two ideal courtyards for improvement were selected.
- Justin emphasized importance of simultaneous redevelopment.

## APRIL 11

- Justin expressed a desire to see hammocks, flowers, and benches added to each courtyard. Jarvis said he wanted to see more trees and seating, and wanted the removal of the mulch. Justin suggested rubber play-ground mats instead of mulch.
- Liz Ogbu noted that the youth were largely interested in using the courtyards for relaxation, as opposed to play, and Justin agreed.
- The youth labeled hammocks and benches as their preferred courtyard equipment.

## OUTCOMES ACTIVITIES

### SESSION 8: CHOOSING A SPACE

- UVA students and youth met at Friendship Court to select ideal locations for the quick wins.
- Justin, Daemond, Emilee led UVA students around courtyards and fence. With photos, UVA students documented youth-identified areas for improvement.

### SESSION 9 : PRESENTING, IMPROVING QUICK-WINS

- UVA students presented possible quick-wins for two opportunity areas, which youth critiqued.
- Courtyard team provided Justin and Jarvis with a large aerial map of two courtyards and accessories like picnic tables, grills, hammocks, benches, climbing walls, flowers, and trees, to use to design their ideal courtyards.
- Courtyard team also put up several photos of playgrounds and courtyards on a wall and asked the youth to label objects they liked and disliked with stickers.
- Fence team brainstormed designs.
- Vertical gardens, a chalkboard, a climbing wall, and a musical pipe fence were all put forth as ideas for the fence. Accompanying studies with feasibility analysis created.

### MAY 3

- Youth and UVA students decided to move forward with the swinging benches and flower beds as the new proposal for the property managers.
- Group then discussed the possible alterations of the fence.
- Youth overwhelmingly agreed to seek the removal of the fence, instead of aesthetic changes.
- Group discussed a campaign to remove the fence: the stakeholders they would engage, community surveys and petitions they could create, and a potential video production in partnership with Light House Studio.

### MAY 7

Youth decided to interview the residents who lived by the fence to learn more about their preferences. Claudette reported that residents who previously said they liked the fence, after discussion, were in support of the youth's decisions.

The team created an agenda for meeting with the property managers and planned to practice it with the UVA students at the celebration the following week.

Youth decided on a series of questions to ask the property owners, including: Why did you decide to build a fence? How possible is it to remove portions of the fence? They also prepared questions to ask about the potential redesign of the courtyards.

### SESSION 10: FINALIZING QUICK-WINS

- Youth and UVA students met to decide on design of the quick-wins.
- Youth received update that property managers decided against hammocks due to the upkeep required; hammocks would have to be taken down each night.
- UVA students proposed swinging benches in courtyards instead, which youth liked. Youth were also interested in raised beds for flowers and plants in the courtyard.
- UVA students presented the idea of a vertical garden, based on the youth's designs from the previous workshop, to the group. Youth discussed their hesitations with the garden, mentioning that it could be torn down, stepped on, and unnecessary.

### SESSION 11: PREPARING TO MEET PROPERTY OWNERS

- Youth leaders, UVA students met at Friendship Court to discuss the start of the fence campaign, and to prepare for the youth's upcoming discussion with the property owners.
- Youth emphasized desire to see fence portions removed and specific gates opened.
- Discussed survey for response to fence removal, both out of respect for other residents and to bolster recommendations to property managers.

# METHODOLOGY: THE TIMELINE

## MAY 9

- Youth took edits and suggestions from UVA team about presentation, and incorporated them into their final draft.
- UVA team listened to feedback from youth leaders about the program and the past few months' work, recorded it, and discussed potential improvements for future partnerships.
- Youth, Claudette, and Barbara received thank-you notes for their effort.

## MAY 15

- The youth gain skills in modelmaking, and have more experiences within the A-School.

## OUTCOMES ACTIVITIES

### SESSION 12: CELEBRATION AND REHEARSAL

- Youth, UVA students, Claudette, and Barbara met to celebrate the past few months' work.
- Youth rehearsed their presentation for the property managers about fence removal/alteration.
- Evaluation team asked questions about youth leaders' overall experience in the program.

### SESSION 13 : MODEL-MAKING WORKSHOP

- Youth meet with Elgin Cleckley at the A-School to learn how to make models, and apply visual tools to their problem-solving skillset.
- Various members of the UVA team attend the workshop, and eat dinner with the youth.





## MAY 27

- Youth offer their suggestions for future projects and improvements
- Youth describe "lessons learned" from their work.

### SESSION 14: RESIDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING - PRESENTATION

- Youth leaders, supported by UVA students, present the past few months' work to the Resident Advisory Committee.

## FUTURE PLANS

As this partnership moves forward, several aspects of it will evolve and change to better fit the needs of the youth, and enhance the effectiveness of our resource partnerships.

- The partnership will change on the UVA side; rather than a full class engaging with a few youth, several students within an independent study will provide more dedicated, one-on-one consultation with the YLDP.
- The youth could learn basic software modeling skills so that they can visually portray what they want to see from the redevelopment.
- Keeping in mind the design solutions proposed during this process, the independent study students will work to create "field guides" that will enable the youth and other partners to complete projects on their own, without relying on the will of UVA.
- Stakeholders will maintain an informal social and mentorship network with the youth to continue beneficial relationship between the youth and their broader environment.
- The youth will continue to engage in activities to further their civic capacity, and keep their voices prominent in the redevelopment process.



## OUTCOME ANALYSIS

Throughout the course of the youth leadership program, the Evaluation Team surveyed the youth on the most important metrics, for them, to measure the impact of our work together. Together, we have identified three important elements of this project: our inclusion of teachable moments, our capacity to begin and complete a project that fits the youths' needs, and our ability to be flexible and dynamic in responding to the youths' perspectives. In our evaluation of this project, we will highlight (1) learning opportunities, (2) the efficacy of our work together, and (3) the perspective of the youth leaders. Ultimately, we will assess whether or not we could create an environment, according to Jarvis, "where everyone does their best, and can contribute their best to make the project the best and make themselves the best they can be."

# EVALUATION

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DESIGN PROCESS

Throughout our class, our methodology sought to develop a dynamic way to assess what mattered to the youth, and how our class could find ways to co-power them to achieve their goals: by providing resources like supplies, advice, and time; or teaching the youth the skills they needed to accomplish a project. During the workshops that were used to decide on quick-wins, the agendas and facilitators did an excellent job of allowing the youth to make the iterative and final conclusions throughout the process. Throughout the majority of the process, the youth directed each step of the process. However, when the end of the semester approached, and when feasibility became a more pressing issue, the UVA partners ended up making the final decisions before consulting with the youth, rather than working with them during that step. While this step was difficult to avoid given obstacles in communication, it is still important to recognize when evaluating the youth-driven component of this process. Having said that, youth-driven design created a tremendous amount of agency for the youth, and enabled them to learn a wide range of skills--from design and model-making, to public speaking and interviews--that will help them far into the future.

The youth leaders will evaluate the quick wins process, once build days have occurred, through interviews and surveys conducted by the Evaluation Team. These questions are listed in the Appendix. The evaluation on behalf of UVA students occurred throughout the semester in personal forum responses, which provided an outlet for reflection without bounds.

### PROS:

- The flexibility of human centered design allows and encourages changes to be made based on the immediate feedback from the youth. As a result, the process has been fluid and based on human sentiment instead of physical results.
- Because of this youth-driven, human-centered design process, the youth leaders have taken advantage of many opportunities to advocate for their needs, and express their desires for what they imagine to be an ideal community. This position helps teach the youth how to be responsible representatives and active and engaged citizens.
- Additionally, this process all but requires youth to regularly engage, in an in-depth way, with strangers--which helps the youth become more confident and comfortable in social situations.
- Although a physical outcome has not been established, this project has yielded many “teachable moments” for the youth. Through this apparently successful design process, we expect a holistic and enjoyable quick win will come to fruition.

### CONS:

- The structure of this project requires a great deal of time and energy. Collaborative design process changes frequently, and often must be reactive rather than proactive. This fact does not mean that planning is unnecessary; extensive planning and coordination is required before workshops and meetings. Agendas must be flexible and thoroughly organized beforehand to account for any challenges or negotiations that may occur.

### OF NOTE:

Although the design partners are children, that neither means that they are immature nor that they do not have a “citizen expert’s” knowledge of what their community needs. For “teachable moments” to be constructive, rather than didactic, the partners working with the youth must treat the youth leaders as equals--not just sources of feedback.

## EFFICACY OF OUR WORK TOGETHER

The quick wins were decided upon through discussion and collaboration with the youth of Friendship Court. To fully understand which projects to complete, we worked with the youth to fully understand the most important needs left unfulfilled by the current conditions of Friendship Court. Workshops, dialogues, interviews, and casual conversations helped us address both wants and needs, together. Then, the projects proposed within the partnership came from a joint interest in working towards the same goal, rather than assuming “what would be best” for the youth leaders, their families, and their neighbors. Additionally, voting served as an important way to decide between projects. Our process also brought up more problems and potential solutions than we could tackle; which means that our partnership could produce ideas and action plans for the youth or other interested parties to complete long after the end of our time together.

Although this project was quite effective in brainstorming, identifying problems, and designing solutions, it lacked the time to fully address every idea proposed. The quick wins have evolved throughout the semester, which is expected in a collaborative design effort. For instance, the Courtyard quick-win has evolved to include porch swings rather than hammocks to avoid maintenance concerns; and, because of feedback received from the youth, the vertical garden has been discarded in favor of a “take down the fence” campaign. This process proves that compromise is not just impossible, but embedded in the design process; and that its iterative nature will make solutions more sustainable, widely-enjoyed, and low-risk--despite taking a longer time.

### PROS:

- Several ideas for improving the short- and long-term quality of life at Friendship Court have been introduced and addressed.
- The youth gained design experience, civic capacity, and collaborative skills by being involved in nearly every aspect of the quick-wins process.
- The quick-wins served as an opportunity to demonstrate to the youth that their work, tangible or intangible, is important when thinking about the welfare of individuals who live in Friendship Court.
- Because of the trust-building that occurred at the beginning of our time together; and because our youth-driven, human-centered design process incorporated more opportunity for partnership and meaningful feedback, the youth felt comfortable sharing exactly what they wanted, and using our class as “resource allies” to make those solutions happen.

### CONS:

- This round, our quick-wins were not tangible. But quick wins can come in the form of soft skills gained or the fostering of relationships. It can be difficult to communicate to partners that something quite valuable is being gained from this kind of design process, even if there are no physical results.
- It took a long time to get a consensus on which project(s) would be chosen, and even then the projects are still limited to restrictions from timing and property restrictions.
- When compromise occurs at a majority of levels of decision-making, stakeholders can feel less efficacious even though they are still accomplishing a great deal.

## PERSPECTIVE OF YOUTH LEADERS

It is vital to take into account the opinions, ideas, and perceptions of the youth, especially when implementing human-centered design. No project addressing the redevelopment of Friendship Court could claim to benefit the residents' needs, without doing the due diligence of meaningfully engaging with those residents to understand what they would like to see their community become. The youth are a perfect example of such a group. The youth leaders provide the insight that a wide variety of stakeholders--property managers, community organizers, architects, and city council representatives--can take to form a more robust knowledge of their constituents, and use that knowledge to create more impactful solutions. Understanding their perspectives should carry a great deal of weight in any process related to bettering the civic fabric, built or social.

As such, it is important to ensure that every party in the human-centered design process feels as if they are on equal footing when entering the partnership. Building trusting, genuine, understanding relationships between every participant in such partnerships will be essential for projects like this to continue, and thrive. The youth are excited to learn the tools and skills to do future projects on their own if need be; and are willing to work on a more long-term quick win to take the fence down. This fact is important: eventually, we hope that these partnerships will become so institutionalized that every resident--regardless of age, ability, or background--will be able to rally the necessary people and resources to make improvements happen. If we incorporate the principles of human-centered design in our partnerships between housing authorities, institutions (like the municipal government and the University of Virginia), property managers, and private sector stakeholders, then classes like ours should be obsolete.

### PROS:

- This project helps break down stereotypes and perceived tension between partners like the University, Friendship Court, and Piedmont Housing Alliance.
- This project places youth voices at the center of its focus--using feedback as a source of inspiration, criticism, and verification.

### CONS:

- Lapses or faults in communication damage the capacity for trusting relationships to form, harming the ability for human-centered design solutions to thrive
- Ensuring that every party is "heard" means devoting a large amount of time, resources, and people towards community-building. Short-changing any aspect of relationship-building is a non-starter with these kinds of projects.

## POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

There were many excellent ideas for improving the quality of life, both now and after the redevelopment of Friendship Court, that we had neither the time nor resources to accomplish. Here are a few solutions that we think should be implemented:

### SHORT TERM

- A mural to go along the outside of the fence to improve perceptions and morale
- A chalkboard on the inside of the fence to engage other youth within Friendship Court
- Repair the benches so that people can sit in the courtyards safely
- Replace the broken trash cans
- Provide more seating near the basketball courts

### MID TERM

- A video project to approach and break-down the negative perceptions of Friendship Court
- Improve hospitality, comfort, and user experience of the bus stop by adding seating and an overhead shelter
- Work with youth to help launch a survey that gauges residents' desires for new community, like interior features, safety and security measures, and the design of green and public spaces.

### LONG TERM

- Remove the fence
- Institutionalize and broaden the Youth Leadership Development Program, adding more community partners and engaging more youth over a longer period of time with the established curriculum
- Replace the mulch with a rubber mat for the new playground, and add equipment for a wide range of ages
- Add barbecue grills and picnic tables to courtyard areas to facilitate relaxation and community bonding

## APPENDIX

### PRE/POST-BUILD EVALUATION QUESTIONS

#### BUILD DAY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (Youth Leaders)

1. How are you feeling?
2. What is your favorite thing about the quick win?
3. What have you enjoyed the most about build day?
4. What is the coolest thing you've learned about design/the design process?
5. Share a favorite memory from your time in the youth leadership program.
6. What, if anything, did you learn from this project?
7. What, if anything, would you change about this project?
8. What, if anything, do you think went really well?

#### POST-PROJECT SURVEY QUESTIONS (UVA Students and Youth Leaders)

2. What were your goals going into this project?
3. Do you feel as though you have built relationships with your UVA partners?
4. Would you suggest this program to a friend? [definitely, likely, not likely]
5. Have you talked to your friends about what you have learned in this program?
6. What was the most important thing you learned with this project?
7. How do you see the skills you've learned, in terms of design, collaboration, etc., translating into future works/projects? How comfortable are you with these skills?
8. What would have you changed? (project, build choices, etc.)
9. What went well with the projects?

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