

# Building Landscape Architects in Bengaluru

**Bronson Teichert**

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Moving to Bengaluru, India, for an internship, a city with more people on one street than in the entire town of Inkom, Idaho, was a big step for Ashely Casperson, a Utah State University senior studying landscape architecture and environmental planning (LAEP). Growing up in Idaho, Casperson said she never imagined a career where she could realize her passions for the outdoors, art and travel.

Casperson was first introduced to the LAEP program by a co-worker and a roommate who were working on projects that looked like too much fun to be homework. Casperson's love for landscape architecture started in her sophomore design studio with David Evans, an associate professor in the LAEP department.

It was while designing and creating graphics on a computer program that Casperson knew she had chosen the right career path. Working with Evans and LAEP internship coordinator Tanya Rice, Casperson was able to land an internship in India with USU alumus Prashanta Bhat.

"It demonstrates a spirit of exploration and courage to live and work in such a unique culture and also includes all of the benefits of working in a professional office," Evans said. "Most professionals would see an internship in another country as a unique and formative experience. Both the learning associated with travel and also working in a professional office are a part of an overseas, or an out-of-state internship, that affirms a student's sense of adventure and willingness to learn."



Evans said these internships are important enough in this competitive field that the LAEP program offers scholarships, funded by the alumni advancement board, for students looking to leave the state or country for internships.

"It was a small landscape firm," Casperson said. "There were less than ten people in the firm. We did a lot of high end-residential projects, a couple of public projects for parks and hospitals and couple of research projects."

Casperson said she received hands-on experience in design, meeting with clients and researching different areas of the city.

"My boss was big on letting me experience India and not just being the office all day," Casperson said.

Not everything about the internship was easy, according to Casperson. Having studied abroad in Slovenia the year

before, Casperson missed the construction documentation class at USU before her internship in India.

“At the time I had no knowledge of it right? So I got to India and my boss told me to prepare some construction docs,” Casperson said. “I had to work with him and he was able to teach me so it was more hands on.”

One of Casperson’s favorite internship learning experiences was working with a client one-on-one.

“They were building a home and I was there for the latter end,” Casperson said. “I got to go with the client to a couple of nurseries in the area and pick out certain plants that she wanted. It was cool to see that interaction and see how much clients can be involved in simple things like picking plants.”

Working with clients and team members wasn’t new skill for Casperson. She said the individual and team projects at USU have a way of bringing the LAEP students together.

“I enjoy this program, not only because of what I’m learning, but because we have this tight-knit community,” Casperson said. “My only friends are people I go to school with. We’re so close that we can come to each other for anything.”

Upon graduation in spring 2019, Casperson will move back to Slovenia for employment where she hopes to tackle large-scale projects in safety, community development and public health.

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