



MASTER OF
**LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE**

**BEN
KOHLS**

DEGREE(S):

B.A. in Urban Affairs, Wright
State University

HOMETOWN:

Dayton, Ohio

Why did you choose to pursue a master's degree in landscape architecture?

I was amazed at how seamlessly landscape architecture blended creativity, design and problem solving, while addressing social and environmental issues in unique, imaginative ways. I knew that it would pair great with the knowledge I had gained studying urban affairs and the design skills I had acquired in industrial design, and so I decided to pursue a master's degree in landscape architecture.

Why did you choose the Knowlton School at Ohio State?

At the time I was researching accredited landscape architecture programs, Ohio State's Knowlton School was celebrating its 100-year anniversary, which I found really intriguing. Upon visiting the school, I was impressed with the rich history of the program, the vast resources available to students and the distinguished faculty that were present. The building and surrounding gardens were inspiring and provided ample space for producing and sharing student work in an atmosphere that encouraged creativity and collaboration.

What have been some of the most valuable opportunities you've experienced at Knowlton?

I enjoy the hands-on approach to education that the Knowlton School offers and through that I have had the opportunity to gain a lot of valuable experiences. Two that stick out the most are the weeklong trip we took with Roland Gustavsson where we travelled all around unique landscapes in Ohio. We gleaned a wealth of information from Roland, who gave us a new perspective on observing and documenting landscapes in nature. The other was the Columbus Dirt exhibit curated by Paula Meijerink, where we researched rammed earth walls, local soils and novel techniques to grow vegetation in a hostile plant environment. Both experiences involved us getting out of the classroom and exploring principles, theories and solutions in the real world.

Describe your experience as a graduate associate and how it has been beneficial in your education and future career.

Being able to see the progress that students make over the course of a year and comparing the quality of work from the first project to the last project is really exciting. It was also interesting being on the other side of a critique as a graduate associate, which really made me think deeper about design proposals and ask questions from a new perspective. Knowlton, and have been very interested in the various forms that research can take.