



# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT ENTREPRENEURS

PROMINENT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ALUMNI  
FACULTY OF DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

VOLUME 01  
2017





HON SHIH CHING  
PLA, ASLA

## MAN OF WISDOM

WISDOM IS LIKE A CHEST OF TREASURES. BE HUMBLE, SINCERE AND GUARD WELL WITHIN YOURSELF THAT TREASURE, THUS IT WILL GUIDE YOU TO THE BOUNDLESS AND ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.

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DESIGNATION  
REGISTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

BUSINESS NATURE  
ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY  
INTERIORS CONSULTANCY  
PLANNING CONSULTANCY

CORE STRENGTH  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE CONSULTANCY

HON SHIH CHING, PLA

### SETTING HIS EYES ON A FOREIGN LAND

Hon bore a dream that one day, after completing his study in the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture programme in UPM, he would continue to develop his career in the United States. His study of the historical and contemporary designs of American built environments during his Landscape Architecture History class in UPM facilitated this desire. After all, this was the home of Fredrick Law Olmstead, the founder of the profession of Landscape Architecture, who created such shining examples of early design like Central Park in New York City.

Hon began his educational studies in pursuit of a degree in Chemistry at Universiti Putra Malaysia Terengganu (UPMT). He did well in his first year at university, but when he was offered an opportunity to change his program of study he decided the pursuit of more creative interests would be a better fit for him. A degree in Landscape Architecture was where he felt his calling. He promptly began his studies within the Faculty of Design and Architecture on the Serdang campus. He had been passionate about art and design since he was a child and found the program to be a perfect balance between his affinity for the arts and his technical background in Chemistry. "We were allowed to be creative and this was a very good platform for me to enrich my art skills with the guidance of the lecturers and my seniors." He remembers well his days as a design student. Even though he and his friends had to work very hard, he has fond memories of his time in studio with his classmates. "The time we spent together in the studio when it was close to final semester presentations was just wonderful."

### WORKING TOWARDS HIS DREAM

After his graduation in 2004, he worked with a landscape contracting company for a brief period. At the same time, he made contact with the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and was told that ASLA would be having their annual meeting and expo that year in Salt Lake City, Utah. He and his Dad decided to go for a vacation and visit the event in the hope of gaining some new exposure. But the event also presented an opportunity that he did not expect. The expo was also an avenue for firms looking for potential staffs through a program called ASLA JobLink. He registered and was approached by a number of architectural and landscape architectural firms such as EDSA, SWA Group, EDAW, who were impressed with his portfolio. One in particular was especially interested in him: Niles Bolton Associates - a large and well-established architectural firm based in Atlanta, Georgia. He interviewed with Gregg Hudspeth, PLA, ASLA, who was immediately intrigued with Hon's story. As Gregg remembers, "We had just secured our first project in China and were looking for a young professional who could speak both English and Chinese. Hon's portfolio blew me away. It was far and away one of the best portfolio's I had ever seen in my 20+ years of practice. In addition to his design talent, he was humble and sincere, yet the one trait that stood out among all others was his determination...the passion he displayed for the profession and his dream to come to the United States and become a landscape architect. It was reinforced the next day as I was riding in the shuttle bus between my hotel and the convention center. Salt Lake City was having an early snowfall. It wasn't too unusual because of its elevation at the base of the Wasatch Mountains and its proximity to some of the best snow skiing in the world. As the bus was driving through downtown, I recognized Hon walking along the street, all bundled up in a heavy coat. It struck me that here was this 'kid' that has come all the way from Malaysia to follow his dreams (and has probably never even seen snow)! It was truly inspiring to see a new graduate travel so far from home and take a chance on getting a job here. I am forever glad that our firm took a chance on Hon and proud of the achievements he has accomplished in his young career. He is part of the reason I had the courage to move to China 10 years later to work on Shanghai Disneyland."

But, applying for a work permit and visa took time. Nevertheless, the firm offered Hon the chance to work remotely in Malaysia until the permit process was complete. A year later he was in his new office in Atlanta, Georgia.

Hon has come all the way from Malaysia to follow his dreams in the States! It was truly inspiring to see a new graduate travel so far from home and take a chance here.

### FIRM'S ACHIEVEMENTS

- GEORGIA TREND MAGAZINE - THE BEST PLACE TO WORK IN GEORGIA, 2007
- ATLANTA'S TOP 25 ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS - RANKED 3
- TOP 100 ARCHITECTURE FIRMS 2016 GIANTS REPORT - RANKED #45
- TOP 110 MULTIFAMILY ARCHITECTURE FIRMS 2016 GIANT REPORT - RANKED #5

### PROJECTS

- OUTSTANDING DESIGNS - AMERICAN SCHOOL & UNIVERSITY. SCHOOLDESIGN.COM.  
**ARCHITECTURAL PORTFOLIO 2011**
  - SOUTHERN POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, HORNET VILLAGE AND UNIVERSITY COLUMNS. MARIETTA, GEORGIA.**ARCHITECTURAL PORTFOLIO 2012**
  - SOUTHERN POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY. MARIETTA, GEORGIA.**ARCHITECTURAL PORTFOLIO 2013**
  - UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE, BAKER & HUGER HALL AND ROSE GARDEN COMMUNITY. LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA.**ARCHITECTURAL PORTFOLIO 2015**
  - VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY, WEST GRACE STREET HOUSING. RICHMOND, VIRGINIA



**HIS DILLIGENCE PAID OFF**

Becoming a licensed landscape architect in the US, one must pass a rigorous professional examination. Hon was required to pass five exams administered by the Council of Landscape Architectural Review Board (CLARB), which governs all practicing Landscape Architects in the United States. In addition to the CLARB exam, he was also required to pass an exam that would allow him to work within the State of Georgia. After months of dedicated study, he passed all exams and was bestowed the title of "Landscape Architect".

"It was very fortunate that, upon review of my educational credentials, CLARB considered the UPM Bachelor of Landscape Architecture program parallel to similar programs offered in the United States, thus allowing me the opportunity to take the exam."



**A HOME IN A FARAWAY LAND**

Hon is now married to his childhood sweetheart, Angeline, and have two lovely children, Ean and Skylar. While he misses his family and friends back in Malaysia, Hon considers the United States his new home, where he cherishes his experiences and the friendships he's cultivated during his time there. He has truly managed to carve out a piece of the American dream.



Southern Polytechnic State University, University Column, Marietta, Georgia. USA.



Allure, Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. (Zen Courtyard)



UH - Midtown. Atlanta, Georgia. USA (Amenity Terrace)



CITIC Tangquan Resort, Huizhou, China. (Private Spa)



Elle Buckhead, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. (Pool Deck Amenity)



CITIC Tangquan Resort, Huizhou, China. (Waterfall Pool w/ Swim Up Bar)



Elle Buckhead, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. (Sky Lounge)

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

- SK SERI BIDOR, BIDOR, PERAK (1991)
- SMK BUYONG ADIL, TAPAH, PERAK (1996)
- ANGLo CHINESE SCHOOL, IPOH, PERAK (1998)
- BACHELOR OF CHEMISTRY, UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA TERENGGANU (2000)
- BACHELOR OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA (2004)

**CAREER HISTORY**

- 2004  
NATION PARK SDN. BHD. (PROJECT EXECUTIVE)
- 2005  
LINE DESIGN SDN. BHD. (PRINCIPAL)
- 2005 – PRESENT  
NILES BOLTON ASSOCIATES (LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT)

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION**

- GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (LICENSE LA001653)
- AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, (ASLA)





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This book is the first in a series of documents aimed to showcase the success and contributions of the alumni of the Department of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Design and Architecture, Universiti Putra Malaysia. It is produced in conjunction with the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the establishment of the Department and the Faculty. The thirty five individuals selected came from a diverse background, went through the same mould in their Bachelor or Master of Landscape Architecture programs and emerged into the world fluttering their colourful wings with various achievements in a variety of enterprises. They represent the hundreds of other alumni who have carved their mark in the nation development and have contributed numerous services to our people and the world we live in. This book traces their dreams and achievements as recognitions of their struggles and successes in both career and life. Their achievements will be a source of inspiration to motivate current students in UPM and elsewhere in their learning and to reassure them of their place in the World.



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