

Mitzi R. Vernon

06 January 2024

Dean's Search Committee:

I write to you with interest in your search for the Dean of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction. It is also an opportunity to think about the future of architecture, design and the built environment during a formidable and auspicious era.

In reading the dean's leadership profile, I remembered the many times I learned something new about the CADC at Auburn. I recall hearing first about Samuel Mockbee and the Rural Studio and the teaching paradigm of practitioner as citizen and conservationist. And as I helped build the industrial design program at Virginia Tech, I remember learning about the long history of that program at Auburn. In 2014-15 I lead the development of a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary book of the College of Architecture & Urban Studies at Virginia Tech, and I discovered overlaps of histories between the CAUS and the CADC and learned more about the celebrated building science program. These signature programs and student experiences of the CADC are emblematic of the land-grant mission. I am privileged to have your invitation for this letter.

*What prepares me for this role?* I recently completed my seventh year as dean of the College of Design at the University of Kentucky (UK) and stepped down to take a research sabbatical, which ends this December. I was recruited in 2015 to bring the academic units together, create new programs, and to create a unifying space on campus for the college. The key components of my administrative portfolio include: 1) doubling the **footprint** of the College through facilities (a new **adaptive reuse structure** with *Studio Gang Architects*, construction to be completed January 2024) and **new programs** (Product Design with an arm to Biomedical Engineering, Urban & Environmental Design, and a suite of online degree and certificate offerings); 2) new faculty/staff/student **councils of leadership** in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Technology, an annual forum called *Inclusion by Design*, which includes a diverse panel of alumni presentations of life trajectories. and a student chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMAS); 3) unpacking and redesigning the **economics** of the College of Design amidst larger campus entities with an ever-evolving calculus for funding distribution; 4) rethinking the College **identity** (3884: *Stories of Design+Place*, an award-winning narrative journal for recruitment and philanthropy), communication & marketing; and 5) uplifting stewardship and expanding the network of the College through **philanthropy/advocacy/outreach** (a College Advocacy Board, innovative capital and scholarship philanthropy, community-based projects, and re-energizing and expanding the alumni network). I have a lot to say about each of these constituent parts of higher education; I will abbreviate for the moment to say that authenticity, heart, strategy and a diverse team are indispensable.

In my tenure as an academic and practitioner I have formed and led numerous and wildly diverse teams (for several National Science Foundation (NSF) grants). I have participated in work with the Board of Trustees at my current and prior universities and served on several upper administrative boards and committees. I have been part of community, private/public, small/large and land-grant institutions. I have recruited and hired staff, faculty and administrators. I have served as mentor and coach to many academics for tenure and portfolio development, both formally and informally. I have been key to or founder of two new programs in industrial/product design. I have worked hand in hand with the mayors of both primary cities in Kentucky to bring the College of Design to local communities through satellite studios. I was steadfast for 84 uninterrupted months leading the pursuit of the adaptive reuse of a 1917 warehouse for the College of Design. My commitment with the selection committee was to preserve the right building, choosing architect Jeanne Gang for her dedication to sustainability, equality and design education. Simultaneously, with a grassroots and micro-philanthropy mindset, I have both designed fundraising strategies and worked with a small team of philanthropy and communications staff to secure funds to support the naming of the **Gray Design Building** (and 48 additional named spaces) and the groundbreaking, which occurred on August 8, 2022.

*What compels me to this letter?* I write because I have something more to say about design education, about what it means to empower young leaders through making; because I know well and am an advocate for interdisciplinary, and studio, education and its evolution. Endeavoring to save and remake a building for creatives had much to teach me about the broadest definitions of equity and sustainability.

Perhaps it is the dean, architect and/or citizen in me, but I see the programs such as the Mass Timber Collaborative, the futures studio, the Rural Studio and Front Porch Initiative as physical and metaphorical bridges between campus, community and industry (again, the land-grant definition). I have been a *placemaker* most of my adult life. As steward of, and activist for, the new building for the College of Design at UK and in my prior research work on traveling exhibitions, I am particularly mindful of nimble space. As we thought of what our former tobacco warehouse afforded us, we opted for wide open studios but with particular curricular adjacencies, because design education is all about student and community connections. As dean it was most critical to knit together the existing monocultures into what our architect, Jeanne Gang coined as *polycultural*, setting the table for *one* community.

Technology is forefront both philosophically and spatially in the new building. Since my days at Stanford University in maker space, I have always understood that ground to be the real opportunity for equal access and empowerment. In preparation for our move into the new building, I inaugurated a **Technology Council**, with equal representation from all programs in the College, including staff and students. An extension of the Council is a student group of workers called *Technology Fellows*. They met with me just before the groundbreaking to discuss **Mentorship and Community** (meaning the *whole* community), a proposal for improving shop culture. It was one of the most inspiring moments of my tenure as dean. The students understand inclusivity; they are the future. We should all wish to be rendered dispensable as academics, and this young group of mavericks did exactly this for me.

In this era of COVID/post-COVID and civic re-examination, we are all, in academia and otherwise, called to think about inclusion, belonging and our responsibility for sustainable ecosystems, both intellectual and environmental. In reviewing the opportunities and challenges for the new CADC dean and given my experience at UK, I am curious about the possibility of a creative commons – a *binding* space for all college disciplines – which might be a direct response to the call for bold vision, integrating research and practice into the campus R1 portfolio.

I was Co-Chair of the University of Kentucky's 2021 Strategic Plan sub-committee on DEI called *Many People, One Community*, and in my opening remarks to the Board of Trustees I mentioned a conversation with a prospective donor to the College of Design. The donor and I had both seen the recent *60 Minutes* episode on Deep Springs College in California. I related to the Board that Deep Springs welcomed every student equitably with *equal* anticipation of their future leadership and their direct involvement in making the small campus work. I asked why we should not treat every student entering the university as if we fully expected each of them to be leaders? That positioning enables students to immediately see themselves as future-builders and agents of social change. *This was an intellectual pivot point for me*: that drawing students to a campus should be an entrusting agreement, that we explain ourselves as an entity seeking future leaders and that we are active, not passive, in that language of recruitment and advancement of students. This service experience for UK reminded me of my 16-year-old self, attending the Governor's School of North Carolina. The experience was life-changing, letting me know for the first time that much was expected of me, and that making, intellect and community were inseparable. It was my first complete experience with interdisciplinary life.

I believe that the renaissance character of my career – systems thinker, formist, creative, educator, writer, researcher and leader – assembles me for this particular leadership role. However, on the heels of finishing a recent article on studio education and the lessons of COVID (for *Innovation Magazine* – Winter), I wonder if my studio leadership might be my best preparation. I created and conducted a new undergraduate studio called **Form Studio** during the four years prior to being recruited as dean at UK. In total it was a full expression of empowering 200 students through making and then selecting a student team to lead the orchestration and delivery of a traveling exhibition of that body of work, called *Form: Line, Plane, Solid*. As it was with my NSF teamwork, this project was at once a lesson in leadership, community-building and life-making, for me and them, through visualization, craft, curation, exhibition, and bookmaking.

We carry with us the meaningful opportunities afforded to us hoping that we can return the favor as citizens and leaders. If there is a longer conversation, I look forward to talking with you about the Architecture, Design and Construction future and the palpable opportunity for young makers, as community activists, to solve complex problems.

Sincerely -- , .

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mitzi', with a horizontal line extending to the left.

Mitzi R. Vernon

**MITZI RENEE VERNON**  
**Abbreviated Biography & Curriculum Vitae | 2023**

College of Design  
University of Kentucky | Lexington, KY 40506

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mitzivernon/>  
<https://uknow.uky.edu/campus-news/uk-college-design-breaks-ground-new-home>  
<https://www.asumag.com/planning-design/renovation/article/21248541/university-of-kentucky-breaks-ground-on-new-home-for-college-of-design>  
<https://design.uky.edu/building-updates/>

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Mitzi Vernon completed her 7<sup>th</sup> year as Dean of the College of Design at the University of Kentucky (UK) in 2022. She began a year-long research sabbatical January 1, 2023. Her administrative portfolio includes: the **Gray Design Building**, an adaptive reuse of a 1917 tobacco warehouse to unify the College and situate it as a new bridge between city and campus. Groundbreaking occurred August 8, 2022 (National Architect, Jeanne Gang of Studio Gang Architects and local Architect of Record, K Norman Berry Architects); **Vision2021**, a College-wide strategic plan; full college identity and media collateral including **38°84: Stories of Design + Place**, a narrative-based, design journal; satellite studios, **StudioLouisville** and **StudioAppalachia**; a new **Product Design** program in collaboration with Biomedical Engineering and the healthcare campus (Fall 2020); the inauguration of two new college initiatives: **Technology Council** and the **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council**; and, in late 2021 and 2022 Vernon served as co-chair of the UK DEI Committee, **Many People, One Community** for the new UK Strategic Plan, and as a search committee member for the new Vice President for Philanthropy.

*Innovation Magazine* published Vernon's article, *Studio Adjacent: Why Studio Education is still part of the Future* in the Winter 2022 issue. Current scholarship includes: higher education micro-philanthropy – the story of the Gray Design Building; the scholarship of form; and *Fields Everywhere* & the public understanding of science.

Prior to UK, Vernon has taught at Virginia Tech, California College of Art (CCA), the University of Southern California (USC) and Arizona State University (ASU). Vernon's career spans 30+ years of leadership, practice and teaching in industrial design, engineering and architecture. As originator of the project, **Fields Everywhere**, she has been the recipient of several patents and grants supporting her research in using design to promote the public understanding of science. She has led multiple and diverse funded project teams. She was a *CreativeMornings* speaker in April 2017, delivering **Form in Life** in Lexington, Kentucky, and one of the inaugural speakers for 2012 TEDx Virginia Tech, delivering **Mapping the Invisible**. Teaching awards include: Edward Singleton Diggs Scholar; a 2008 Dell ReGeneration International Design Educator; & the prestigious William E. Wine Award for Excellence.

## EDUCATION

1995 MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ENGINEERING IN PRODUCT DESIGN | Stanford University

1986 MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE | Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

1984 BACHELOR OF SCIENCE | Housing & Interior Design | University of North Carolina-Greensboro

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2023 TED2023 | POSSIBILITY, SPRING 2023

2021 RESILIENCELAB: MAY 2021

2020 TEDWOMEN2020: FEARLESS, FALL 2020

2018 TEDWOMEN2018: SHOWING UP, FALL 2018

2018 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP | HIGHER EDUCATION, FALL 2018

NATIONAL DIVERSITY CONGRESS AT HARVARD, CAMBRIDGE, MA

2017 TED2018 | THE AGE OF AMAZEMENT, SPRING 2017

2016 CERTIFICATE, MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (MDP), SUMMER 2016

HARVARD INSTITUTES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,  
CAMBRIDGE, MA

2016 UNCONSCIOUS BIAS LEARNING LAB (UBLL), COOK ROSS, SUMMER 2016

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2022- PROFESSOR Product Design University of Kentucky

2015-2022 DEAN College of Design University of Kentucky

2009-2015 PROFESSOR Industrial Design Virginia Tech

2001-2008 ASSOC PROFESSOR Industrial Design Virginia Tech

1995-2001 ASSIST PROFESSOR Industrial Design Virginia Tech

1995 ADJ INSTRUCTOR Industrial Design California College of the Arts

1991-1992 ADJ INSTRUCTOR Architecture University of Southern California

1986-1991 ASSIST PROFESSOR Department of Design Arizona State University

## INVITED PAPERS, LECTURES, WORKSHOPS, PANELS, REVIEWS & EXHIBITIONS

2023 *Adaptation: a Place, a College, a Building and an Idea* | In process

2022 *Studio Adjacent: Why Studio Education is still Part of the Future* | Innovation Magazine,  
Winter 2022

2022 Panelist | Industrial Design Society of America Education Symposium, Sept 2022

2018 *Teaching the Future...Healthcare Designers* | Boston, MA, 30 March, 2018  
2018 IDSA Medical Design Conference

2018 *Teaching the Urban Future* | Louisville, KY, 15 June, 2018  
Urban Land Institute (ULI) Mayor's Land Use & Development Forum

2017 *Form in Life* | CreativeMornings, Lexington, KY, 21 April, 2017

2016 *FORM: Line-Plane-Solid* | Exhibition at The Downtown Arts Center, Lexington,  
Kentucky

*Form to Product* | Keynote for Exhibit Opening, 25 October, 2016

2016 *Form & Line* | Exhibition at The Simons Center for Geometry & Physics,  
Stony Brook University

*Form to Product* | Keynote for Exhibit Opening, 03 March, 2016

- 2015 *Principles of Design* | Recorded Lecture for The Great Courses Company, Chantilly, VA
- 2012 *Mapping the Invisible* from the Fields Everywhere project | TEDx Virginia Tech Speaker  
Among 20 talks selected for the inaugural TEDx at Virginia Tech
- 2011 National Science Foundation | Panelist  
Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) panel for The  
Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL)
- 2010 Lawrence King Publishers | Reviewer  
Design Research Book Proposal Review
- 2009 *I Speak Three Languages* | Stanford University  
Invited as one of the speakers for the Alumni Symposium for the Product Realization  
Laboratory
- 2009 National Collegiate Inventors & Innovators Alliance (NCIIA) | Reviewer  
Invited to review paper submissions for the 2010 Annual Conference
- 2009 National Science Foundation | Panelist  
Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) panel for The  
Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL)
- 2008 National Science Foundation | Reviewer  
Pre-proposal review – single submission – for the Informal Science Education Program  
in the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings (DRL)
- 2007 Image and Meaning Workshop 2.4 at Harvard University | Workshop  
Invited to participate with the Phoebe's Field Project
- 2007 *Phoebe's Field* – Innovate 2007 Exposition | Exhibitor  
Invited by the Virginia Department of Education Showcasing innovative technologies  
and products proposed for education, featuring over 65 interactive exhibits and  
organized around Virginia's long-range technology plan.
- 2006 Museums in Transition: Emerging Technologies as Tools for Free Choice Learning |  
Reviewer  
Published Report by Gyroscope, Inc.
- 2006 Faculty Discussion on Libraries of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century | Panelist  
University Libraries In-Service Day at Virginia Tech
- 2006 National Science Foundation | Panelist  
Informal Science Education Program in the Division of Research on Learning in Formal  
and Informal Settings (DRL)
- 2002 Gender & Science Digital Library (GSDL) | Reviewer  
Sponsored by the National Science Foundation to create an interactive library of K-12,  
higher education, women's studies, and teacher preparation resources for STEM  
disciplines
- 1999 Industrial Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) | Juror  
International design competition sponsored by the Industrial Design Society of America  
(IDSA)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE | Special Projects

- 1995 — Fields Everywhere & Phoebe's Field | Since 1995  
Using design to teach science to children – exhibition design & children's novella in process
- 2011 — The Scholarship of Form | Since 2011  
Exploration of the pedagogy of product form through exhibition & publication in process
- 1999 Papa John's Pizza Brand Design | Sponsored by Papa John's, Inc.  
Co-Principal Investigator – Part of 22-member faculty/student design team to redesign entire corporate brand: architecture, product, iconography, and advertising
- 1993 ImageNet/Interval Corporation | Palo Alto, California  
Hired by ImageNet to work with Interval Corporation on product development research on girls and digital gaming
- 1988 Astronauts Memorial Design Competition Project | Letter of Commendation  
One of 50 projects chosen (750 entrants) for exhibition at Smithsonian Institution. One of five selected by all judges for Top 50 projects by NASA & Astronauts Memorial Foundation
- 1984 Spirit of Design | Workshop with Christopher Alexander in San Francisco  
Design and construction of the Uncommon Bench at Fort Mason

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE | Architecture & Design

- 2007 Catawba Valley Residence | Blacksburg, Virginia  
2500 square foot new construction including site plan, structural and casework
- 1990-1992 Lise Matthews Architect | Venice, California  
Project Architect
- 1992-1995 Linde Residential Project | Chicago, Illinois  
8500 square foot high-rise interior floor plan including furniture & all millwork
- 1990-1992 Linde Residential Project | Phoenix, Arizona  
6000 square foot high-rise interior floor plan including furniture & all millwork
- 1990-1991 Rapp Residential Project | Chicago, Illinois  
Renovation of an historic district house including millwork and furniture
- 1988-1990 Zuber Residential Project | Paradise Valley, Arizona  
Furniture design for new Antoine Predock Residence
- 1986-1990 North Carolina Residence | King, North Carolina  
3000 square foot new construction including site plan and millwork
- 1985 Design Group Architects | Sedona, Arizona  
Student Intern
- 1983 Design Group Architects | Sedona, Arizona  
Student Intern

## ACADEMIC AWARDS

- 2015 Ut Prosim Exemplary Service Award | School of Architecture + Design | Virginia Tech
- 2015 Excellence in Creative Achievement Award | School of Architecture + Design | Virginia Tech
- 2013 Thank-A-Teacher Citations (three) | Virginia Tech  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research
- 2012 William E. Wine Award for Teaching Excellence | Virginia Tech
- 2012 J. Stoeckel Design Studio Teaching Award | School of Architecture + Design | Virginia Tech
- 2012 Mapping the Invisible | TEDx Virginia Tech  
The Fields Everywhere project, selected among 20 talks for the inaugural TEDx at Virginia Tech
- 2011 Teacher of the Week | Virginia Tech  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research
- 2010 Design Excellence in Scholarship Award | School of Architecture + Design | Virginia Tech
- 2010 Favorite Faculty Award | Virginia Tech  
Office of Residence Life
- 2009 Edward Singleton Diggs Teaching Scholar Award | Virginia Tech
- 2009 Scholar of the Week Award | Virginia Tech  
Office of the Vice President for Research
- 2008 University Exemplary Department Award | Virginia Tech  
Honoring collaborations between the School of Architecture + Design & other disciplines across campus – Fields Everywhere (1 of 3 projects cited)
- 2008 Design Educator Award | Dell Computer  
ReGeneration: International Green Computing Technology Design Competition (\$2000)
- 2007 Phoebe's Field – Innovate 2007 Exposition | Virginia Department of Education  
Showcasing innovative technologies and products proposed for education, featuring over 65 interactive exhibits and organized around Virginia's long-range technology plan.
- 2007 Diversity Recognition Award | College of Architecture & Urban Studies
- 2004 Pioneers for Women at Virginia Tech  
Recognition at the Women's Center Tenth Anniversary Gala at Virginia Tech
- 1993 Centennial Teaching Assistantship Award | Stanford University

## GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

- 2015 Form Exhibition 2015 | Internal Grant  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$8,100)
- 2014 Form Exhibition 2014 | Internal Grant  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$8,500)
- 2013 Kinesthetic Field | Internal Grants  
Institute for Society, Culture & the Environment (ISCE) (\$7,000)  
Institute for Creativity, Arts & Technology (iCAT) (\$3,000)  
Office of the Associate Vice President for University Relations (\$10,000)
- 2013 Form Exhibition 2014 | Internal Grant



- Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$5,000)
- 2012 Mapping the Invisible | TEDx Virginia Tech  
The Fields Everywhere project, selected among 20 talks for the inaugural TEDx at Virginia Tech
- 2012 inFORM Exhibition - Notodden, Norway | Instructional Enhancement Grant  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$3,250)  
Project Leads: Professors Akshay Sharma and Martha Sullivan
- 2012 inFORM Exhibition – Arlington, Virginia | Instructional Enhancement Grant  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$3,000)  
Co-principal with Professor Martha Sullivan
- 2011 Exhibit, Catalog, & Essay: The Scholarship of Form | Instructional Enhancement Grant  
Center for Instructional Development & Educational Research (CIDER) (\$1,000)  
Co-principal with Professors Akshay Sharma & Martha Sullivan
- 2009 Fields Everywhere | Summer Faculty Scholars Grant  
Institute for Society, Culture & the Environment (\$20,000)
- 2008 Professional Practice & Entrepreneurship Coursel Internal Grant Academic Assessment Grant  
Office of Academic Assessment at Virginia Tech (\$2,000)
- 2008 Sound Fields | Educational Enhancement Collaboration Grant  
The Arts Initiative at Virginia Tech (\$5,000)
- 2007 Design+Science+Technology | Virginia Tech Symposium Sponsorship (\$10,000)  
Eight national and international invited lecturers, student team presentation, advisory meeting, and Phoebe's Field project exhibition. Sponsors: Vice President for Research, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education; Deans (CAUS, COS, COE, CLAHS; Graduate School); Department of Engineering Education; School of Architecture + Design; and AdvanceVT
- 2007 Studio Collaborative | National Science Foundation (\$802,410)  
Investigating and Refining the Studio Experience as a Method for Teaching Human Computer Interaction – Co-PI with K. Cennamo (PI), M. McGrath, S. Douglas, Y. Reimer, C. Brandt
- 2005 Planning Phoebe's Field | National Science Foundation (\$75,000) | Principal Investigator
- 2000 interCONNECTIONS | National Science Foundation (\$105,000) | Principal Investigator
- 1999 Transforming Instructional Space Grant | Office of the Provost at Virginia Tech (\$150,000)  
Faculty Team: PI – Frank Weiner (Architecture), and Co-PIs – Ed Dorsa (Industrial Design), Jim Jones (Architecture), Hunter Pittman (Architecture), and Mitzi Vernon (Industrial Design). The grant was awarded to transform Cowgill Hall Room 100 into a technology-teaching classroom. The top-rated submission but not implemented due to budgetary constraints.
- 1998 Planning a Materials Library | Summer Faculty Fellowship (\$3,000)  
Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT) | Industrial Design Program
- 1997 Interdisciplinary Studio | Summer Faculty Fellowship (\$3,250)  
Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT) | Co-PI with Professor Richard Goff to develop an interdisciplinary studio for engineering & industrial design student

## **PATENTS ISSUED and PENDING**

- 2013 Mobile Phone User Interface for Communication, Navigation, and Organization  
Bortz, B., Cheek, C., Efrid, C., Jackson, J., Lane, S., Vernon, M. (Faculty/Student Inventors)  
Provisional Patent Filed April 5, 2013 (Docket No: VTIP 13-139)
- 2007 System for Demonstrating, Educating and Interaction with Fields (Fields Everywhere)  
Full Utility Patent Filed, May 4, 2007. Patent Pending (Faculty/Student Inventors)
- 2004 Bookbag, No. 6,802,348 Utility Patent (Vernon as primary inventor)
- 2003 Bookbag, No. D469,605 Design Patent (Vernon as primary inventor)
- 2003 MagneWidget, No. 6,611,185 Utility Patent (Vernon as primary inventor)

## **ARTICLES in REFEREED JOURNALS**

- 2013 Vernon, M., Sullivan, M. (2013). Form to Product: Making as Pedagogy. *Studies in Material Thinking*, 9, 16. [www.materialthinking.org/papers/130](http://www.materialthinking.org/papers/130).
- 2011 Brandt, C., Cennamo, K., Douglas, S., Vernon, M., McGrath, M. (2011). A theoretical framework for the studio as a learning environment. *International Journal of Technology and Design Education*. DOI10.1007/s10798-011-9181-5.
- 2011 Cennamo, K., Douglas, S., Vernon, M., Brandt, C., Scott, B., Reimer, Y., McGrath, M. (2011). Promoting creativity in the computer science design studio. SIGCSE '11: The 42nd ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education, March 19-12, 2011, Dallas, TX.
- 2011 Cennamo, K., Brandt, C. Scott, B, Douglas, S., McGrath, M., Reimer, Y., & Vernon, M. (2011). Managing the complexity of design problems through studio-based learning. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning*, 5 (2), Article 5. Online publication available at: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/ijpbl/vol5/iss2/5>
- 2009 Vernon, M. (2009). Growing Up through Entrepreneurship: Case Studies of Student Ventures. 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the National Collegiate Inventors & Innovators Alliance (NCIIA). Washington, D.C., March 2009. Author and Presenter. Online publication, available at: <http://nciia.org/conf09/papers/Vernon.pdf>
- 2007 Vernon, M., Cennamo, K., Lally, L., McGrath, M., Moulton, C. (2007). Planning Phoebe's Field: A Case Study—multidisciplinary collaboration and integrated design practices in the development of a children's science exhibition. American Institute of Architects Case Study Initiative. Online publication, available at <http://www.aia.org/>
- 2006 Terpenney, J. P., Goff, R.M., Vernon, M. R., and Green, W. R. (2006). Utilizing Assistive Technology Design Projects and Interdisciplinary Teams to Foster Inquiry and Learning in Engineering Design. *International Journal of Engineering Education*, 22(3):609-616.

## **PAPERS PRESENTED and PUBLISHED for PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS**

- 2010 "The DIY Ethic of the Design Studio: Past, Present & Future" 2010 Annual Conference of the Industrial Designers Society of America. Portland, Oregon. Authors: Mitzi Vernon, Katherine Cennamo, Sarah Douglas, Margarita McGrath, and Yolanda Reimer.
- 2008 "Factors of Design Culture that Foster Innovation: A Case Study of a Multidisciplinary Student Design Team." 2008 Annual Conference of the Association of Educational Communications and Technology. Orlando, Florida. Authors and Presenters: Katherine Cennamo and Mitzi Vernon.

- 2008 "(de)Coding the Studio Method to Teach the Design of Human-Computer Interaction." Beginning Design Conference. Georgia Tech, March 2008. Authors: Margarita McGrath, Yolanda Reimer, Carol Brandt, Sarah Douglas, Katherine Cennamo. Presented by McGrath and Reimer.
- 2008 "Fostering Creativity in the Classroom: A Case Study of a Multi-disciplinary Design Project." Arizona State University. NSF Workshop: Success factors in fostering creativity in IT research and education. Arizona State University, January, 2008. Authors: Katherine Cennamo and Mitzi R. Vernon. Presented by Katherine Cennamo.
- 2007 "Planning Phoebe's Field: An Analysis of the characteristics of an effective collaborative student design project," Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Co-Authors: Katherine S. Cennamo, Mitzi R. Vernon, Leigh Lally. Chicago, Illinois, April 2007.
- 2007 "The Story on Phoebe's Field: An Exhibit and Workshop on a Multidisciplinary Project to Communicate Science to Kids through Narrative-based Spatial Experiences." Narrative Practitioner International Conference, Wrexham University, United Kingdom, June 2007. Authors: Margarita McGrath and Mitzi R. Vernon. Delivered by Margarita McGrath.
- 2002 "Education Is a Non-Flat Thinking Venture." 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of The Women in Engineering Programs and Advocates Network (WEPAN). San Juan, June 2002.

#### **PAPERS PRESENTED for PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS**

- 2011 Cennamo, K., Douglas, S., Vernon, M., Brandt, C., Scott, B., Reimer, Y., McGrath, M. (2011). Promoting Creativity in the Computer Science Design Studio. Presented at SIGCSE '11: The 42nd ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education. March 12, 2011. Dallas, Texas.
- 2010 Cennamo, K., Brandt, C., Vernon, M., Scott, B., Douglas, S., McGrath, M., Reimer, Y. (2010). The Ecology of the Design Studio Learning Environment: Identity, Participation, and Professional Practice. Symposium presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting. April, 2010. Denver, Colorado.
- 2009 Brandt, C., Scott, B., Cennamo, K., Vernon, M., McGrath, M., Douglas, S., Reimer, Y. (2009). Capturing the studio method: Using ethnography to understand space, learning, & innovation. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting. April 13-17. San Diego, California.
- 2008 Ermann, M., Jaramillo, A., Vernon, M., Han, J., Victor, J., Barnobi, C., Thompson, A., McDermott, M. (2008). Acoustics, translated into the language of Architecture. Presented to the 156<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Acoustical Society of America. November, 2008. Miami, Florida.
- 2008 Larson, M., Cennamo, K., & Vernon, M. (2008). Knowledge, Conditions and Interactions in Studio-Based Design Education. Paper presented at the 2008 annual conference of the Association of Educational Communications and Technology. November, 2008. Orlando, Florida.
- 2008 Vernon, M., McGrath, M. (2008). A Chapter from Phoebe's Field: Using Narrative and Design to Communicate 'How to Think Science.' Lecture delivered to the College of Architecture & Urban Studies Research Symposium. February, 2008. Blacksburg, Virginia.

- 2007 Vernon, M. R., and Witt, T., (2007). Myths about Knowledge: Design Defines New Knowledge–Connecting the Virtual to the Visceral. 2007 International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) Conference. San Francisco, California.
- 2006 Vernon, M. (2006). Phoebe's Field: The Interface of an Academic and Professional Collaboration. Center for e-Design Industrial Advisory Board Meeting. November, 2006. Orlando, Florida.
- 2006 Vernon, M. (2006). Fields Exist–Exhibiting the Invisible. Lecture delivered to the College of Architecture & Urban Studies Research Symposium. February, 2006. Blacksburg, Virginia.
- 2006 Goff, R., Terpenney, J.P., Vernon, M.R., and Green, W.R. (2006). Evolution of Student Perception in a Human Centered Interdisciplinary Design Project. Paper presented at the Frontiers in Education Conference. San Diego, California.
- 2006 Ball, H., and Vernon, M. (2006). What's in Your Toolbox: Rethinking User-Centered Research. Industrial Designers Society of America Annual Conference Proceedings. Austin, Texas.
- 2005 Vernon, M., Terpenney, Goff, R. (2005). A Conversation for Collaboration - A panel presentation of the evolution of a nine-year interdisciplinary design project from toys to assistive technology. Integrations: Liberal Learning in a Diverse World. October, 2005. Fairfax, Virginia.
- 1999 Vernon, M., Witt, T. (1999). The Measurable and the Immeasurable: A Conversation (reader's theatre performance). International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) Conference. September, 1999. Sydney, Australia.

## RECENT MEDIA CONTRIBUTIONS

- 2021 Behind the Blue Radio Interview | March 17, 2021  
<https://patch.com/kentucky/lexington-ky/behind-blue-opportunity-collaboration-uk-college-design>  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/march-12-2021-dean-mitzi-vernon-college-of-design/id1114911777?i=1000512723442>
- 2021 See how UK plans to transform 100-year-old Reynolds building into modern College of Design | February 1, 2021 | Herald Leader  
<https://www.kentucky.com/news/local/education/article248917749.html>
- 2020 Product Design Launch | NPR | June 3, 2020  
[https://cpa.ds.npr.org/wuky/audio/2020/06/ukperspectives060520\\_1\\_.mp3?dl=1&siteplayer=true&dl=1](https://cpa.ds.npr.org/wuky/audio/2020/06/ukperspectives060520_1_.mp3?dl=1&siteplayer=true&dl=1)
- 2017 Studio Louisville Launch | September 18, 2017  
<https://louisvilleinsight.com/archived-news/university-of-kentucky-opens-satellite-architecture-studio-in-portland/>  
<https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2017/09/18/uk-expands-into-louisville-with-new-studio-in.html>
- 2015 Vernon, M. (2015). Form and its Selfless Partner, Function. Pedagogy in Practice, <http://www.cider.vt.edu/pip/>

- 2014 AutoDesk Faculty Showcase | June 24, 2014  
<http://www.autodesk.com/education/free-software/educators-university/fusion-360-teacher-spotlight>
- 2014 Industrial Design Students Craft a Traveling Exhibition | June 15, 2014, VT Spotlight  
<http://www.vt.edu/spotlight/innovation/2014-06-16-form/exhibit.html>
- 2014 FORM | Line-Plane-Solid on exhibit at Perspective Gallery | April 7, 2014  
<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2014/04/040714-dsa-formexhibit.html>
- 2013 Virginia Tech Magazine | January – Professor Profile for the Wine Award  
<http://www.vtmag.vt.edu/winter13/mitzi-vernon.html>
- 2012 TEDx or YouTube: Mapping the Invisible | November 10, 2012  
 The concept of fields in physics and Michael Faraday's role in its origin:  
<http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/Mapping-the-Invisible-Mitzi-Ver;TEDxVirginiaTech>
- 2012 NCR Highlights | July 5, 2012  
 Article featuring the inForm Exhibition at the Virginia Tech Research Center in Arlington, Virginia: <http://ncr.vt.edu/highlights/Highlight-070512.html>

## TEACHING

Thesis Committees (Chair)

- 2011-2014 Chris Taylor, Industrial Design  
 2010-2013 Stephen Lindamood, Industrial Design  
 2012 Greg Mitchell, Industrial Design  
 2007-2008 Benjamin Tew, Industrial Design  
 2001-2002 Murphy Mungeon, Industrial Design  
 1999-2000 Bonnie Johnson, Industrial Design  
 1998 Lia Braaten, Industrial Design  
 1998 James McLeod, Industrial Design  
 1998 Jesslyn Tankel, Industrial Design  
 1996-1997 Kim Peck, Architecture Thesis Committees (Member)  
 2013-2014 Mohammed Elzamzamy, Architecture  
 2010-2012 Yushi Yang, Industrial Design  
 2007-2008 Leigh Lally, Design Research  
 2007-2008 Dan Noonan, Architecture  
 2005-2007 Clay Moulton, Industrial Design  
 2005-2006 Martha Sullivan, Industrial Design

## STUDENT SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

2015 Outstanding Graduate Student for the College of Architecture & Urban Studies at Virginia Tech

Primary Advisor and Thesis Committee Chair to Chris Taylor.

2013 Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) Masters Thesis Award

Greg Mitchell's master's thesis, The Reconciliation of Art + Science was awarded outstanding student thesis demonstrating innovative use of technology in thesis presentation.

#### 2012 William Preston Society Master's Thesis Award

Greg Mitchell's master's thesis, *The Reconciliation of Art + Science* was selected in the category of Innovative Application of Technology in a Master's Thesis. A review committee comprised of the associate deans of research and graduate studies gave Mitchell's thesis the highest possible score. The committee noted the originality and contribution of the research, and the preparation of the final document.

#### 2010 LG Design The Future Competition

Student team, Chris Carpenter, James Connors, Zack Filbert, and Kees Luyendijk won grand prize of \$20,000 for their studio project entry, *AL-I*, a smart phone interface driven single-handedly by the thumb and rear touch pad.

#### 2008 International Designer's Workstation Competition

Joseph Kauffman (Graduate student) and Phillip Padilla (undergraduate student) won

Third Place for their "Digital Docker" workstation, as part of a studio project led by Mitzi Vernon. They were the only United States student team to place in the competition.

#### 2008 International Greener Gadgets Design Competition

Clay Moulton (Graduate student) won Second Place for his "Gravia LED Lamp," which was a part of his Master's Thesis at Virginia Tech.

#### 2008 TEA-OFF Competition

Scott Cavanaugh (sophomore) won an Honorable Mention for design achievement in his entry, *Smart Brew*. Faculty: Martha Sullivan and Mitzi Vernon.

#### 2007 International Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association Student Design Competition

Benjamin Tew (Graduate student) won Grand Prize for "NIPA" (nested interactive play).

### **COURSES TAUGHT at VIRGINIA TECH**

Honors Freshman Seminar (UH 1004)

Topics in Prof Development: Portfolio (IDS 3204)

Topics in Design Competencies: Exhibit Design (IDS 3224)

Topics in Design Competencies: Seat Surface Storage (IDS 3224)

Industrial Design Laboratory II (IDS 2015)

Industrial Design Laboratory II (IDS 2016)

Human Factors (IDS 2044)

Design Research (IDS 3514)

Allied Design Laboratory (ARCH 2014)

Materials and Processes Laboratory (IDS 2024)

Topics in Industrial Design: Portfolio (IDS 4304)

Honors Design Workshop (UH 3004)

Industrial Design Laboratory IV (IDS 4415)

Industrial Design Laboratory IV (IDS 4416)

Professional Practice & Entrepreneurship (IDS 4044)

IDS Special Study: Phoebe's Field Exhibit Concepts and Realization (IDS 4984 and 5984)

IDS Special Study: Phoebe's Field Exhibit Concepts and Evaluation (IDS 4984 and 5984)

IDS Special Study: Design+Science+Technology (IDS 4984 and 5984)  
Industrial Design Laboratory III (IDS 3035)  
Industrial Design Laboratory III (IDS 3036)

#### **OUTREACH and PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

2015 Invited Juror for the Institute for Creativity, Arts & Technology (iCAT)-Virginia Governor's School Maker Conference  
2013 Speaker for Southwest Virginia Governor's School for Science, Mathematics, & Technology  
2011 External Reviewer for Promotion & Tenure | North Carolina State University  
2011 External Reviewer for Promotion & Tenure | Georgia Tech  
2008 External Reviewer for Promotion & Tenure | Carnegie Mellon University  
2008 Invited Guest Lecturer for Workshop on Ethics in Science for Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) interns at Virginia Bioinformatics Institute.  
2005 Invited Guest Lecturer at Concord College Math & Science Upward Bound (MSub)  
MSub is a TRIO program funded by the U.S. Department of Education.  
2003 Mentorship Program with Southwest Virginia Governor's School.

#### **UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

2014-2016 Chair & Chair-Elect, Academy of Teaching Excellence  
2015 Member of Faculty Senate Task Force | Ombuds Center for Virginia Tech Proposal  
2013 TEDx Virginia Tech 2013 Stage Design Subcommittee  
2013-2016 William E. Wine Award Committee  
2012-2015 Academy of Teaching Excellence (Alumni Teaching Award Committee)  
2012-2013 Faculty Search Committee (Rhetoric & Writing) for Department of English  
2011-2013 Faculty Search Committee (Sculpture) for School of Visual Art  
2011 Administrative Review Committee for Dean of CAUS  
2010-2011 University Curriculum Committee for Liberal Education  
2010 Faculty Review Committee for Associate Director search – CIDER  
2009-2010 Member of the Task Force on the Evaluation of Teaching  
2009 Speaker for the Promotion to Professor Workshop (Office of the Provost & AdvanceVT)  
2008 — Member of the Reconciliation Committee  
2007-2008 Chair, Faculty Ethics Committee  
2006-2009 University Honorifics Committee  
2005-2007 Member of Faculty Ethics Committee  
2003-2005 Member of University Promotion and Tenure Committee  
2002 Marshal for Spring Commencement (Graduate, Undergraduate and NoVA Campus)  
2002 Member of the Commencement Committee  
2002 Ad Hoc Committee on University Intellectual Property Policy, Chair  
2002-2003 Member of the Reconciliation Committee  
2002 Member of the Conflict of Commitment Committee  
2001-2008 VT STEM K-12 Outreach Initiative, Charter Member

2000-2003 Board Member of Virginia Tech Intellectual Properties (VTIP)  
 2001 Member of the Strategic Planning Commission  
 2001 Member of the External Awards and Tributes Committee  
 2001 Member of the University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning  
 2001 Member of the Multicultural Affairs Executive Board  
 2000-2001 Member of the Search Committee for University Provost  
 1997-2001 Virginia Tech Design Consortium  
 2000 Processional Member for Founders Day  
 2000 Marshal for Fall Convocation  
 1999-2003 Member of University Council  
 1999-2001 President & Vice President, Faculty Senate  
 1999-2000 Chair, Commission on Faculty Affairs

### **COLLEGE SERVICE**

2011-2014 CAUS 50th Anniversary Celebration Steering Committee  
     Lead: CAUS 50<sup>th</sup> Photography Journal  
     Lead: web design development for Icon Competition and competition post card  
     Subcommittees: competition brief, jury visit and lecture series; icon guidelines;  
     memorial collateral (photography book); emeritus exhibition  
 2013 Introduction to Special Screening of film, Design & Thinking (SOVA)  
 2012 Woodshop Craftsman Search Committee  
 2006-2010 College Curriculum Committee  
 2000-2004 CAUS Shop Coordinator  
 1999-2004 International Archive of Women in Architecture (IAWA)  
 2003 College Promotion and Tenure Committee (observer)  
 2003 Europe Summer Travel Program  
 2001 Europe Travel Program

### **DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE**

2015 Faculty Search Committee (Industrial Design)  
 2010-2014 Peer Review (Promotion & Tenure) Committee | Chair 2013-2014, 2011-2012  
 2013 Pella Architectural Prize for Undergraduates | Juror  
 2011-2013 Overseeing Design & Development of Industrial Design Program website  
     Kees Luyendijk (industrial design program) programmed original site  
 2011 Faculty Search Committee (Industrial Design)  
 2009 Administrative Review Committee for Chair of Interior Design  
 2008 Faculty Search Committee (Architecture & Interior Design)  
 2003 Peer Review Committee  
 1997 Faculty Search Committee (Industrial Design)

### **RECENT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT & SCHOLARSHIP**

2014-2015 Principles of Design Course Development | The Great Courses  
     FORM: Line-Plane-Solid | Book Proposal & Exhibit Travel  
     Phoebe's Field | Book Completion



- 2013      Awakening the Digital Imagination | September 19 – December 5  
New Media Faculty-Staff Seminar sponsored by Networked Learning Initiatives (NLI): Weekly seminar, The New Media Reader. <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/f13nmfs/>
- 2013      The Art of the Story | May 16-19, New York City  
Writing workshop directed by author and editor, Tom Jenks of Narrative Magazine: Selected (with 11 others) through writing submission process and interview, November 2012 – March 2013.