



CHANGE AGENT

For architect Bryan Cook, his program to expose minority students to architecture careers is a labor of love. With the help of MAF's Public Awareness Grants, he's expanded its reach.

One of the most engaging ways to learn more about architecture is through programs that educate us, enrich our experiences, and stimulate our imaginations. That's the premise behind the [Michigan Architectural Foundation's \(MAF\) Public Awareness Grant program](#). Grants have helped fund films, lectures, events, workshops, and educational programs, connecting people with architecture in creative ways.

One program that has benefitted from MAF Public Awareness Grants is [Project Pipeline Architecture Camp](#). The National Organization of Minority Architects

(NOMA) created Project Pipeline to help increase the number of minority and under-represented students exposed to architecture and the built environment. Inspired after hearing about Project Pipeline at a national NOMA conference, architect Bryan Cook brought it to Michigan, starting with Grand Rapids in 2013, expanding to Detroit in 2016, and, beginning in 2018, to Flint. The program has been so successful that it has been a MAF grant recipient for multiple years running.

"I was impressed by the success other NOMA chapters, such as Chicago, have had with the program," said Cook, who also is

a member of MAF's K5 Education Committee. Cook obtained funding and space, and four students to start. He condensed the national camp format from four days to two, to make student engagement and commitment for program volunteers more manageable. "On the first day, we take students on tours to see architecture and discuss its impact, and do a city planning exercise. Students spend the second day sketching and building models. They finish by presenting their work to a panel of judges consisting of industry professionals, and awards are given out." Parents are invited as well.



Cook is pleased with the program's growth, and its reception from students, parents, and supporters like MAF. "It's very gratifying to see students get engaged, and interested in architecture and planning," said Cook. "They also are learning teamwork, participating in healthy competition, and learning how creativity and critical thinking influence how they learn and look at the world around them."

Cook's long-term goal is to engage more students, particularly at the middle school level. He also would like to eventually expand the camp to a full-year program, and possibly work with educators to incorporate Project Pipeline program lessons and activities into educational curriculums. He also is working to get more corporate support and mentors involved, to continue to grow and evolve the program.

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"The program is the first of its kind. "We have tremendous potential here, to reach a segment of students that may not otherwise have known about careers in architecture, and to help build a network of future professionals and citizens who are engaged in their communities," said Cook. "That makes for a very bright future, both for students and for our world. It's exciting to be part of it."