elevating habitat
service learning in design and construction

Organizations such as Architecture for Humanity, Architects Without Borders and other non-profit architecture design organizations are interested in service-learning to aid those throughout the world that have been affected by poverty, war and natural disasters. The students working on this research worked with the Starkville Area Habitat for Humanity to design the upcoming Maroon Edition 2013 house to be constructed in the fall semester of 2013. The class was composed of students from the School of Architecture and the Department of Building Construction Science. Students met and worked directly with the future homeowners for the house in addition to members of the Starkville Habitat for Humanity board. The research studied the effects of service-learning on Millennial students working on architecture design and construction. The students worked as a team to design the house, as well as create the construction drawings that will be needed to order materials and construct the house. Students developed critical professional skills in addition to the design skills inherent in architecture education. These include the ability to utilize modular materials for construction detailing to limit the expense of the house construction, the ability to complete a construction budget estimate to help provide guidance on the expense of the construction of the student design, and the ability to complete a construction schedule for the project to understand the time implications of design for a non-profit client. The service-learning aspect of the research exposed students to a new way of learning and looking at an architectural design and construction project. They were able to partner with a real-world client, not just imagine how to work with them. This helped the students better understand the needs of their client, and the community. A more developed sense of the effects of architecture as service was achieved through the student research.