



Jessica Ward

Architectural Designer | Educator | Planner | Published Researcher

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SKILLS

Urban Planning Expert

Environmental Policy Expert

Grant Management Expert

Climate Resilience Expert

Data Driven Decision Making Expert

Community Engagement Expert

LANGUAGES

Hebrew

Spanish

Profile

Dynamic educator and published researcher specializing in urban planning and environmental policy. Proven expertise in securing and managing large-scale grants, including a \$600,000 Title III grant and a \$750,000 National Academies of Sciences grant, driving climate resilience initiatives. Strong background in interdisciplinary instruction, mentoring students, and fostering community engagement through applied research. Unique ability to integrate sustainability into housing policy and community

EDUCATION

2018 — May 2023

Houston, Texas

Texas Southern University, Barbara Jordan Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs

Ph.D. Urban Planning and Environmental Policy

Dissertation: Seniors Seeking Housing, Health, and Climate Justice: An Oral History of Hurricane Recovery in the Gulf Coast

2009 — May 2012

Tempe, Arizona

Arizona State University, the Design School

Master of Architecture

Capstone Project: Rwanda: Regenerative Regionalism: Healing Environments in the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

2005 — 2009

Tempe, Arizona

Arizona State University, the Design School

Bachelor of Arts in the Built Environment

Transfer credits from Ringling School of Art and Design and University of South Florida, School of Architecture + Community Design

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2015 — 2025

Prairie View, Texas

Assistant Professor of Architecture & Construction Science at Prairie View A&M University

- Developed curriculum for upper level undergraduate and graduate architecture and construction science courses: Architecture Design; Design Theory & History; Sustainable

Building; Net Zero Design; Professional Internship; Materials & Methods; Professional Internship

- Directed interdisciplinary instruction in environmental systems, sustainable development, and policy-integrated design
Principal Investigator, U.S. Department of Education Title III Grant (\$600,000):
- Oversaw program design, construction, compliance, reporting, and cross-institutional implementation of Micro-Grid House 360 on campus
Principal Investigator, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine – Gulf Research Program (\$750,000): Advanced research in climate resilience and environmental justice
- Mentored student organizations (American Institute of Architecture Students), research assistants, and fellows, in design, environmental compliance, building performance, historic preservation and community-based implementation
- Research Infrastructure and Lab Development: Established and led design and construction of campus learning facility, sustainability and building performance lab supporting applied environmental monitoring and data collection
- Operated a net-positive energy system enabling on-site solar generation, energy storage monitoring, and distribution to adjacent campus facilities
- Invited participant, JUMP into STEM program (U.S. Department of Energy / National Renewable Energy Laboratory), supporting applied research in building performance, energy systems, and resilient housing design

2007 – 2009

Tempe, Arizona

Graduate Research & Teaching Assistant at Arizona State University – The Design School

- Supported applied research in housing, environmental planning, and community development, including work with the Salt River Pima–Maricopa Indian Community on land use and planning analysis, design visualizations and planning research

- Assisted with data collection, mapping, and development of planning strategies aligned with community and environmental considerations

2012 — Present

Houston, Texas

Founder & Principal | Designers. Planners. Consultants. at IDEA Studio x Workshop LLC

- Practice centers on integrated design for environmental architecture and development, aligning planning, permitting, and construction with long-term resilience and sustainability goals
- Provide technical guidance on sustainable development, environmental systems, and resilience-focused design strategies
- Support integration of energy-efficient, high-performance building systems and renewable-ready strategies aligned with environmental standards and long-term resilience goals
- Advise developers, nonprofit organizations, and public stakeholders on aligning project delivery with regulatory policy, funding requirements, and community impact goals
- Translate complex regulatory and environmental policy frameworks into actionable development strategies across permitting, construction, and implementation phases

2023 — Present

Houston, Texas

Current Consulting: Houston Habitat for Humanity at Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC)

- Support implementation of development and design guidelines for a mixed-income master-planned community, ensuring alignment with municipal regulations, environmental policy, and long-term resilience goals
- Conduct field-based compliance assessments and produce reporting frameworks used to guide development decisions and stakeholder coordination
- Coordinate with developers, contractors, and stakeholders to ensure adherence to environmental guidelines and permitting requirements, assist in development and implementation of quality control, architectural design and environmental review standards

- Vetted qualified builder partners
- Solar policy and sustainability integration
- Introduced new housing prototypes responsive to community and performance goals

Jan 2015 — Jan 2017

Houston, Texas

Past Consulting: Contributed to National FEMA Pilot Program at Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC)

- Contributed design to a federally funded Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) pilot program delivering disaster recovery housing prototypes in the Gulf Coast region advancing housing solutions focused on durability, resilience, and long-term environmental performance
- Designed and implemented 20 prototypes aligned with federal funding requirements, local codes, and environmental standards

2014 — 2015

Houston, Texas

Assistant Director at Building Community Workshop

- Led community engagement and implementation support for City of Houston disaster recovery housing programs
- Coordinated delivery of federally supported housing initiatives aligned with resilience and recovery objectives
- Facilitated collaboration between public agencies, community stakeholders, and technical teams.

2012 — 2013

Phoenix, Arizona

Project Manager / Junior Architect at Neighborhood Housing Services of Phoenix

- Managed implementation of a \$1M federally funded Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
- Oversaw contractor procurement, bid evaluation, and budget administration. Coordinated construction inspections and draw approvals to ensure compliance with HUD funding requirements
- Ensured adherence to environmental review processes and federal, state, and local regulations. Collaborated with contractors,

inspectors, and public agencies to maintain
program compliance and delivery timelines

2006 — 2007

Mesa, Arizona

Facility Planner at BPLW/ ASCG Architects & Engineers

- Assisted with land use planning, site analysis, and preparation of development proposals
- Supported coordination of entitlement and permitting documentation for educational facilities
- Conducted research and mapping to inform planning strategies and regulatory compliance

2005 — 2006

Mesa, Arizona

Design Review Planner at City of Mesa

- Supported municipal planning staff in development review, zoning research, and land use analysis
- Assisted with preparation of planning documents and coordination of permitting-related materials
- Contributed to review processes aligned with local codes, ordinances, and comprehensive planning frameworks

1998 — 2000

Sarasota, Florida

Assistant at Carl Abbott Architects

- Supported residential and coastal architectural projects in Sarasota County Gained early experience working within coastal development constraints and regional environmental considerations

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

2026

Architect Registration Examination (ARE) Candidate

2026

NSPIRE Certified Inspector (HUD National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate)

2023 — 2024

Stanford Building Decarbonization Learning Accelerator

Stanford University

- 2019 Evidence-Based Design Accreditation and Certification (EDAC)
The Center for Health Design
- 2017 Green Classroom Professional (GCP)
U.S. Green Building Council
- 2020 Quality Matters – Applying the Quality Matters Rubric
- 2020 Quality Matters – Introduction to Teaching Online

PUBLICATION

- 2025 An oral history of African American seniors seeking hurricane recovery and climate justice in the Gulf Coast.
Environmental Justice (2025)
- 2025 An oral history of African American seniors seeking housing, health, and climate justice in the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Harvey.
Journal of Public Management & Social Policy, 31(1) (2025)
- 2024 Integrated Design for Environmental and Climate Justice Research, House 360.
7th Residential Building Design and Construction Annual Conference Proceedings, Penn State, College of Engineering, March, p.127. +LINK
- 2024 IDEA Climate Justice Research: House 360 Prototypes.
112th American Institute of Architects/ Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) Annual Meeting Proceedings, Disruptors on the Edge. March, p.746. +LINK
- 2020 Design Studio as Integrated Living Lab for Climate Justice: Houston.

108th American Institute of Architects/ Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) Annual Meeting Proceedings, Open. March, p.888.

2027

Environmental Justice Heroes of Prairie View.

In Hoston, W.T. (Ed.), Black Profiles in Greatness: A Legacy of Prairie View A&M University. Texas Tech University Press. (forthcoming book chapter)

HONORS, AWARDS & PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

2025

Selected Juror, American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment (COTE) Awards

2019 – 2020

AIA Design for Aging Fellowship

2018

Texas Society of Architects Studio Design Award (Faculty Lead / Studio Instructor)

2018

AIA Houston + City of Houston Council – Special Distinction (Faculty Lead / Studio Instructor)

2021

City of Houston ADU Design Guide (Faculty Lead / Studio Instructor)