



Vandal Hall
Garden and
Memorial

Academic Hall

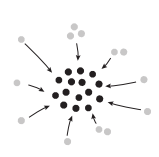
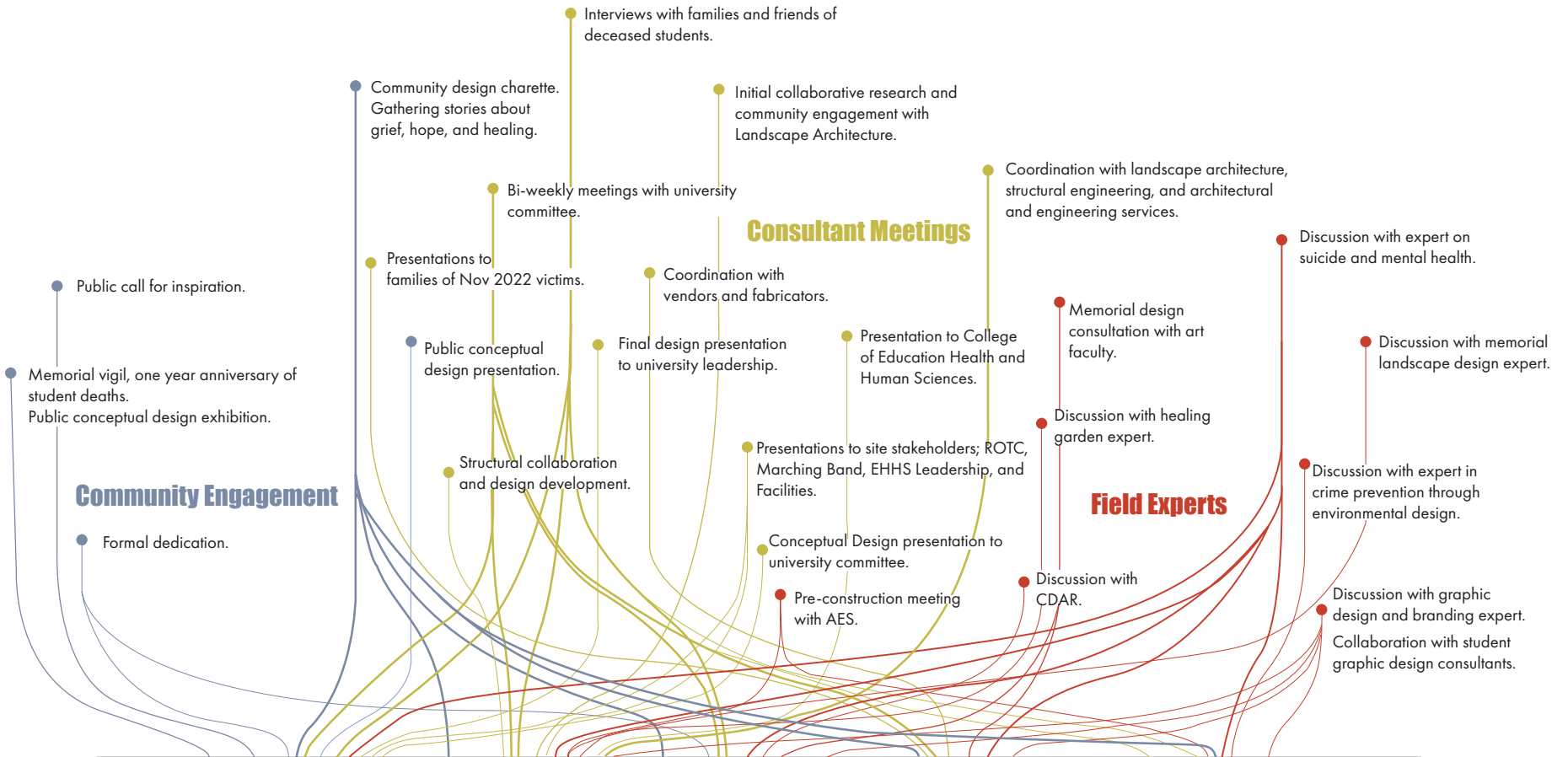
Rituals of Remembrance
A Healing Garden and Memorial for a University Campus



A long-standing need for a place of grief and remembrance on the [redacted] Campus was made acute following the deaths of four students in their off-campus home. A University Committee was formed to grapple with this sudden, unimaginable loss. Over the next year, we collaborated with the committee, university students, family, friends, consulting professionals, and the wider community to lead design and construct a Healing Garden and Memorial; a place of reflection, self-care, and healing which honors all the students who have died before they could graduate. Working on the garden was a vital healing step for everyone involved, including our studio.

To ensure the garden design grew from and centered the voices of family, friends, and the community, we led numerous interviews, a community charette, exhibitions, discussions, and regular committee meetings throughout the process. These activities paralleled in-depth research into grieving, healing, remembrance, and mental health best practices. The full studio worked toward shared goals, while subgroups rotated in and out the specific challenges (hardscapes, structure, irrigation, planting, seating, retaining walls, memorial elements, etc.). This multi-focal feedback loop kept all students invested in the full project, ensuring the specific could inform the general and visa-versa.

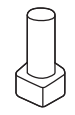
The ~20,000sf multi-centered garden reflects the varied and non-linear nature of grieving. A covered memorial area includes a dedicated sculpture and seating alcoves where individuals are encouraged to leave their thoughts and memories. The healing walk with integrated seating areas doubles as a place for gathering and mindfulness exercises. Plantings along the interconnecting paths are selected for climatic fit, hardiness, and symbolic meaning ensure a variety of life and color in the cold winter months. On the hill at the southern edge of the site, a beacon offers a reminder of the light each person offers as a part of the University family.



A Place to Gather



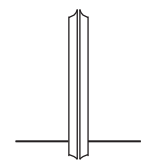
Non-Linear Experience



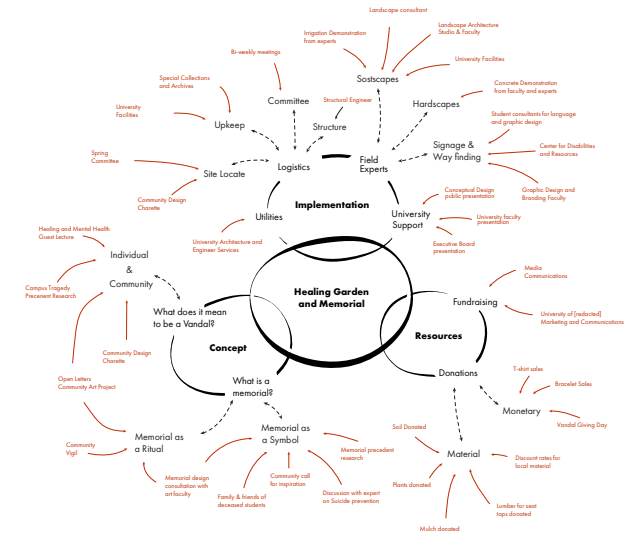
Individual Story



Celebration of Life



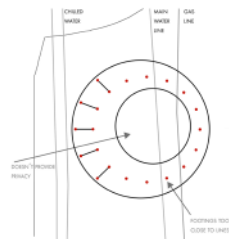
Beacon of Hope



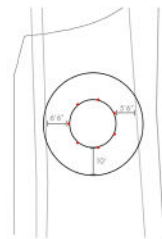
Collaborative Process

Following the events of November 2022, as a collective, we experienced the desire for a place to go when tragedy strikes. Conversations with community members and field experts revealed overarching needs that drove the design process and anchored our studios understanding of the project.

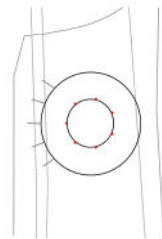
The studio worked with a wide array of university staff, professionals, and stakeholders to realize the design within the quick time frame. Contributions of materials, funding, and time were essential to the project's completion, while also providing students a unique opportunity to coordinate diverse stakeholder relations.



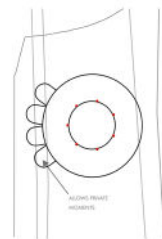
Conceptual Presentation



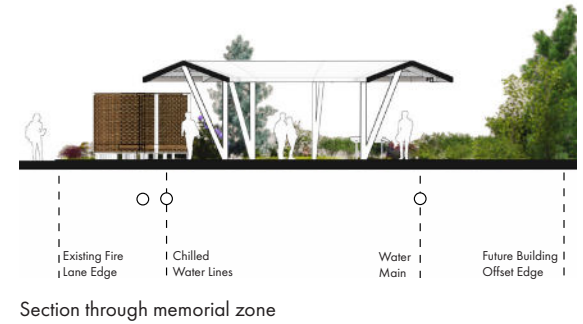
Structural Update



Interactive Spaces



Memorial Alcoves



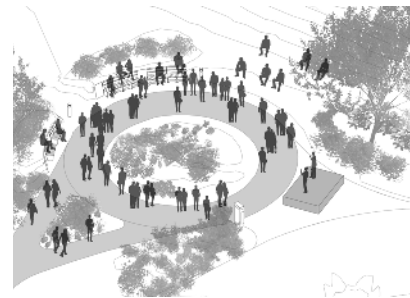
Section through memorial zone

Hidden Complexities

The primary structure navigates a complex web of underground utilities. These constraints introduced structural challenges and questions of permanence. In anticipation of a future main water line replacement, the entire structure can be lifted and temporarily relocated.



Individual Use



Class Use



Group Use

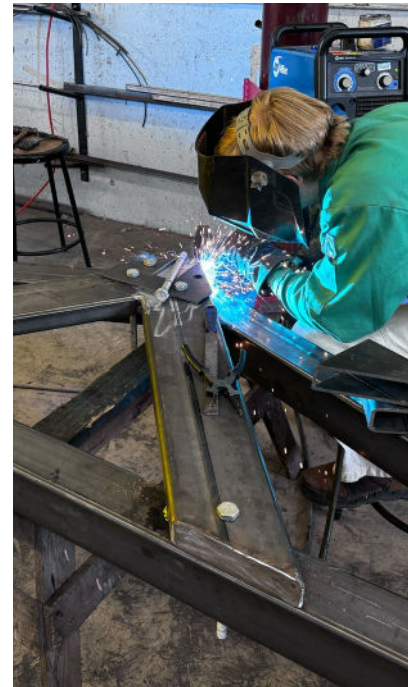
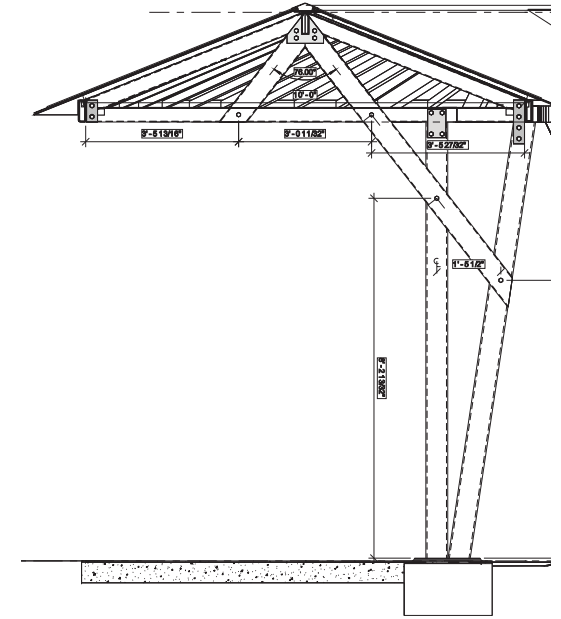


Multi-Centered Garden

The layout of the garden was designed with meandering in mind. Grief is not a linear process and this is reflected in the looping pathways of the garden. At the South end is the large, circular Healing Walk. This walk of the garden can be used in multiple different ways; individuals can meander around the garden, classes can be held on the pathway, and large groups can gather easily.

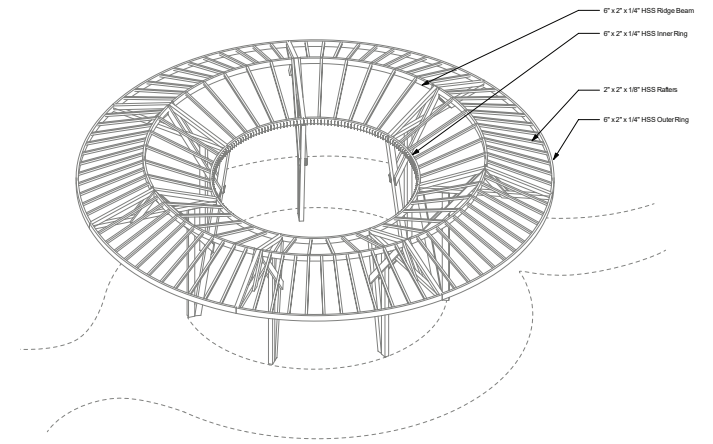
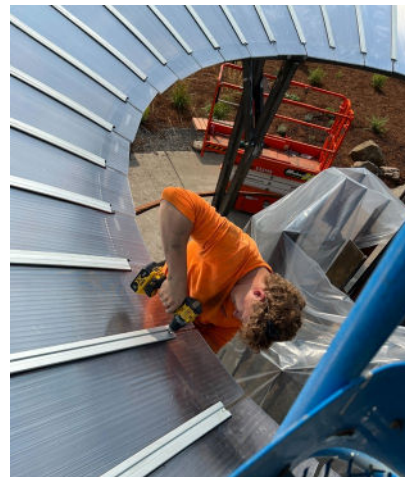


"Grieving and Healing are not linear processes."



Design and Fabrication

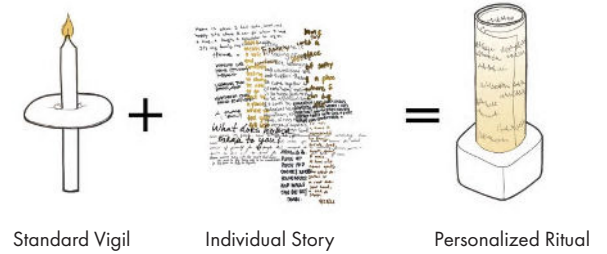
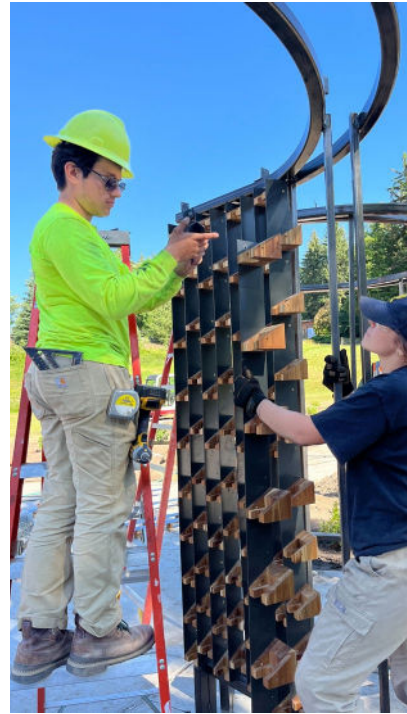
Full-scale mock-ups and studies resolved the detailing for seven prefabricated cantilevered structural trusses that surround the memorial sculpture. Combined with radius bent tube steel girders on site, the unified moment frame structure provides cover for all season use.



Radial Structure

The structure orients users toward the memorial at its center while acting as an implied buffer between this dedicated space and the surrounding campus. The translucent roof softens but doesn't block sunlight throughout the year.





Interactive Alcoves

The garden centers the individual's voice. A series of seating alcoves are created from walls that hold votives where individuals can leave their thoughts and memories about those they have lost.

Distributed to individuals during memorial events, then returned to the alcoves, these votives create a personalized space of remembrance for all.



Cut Back and Front Angle

Start by cutting back angle on the chop saw 3" in from the back and on a 1" up from the bottom to create a slope of 2 1/4" over 3"



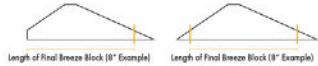
Next cut front angle by connecting the three points shown in the diagram to create the slope for the front



This process will be organized by flipping and mirroring the shape so that the angle is correct front and back for each piece



After the angled chunks will be cut to the correct length by chopping off the final nub

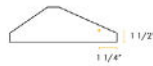


Drill Hole for Dowel and Glue Up all 3 Chunks

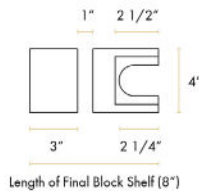
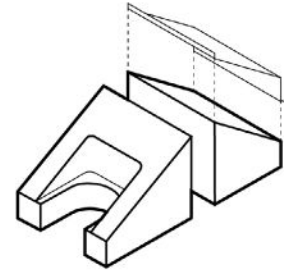
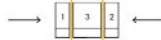
For this step we will start by drilling the smaller holes in both outside chunks this will allow us to install small dowels to help secure the not holders



This hole will be drilled 1 1/4" from the front of the piece and 1 1/2" from the bottom of the piece, this same hole placement will be repeated for all outer pieces

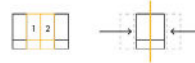


Next we will now take 2 outside doweled pieces that we just made and combine them together with one middle chunk from the previous page, this combination will be making the final form so it will be important for this glue up to be carefully crafted

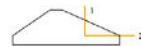


Glue Up Middle 2 and Cut Holder Notch

Start by taking 2 of the sloped and cut 2x4s and gluing them together. We will be using a glue up jig and an exterior graded wood glue to make sure this process stays consistent



Next we are going to use the table saw and the band saw to cut a rectangular notch out of our newly glued up middle chunk when it is dried



The first cut will be with the table saw where we will set the depth of the saw at 2 1/4" and set the fence to cut 2 1/2" from the front of the chunk

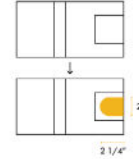


The second cut will be done using the band saw by setting the fence 1" away from the bottom of the chunk and cutting up too the first cut from the table saw to complete our chunk taken out

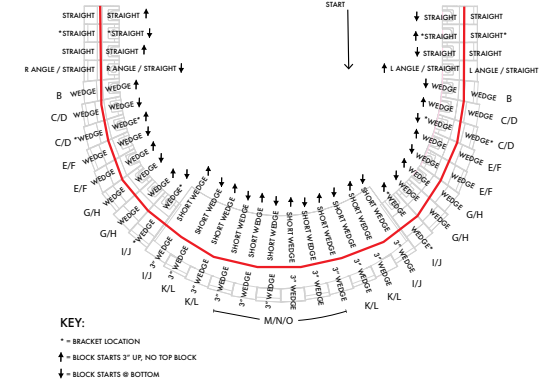
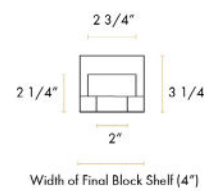
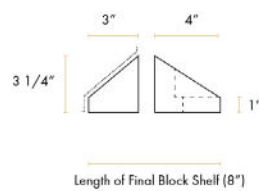
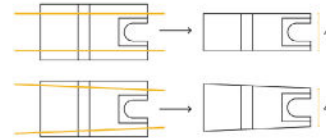


Routing Out U Shape and Cutting the Final Wedge Shape

This next step will be using the router table with the proper jig to cut out the U shape through the bottom of the now final glued up shingle the U shape is 2 1/4" deep from the front of the shingle and a 2" wide on center

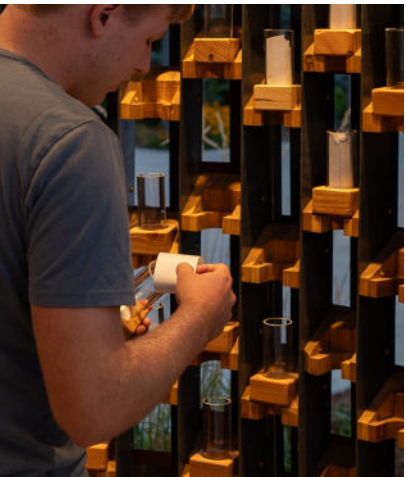


The last step in the process will be to cut the final chunk into the correct shape depending on where it will be placed in the final assembly, all of the shingles will have a 4" front O.C. and will either wedge out or be cut at a straight 4" wide depending on where they go, after this final cut is made sand as needed

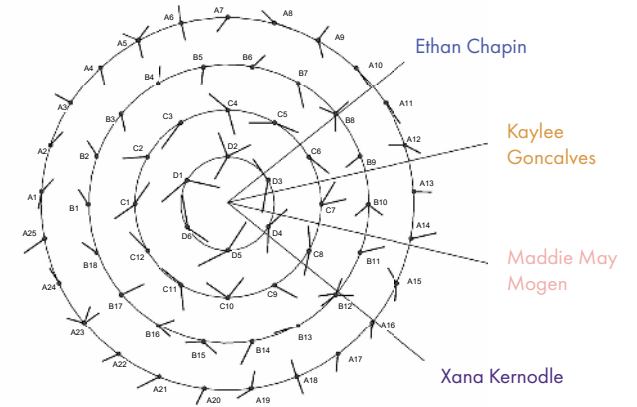
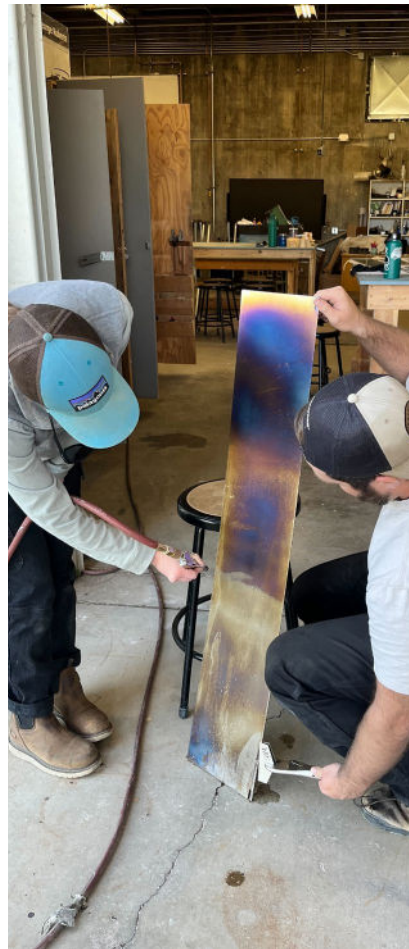
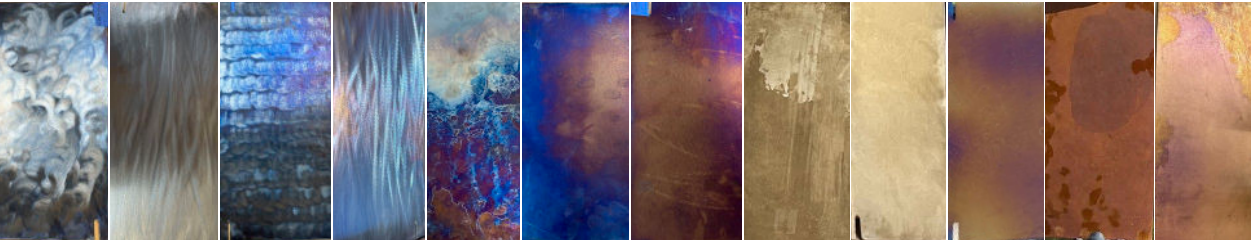


Votive Holder-Jig-Privacy Screen-Structural Wall

The alcoves privacy walls are made from 1440 pieces with 15 unique types. Diligent organization was necessary to design and track blocks during processing and assembly. Extensive documentation and refinement ensured efficient fabrication and assembly that optimized material and accomplished multiple goals with a single project element.



"Interaction, meditation, and reflection are all a part of grieving and healing."



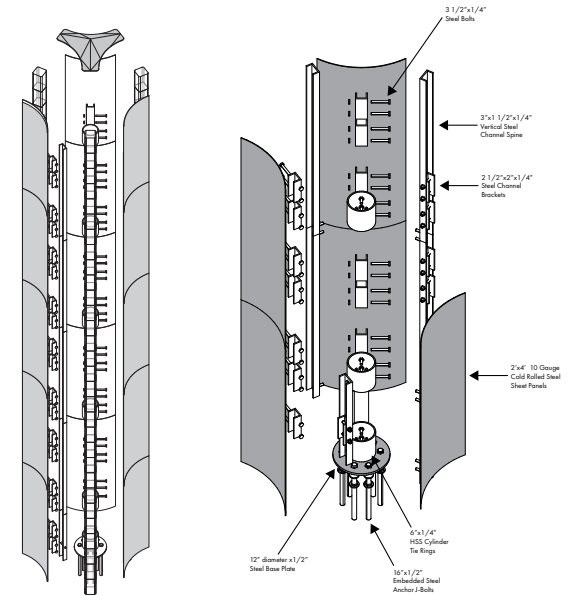
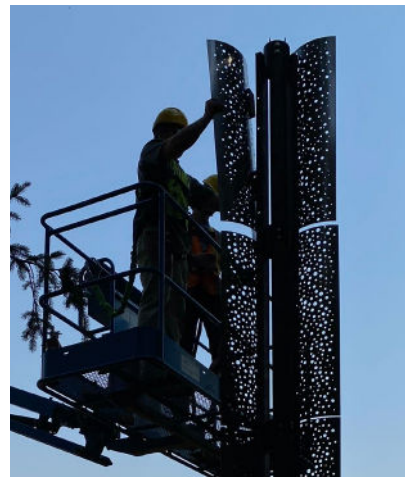
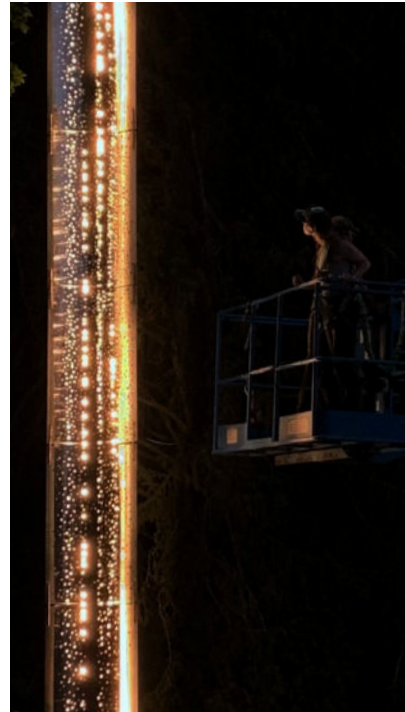
Celebrating Life

Conversations with family and friends of the students we lost revealed that rather than serve as a reminder of loss, the dedicated memorial sculpture needed to portray the vibrancy that these students brought to our university community.

The sculpture is made of 93 unique elements, created by sanding, heat treating, and patinaing recycled steel. The elements were designed to capture light and reveal color as the user circulates around the space.



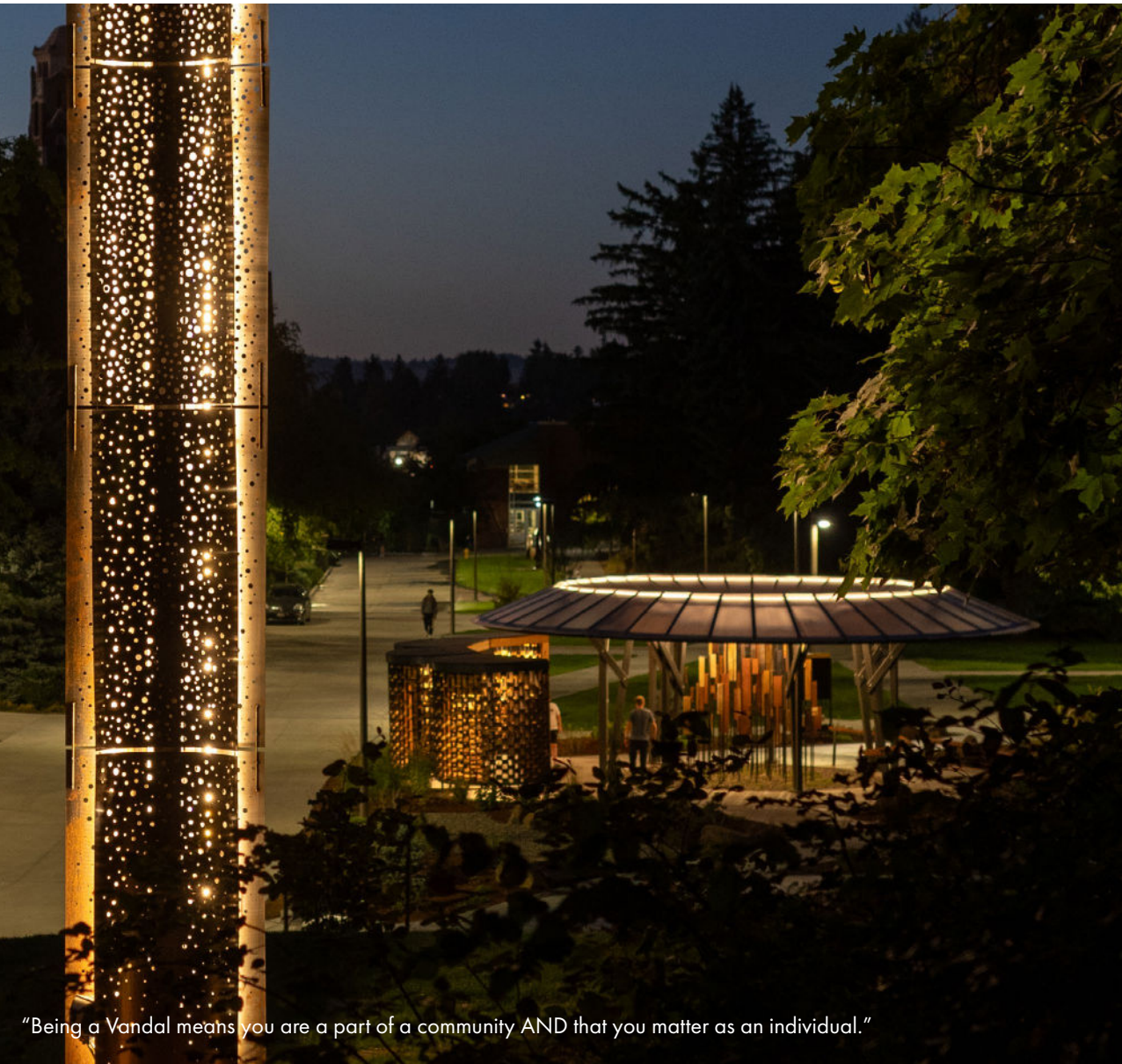
"Keep our kids in the light."



Resolving Structural Connections

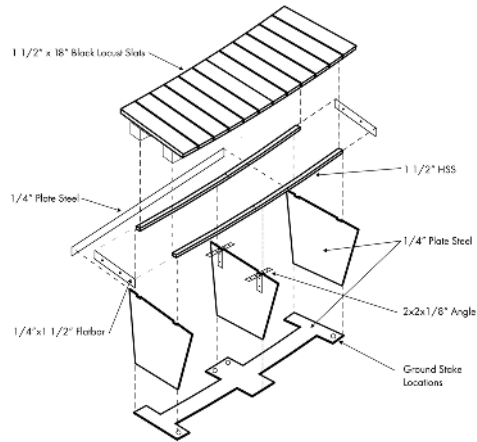
Beacon of Hope

The sculpture at the South end of the garden is a symbol of hope and resilience. It is dedicated to all the students who died before they had the opportunity to graduate.

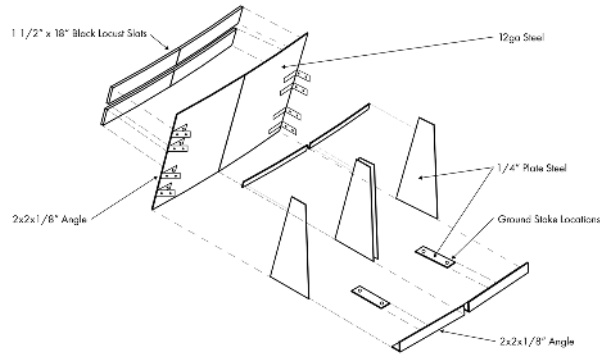


"Being a Vandal means you are a part of a community AND that you matter as an individual."





Bench Assembly



Retaining Wall Assembly

We prototyped modular flat-pack solutions for integrated seating and retaining walls that can be reconfigured as needed while mirroring the structure of the garden. The retaining walls are modeled on rapidly deployable flood barriers, using advanced steel fabrication techniques.



"The seating should be part of the garden, not just in it."



Participants & Collaborators

Participants:

1 Professor (Nominee)
2 Teaching Assistants (Paid, 400 Hours)
20 Architecture Students (For Credit - 12 Studio Credits, 3 Seminar Credits. Students received stipends to cover summer costs.)

Project Start: August 2023

Project Completion: July 2024

Primary Collaborators and Consultants:

11 University Steering Committee Members
University Facilities Staff (Paid)
College Faculty and Staff (Paid)
Landscape Architecture Program
Structural Engineer (Paid)
Landscape Consultant (Paid)