

**IIT INSTITUTE OF DESIGN  
ACADEMIC UNIT CEREMONY**

**CELEBRATING THE 80<sup>th</sup>  
COMMENCEMENT OF  
THE INSTITUTE OF DESIGN**

Saturday, May 15, 2021  
11:00 am CT



**ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

## LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Dear freshly-minted ID graduates,

On behalf of the faculty and staff of IIT Institute of Design, I want to congratulate you on your graduation. You join a group of alumni that has a phenomenal history. Going back to the first people who entered ID 84 years ago in 1937, consistent among ID graduates is a passion for applying new ways of doing design—ways always adapted to the particular social, cultural, economic, and technological forces of their time.

Your experience as the class of 2021 has been unique, shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to recognize how well you have dealt with this challenge. You persevered, you adapted, you connected and supported each other, and you achieved your learning objectives with good work—as your End of Year Show demonstrates so clearly. In ID's first commencement in May 1942, which was also during the global crisis of WWII, our founder László Moholy-Nagy contended that in a time of crisis, where many people lost their work or suffered from illness, it was a great privilege to be allowed the exercise of one's skill in design—a privilege granted by society, made for its future benefit, and bringing with it an obligation to use one's creative skills for the “productive and harmonious existence of a new generation.”\*

One of the main contributors to making ID a remarkable experience is our community: our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Please know that wherever your career may take you, you will always remain a member of the ID community. We encourage you to stay in touch with the school, your peers, and new generations. Network with alumni from across ID's history and its international footprint. Find fellow alumni working in the same sector. And make sure to let us know how you are doing—visit us at Kaplan and through ID events, which are increasingly available to you no matter where you are.

We applaud you on your achievement, particularly in this difficult time, and look forward to hearing about and celebrating your impact and contributions.

Best regards,



Denis Weil (MDes 2001)

*Dean*

\*Schuldenfrei, R. (2012). 'Assimilating Unease: Moholy-Nagy and the Wartime/Postwar Bauhaus in Chicago'. In R. Schuldenfrei (Ed.), *Atomic Dwelling: Anxiety, Domesticity, and Postwar Architecture* (pp. 87-126). Routledge.

## **INSTITUTE OF DESIGN FACULTY AND STAFF**

### **FULL TIME FACULTY**

Jeremy Alexis\*  
Weslyne Ashton  
Laura Forlano  
Tomoko Ichikawa\*  
Mark Jones  
Tom MacTavish  
Matt Mayfield\*  
Zach Pino  
Christopher Rudd  
Ruth Schmidt\*  
Carlos Teixeira\*  
Martin Thaler  
Denis Weil\*

### **ADJUNCT FACULTY**

Smiljana Antonijevic  
Santosh Basapur  
Bruce Bendix  
John Cain  
Jody Campbell  
Brian Casario  
Daniel Chichester  
Sarah Kelly Costello\*  
John Dominski  
Jereme Dumm\*  
Sari Gluckin\*  
Eric Hausman  
Yuli Patrick Hsieh  
Ben Jacobson  
Sara Johnson\*  
Adam Kallish  
JoEllen Kames  
Ali Karbassi  
Larry Keeley  
Jennifer Levin  
Mark Micheli  
Ruben Ocampo\*  
Mike Oren  
Mo Sook Park  
Charlie Smith  
Susan Stirling\*  
Brianna Sylver-Galvao\*  
Peter Zapf\*

### **STAFF**

Rachel Dean  
Kristin Gecan  
Brandon Kinports  
Sha'Ronda Lewis  
Rashaan Meador  
Krista Roble

\* ID alum

## GRADUATES

### MASTER OF DESIGN

Harini Balasubramanian\*  
Justin Bartkus\*\*  
Vaaibhav Bhardwaj  
Xuanyu Chen\*  
Kanal Dinesh Chhajed  
Tommie Albert Collins III\*\*  
M. Todd Toland Cooke\* \*\*  
Mridula Dasari  
Jessica Brinkley DeMeester\*  
Kaitlyn O. Forsythe  
Mrinali Rajesh Gokani\*\*  
Audrey Elizabeth Gordon\*  
Grace C. Hanford\* \*\*  
Yuqing He\*  
Yuanyuan Hu\*  
Kie Ichikawa\*  
Zhengyi Jin\*  
Lavanya Julaniya\* \*\*  
Yuta Katsuyama\*\*  
Mithila Kedambadi Prasanna  
Esther H. Lee  
Haiping Liao  
Sike Liu  
Anand Umesh Nagapurkar  
Jessica Aba Natsewa Nelson\* \*\*  
Luisa Parlow Siliprandi\*  
Catalina Prada Valderrama\* \*\*\*  
Alexandria Rengifo\*  
Jason Romano\*  
Jiani F. Sapathy\* \*\*

R. McKinley Sherrod\*  
Jonathan Craig Smyk\*  
Yutian Sun  
Justin Walker\*  
Catherine Wieczorek  
Sze Wing Alpha Wong\*\*  
Wanshan Wu\*  
Shiya Xiao\*  
Nanxi Yu  
Yifei Yu\*  
Siyan Zhou

### MASTER OF DESIGN METHODS

Scott J. Benbrook\*  
Hongpyo Kim\*  
Wendy Manning\*  
Lana McClure  
Anna Olsztynska  
Katherine A. Petersen\*

### DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Santosh Basapur\*  
Roberto da Rosa Faller\*

\*Degree awarded Fall 2020

\*\*Awarded degrees in both Design + MBA

\*\*\*Awarded degrees in both Design + MPPA

This program lists the names of expected degree candidates, which will be officially awarded only upon verification that all relevant requirements have been met. Due to COVID-19 related constraints, verification is expected to be completed on or before Saturday, May 22, 2021.

## HISTORY

### Over eighty years of innovation and design education

In 1937, László Moholy-Nagy left Europe to found The New Bauhaus in Chicago as a school that experimented with new materials and media. Over the years, this experimental spirit has taken many forms.

Today, the methods pioneered at ID are finding a wider audience. Many leading corporations, consultancies, and schools are adopting our methods into everyday work processes. Other organizations seek stronger bonds with ID, choosing to recruit our graduates and sponsor our work. *BusinessWeek* has described ID as “a leader in developing innovation metrics and design strategy curricula.” Students come from around the world to be a part of this school, and they leave as alumni ready to make life better and more meaningful.

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1937

German Bauhaus luminary László Moholy-Nagy arrives in Chicago to head a new school he named The New Bauhaus

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1944

The school is renamed the Institute of Design

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1949

The Institute of Design becomes part of IIT

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1955

Director Jay Doblin introduces design theory into curriculum

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1965

Systems and systematic design introduced into curriculum

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1993

Design planning and ethnographic methods introduced into curriculum

ID creates America's first PhD program in design and introduces MDes degree

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2003

ID launches Master of Design Methods degree for mid-career designers and product managers

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2006

ID introduces the first MDes+MBA dual-degree program

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## COMMENCEMENT EVENTS

### **FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2020**

*End of year show opening*

[Register](#)

### **SATURDAY, MAY 15, 2020**

*Opening ceremony live-stream*

10:00 am

[Click here](#)

*ID virtual commencement ceremony*

11:00 am

[Register](#)

# COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

## WELCOME

Rachel Dean  
*Director, Graduate Admission  
and Student Engagement*

## DEAN'S ADDRESS

Denis Weil  
*Dean*

## PRESENTATION OF DEGREES

Denis Weil  
*Dean*

## AFTER ID: AN ALUMNI CONVERSATION

Akilah Halley  
*MDes 2005*

Tommie Collins  
*MDes + MBA 2021*

Sze Wing Alpha Wong  
*MDes + MBA 2021*

## STUDENT SPEAKER

Justin Bartkus  
*MDes 2021*

## WELL WISHES

ID Community

## About the speakers

**Akilah Halley** (MDes 2005) has spent 15 years focused on equitable approaches to helping make Chicago a better place for all people to thrive through art, education, and philanthropy. A Chicago native inspired by the city's vibrancy, currently Akilah is the Executive Director of Marwen, a nonprofit inspiring young people to nurture their growth and build their futures through art and community. She previously led communications with Crown Family Philanthropies, marketing with Urban Gateways, and community engagement with Chicago Public Schools.

**Tommie Collins** (MDes + MBA 2021) considers himself a storyteller with a designer's toolkit. His passionate work exists at the intersection of civic systems, collaborative design, communications, and strategy. He desires to share undiscovered and sometimes overlooked stories, create experiences, and, most of all, impact lives.

**Sze Wing Alpha Wong** (MDes + MBA 2021) goes by Alpha. She came to ID seeking answers for design, the world, and our future. During her time at ID, every conversation expanded her boundaries. Now she is departing, with some questions answered, more questions asked. Design is not about finding the solutions but the right questions. That's what Alpha has been doing and will continue to do.

**Justin Bartkus** (MDes 2021) is a theologian-turned-designer originally hailing from South Bend, Indiana. He is looking forward to a career in healthcare equity and transformation, though he daydreams about one day being Pope Francis' chief innovation officer.