



# Sasaki Foundation

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Sasaki  
Foundation



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As communities across the Commonwealth and the country face increasingly complex challenges related to climate change, community identity, social inequities, antiquated infrastructure, housing affordability, and transportation, innovative solutions are urgently needed.

The Sasaki Foundation is committed to supporting **design** initiatives that promote **equity** in order to strengthen and empower local communities throughout Greater Boston, Metro West, and the Gateway Cities. Through **research, programs, and partnerships**, the Foundation takes an interdisciplinary approach to tackling global challenges through local action.

Using **design thinking**—the iterative practice of understanding, innovating, prototyping, testing, and implementing—we bridge the physical environment, community and social needs, policies and governance, and economic forces that shape communities.

The Foundation serves as a catalyst for change, bringing researchers and collaborators into our recently opened Incubator at Sasaki's global headquarters in Watertown. Through cutting-edge research, new technologies, and fabrication strategies, the Incubator is a hub for advancing new solutions that are shared with policy makers, businesses, and others seeking change and action.

We believe in co-creating change in our world, as we work together to test assumptions, create new paths, and explore new approaches.

Alexandra Lee  
Executive Director  
Sasaki Foundation

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**Holly St. Clair**, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

58

Volunteers!



# COMMUNITY LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

## PARTNERSHIPS

beyondAEC  
Black in Design  
Boston Green Ribbon Commission  
Boston Harbor Now  
Boston Housing Authority  
Boston Private Industry Council  
Boston Society of Architects  
Boston Society of Landscape Architects  
Boston University Initiative on Cities  
Charles River Conservancy  
Conveyal  
Environmental League of Massachusetts  
G|Code House  
Girl UNinterrupted  
Harvard Graduate School of Design  
Innovate @BU  
Landscape Architecture Foundation  
MA Department of Transportation  
Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

MIT Solve  
Mosesian Center for the Arts  
Mystic River Watershed Association  
Northeastern University, Boston Area Research Institute  
Social Innovation Forum  
Society for College and University Planning  
Transportation for MA  
Venture Cafe Foundation  
Watertown Public Schools

**60+**  
PARTNERSHIPS

### INCUBATOR AT SASAKI

Hosted as a joint venture between the world-renowned design firm Sasaki and the Hideo Sasaki Foundation, the Incubator is a working lab, meeting place, and forum for innovators dedicated to bringing transformational change to our shared environment.

This flexible research studio and shared workspace serves as the catalyst for cross-industry collaboration, bringing academic, professional, and community partners to the table to solve complex problems.

The Sasaki Foundation serves as the steward and curator for this facility—activating it with public programs, facilitating research initiatives, and inviting new people to the mix—while Sasaki offers its expertise and resources as a global design firm motivated by working with our neighbors to co-create change.

The Incubator is located on Sasaki's Chase Mills campus, within one of several interconnected historic mill buildings along the Charles River. Sasaki is an award-winning international design firm, focused on architecture, landscape architecture, planning, urban design, and more.

## PROGRAMS & COMMUNICATIONS

**1500+**  
ATTENDEES in 9 months

**24**  
GUEST SPEAKERS in 9 months

**20+**  
EVENTS in 9 months

**120,000+**  
IMPRESSIONS in 6 months

# COMMUNITY LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

## LAUNCH OF THE INCUBATOR AT SASAKI



**April 11, 2018**

Design industry, municipal, and nonprofit leaders gathered to launch the coworking space and the Sasaki Foundation's new direction.

## CONVERSATIONS WITH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS



**May 15, 2018**

A dialogue in partnership with MIT SOLVE addressed sustainable housing infrastructure, nutrition in food deserts, school lunches, coding education for girls, and water and energy collection.

## GIRL UNINTERRUPTED



**June 6, 2018**

Project leaders presented results of the Designers Data Survey, which targeted emerging professionals in architecture, aiming to extract current issues while testing gender differences.

## DESIGN FOR EQUITY & INCLUSION



**June 12, 2018**

A panel discussion in partnership with the Landscape Architecture Foundation explored the role landscape architects can play in designing for equity and inclusion and reshaping society.

**July 25, 2018**

Individuals of all expertise levels collaborated in a 24-hour research and development intensive for trending technologies, encouraging cross-pollination of ideas and exposure to new skills.



**BEYOND AEC HACKATHON**

**September 26, 2018**

Sasaki Foundation Design Grants finalists pitched their ideas for projects that address climate adaptation, new models for housing, transit access, and creative community building.



**PITCH NIGHT**

**October 11, 2018**

A discussion in partnership with Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash, MassDevelopment, and Sasaki explored community-led urban revitalization in Gateway Cities.



**GATEWAY CITY MEETUP: DESIGN X IMPLEMENTATION**

**November 28, 2018**

A panel discussion with Massachusetts Arts Funders explored possible outcomes and mechanisms to inspire climate action leading to policy change amid rapidly changing demographics.



**RESILIENCY AND ARTS & CULTURE SHAPING A CITY'S ASPIRATIONS AND FUTURE**

SASAKI FOUNDATION DESIGN GRANTS

The Sasaki Foundation Design Grants are annual grants awarded to teams of two to four people from Greater Boston communities who propose projects in the Foundation’s focus areas and that work to promote equity in design.

22 Teams

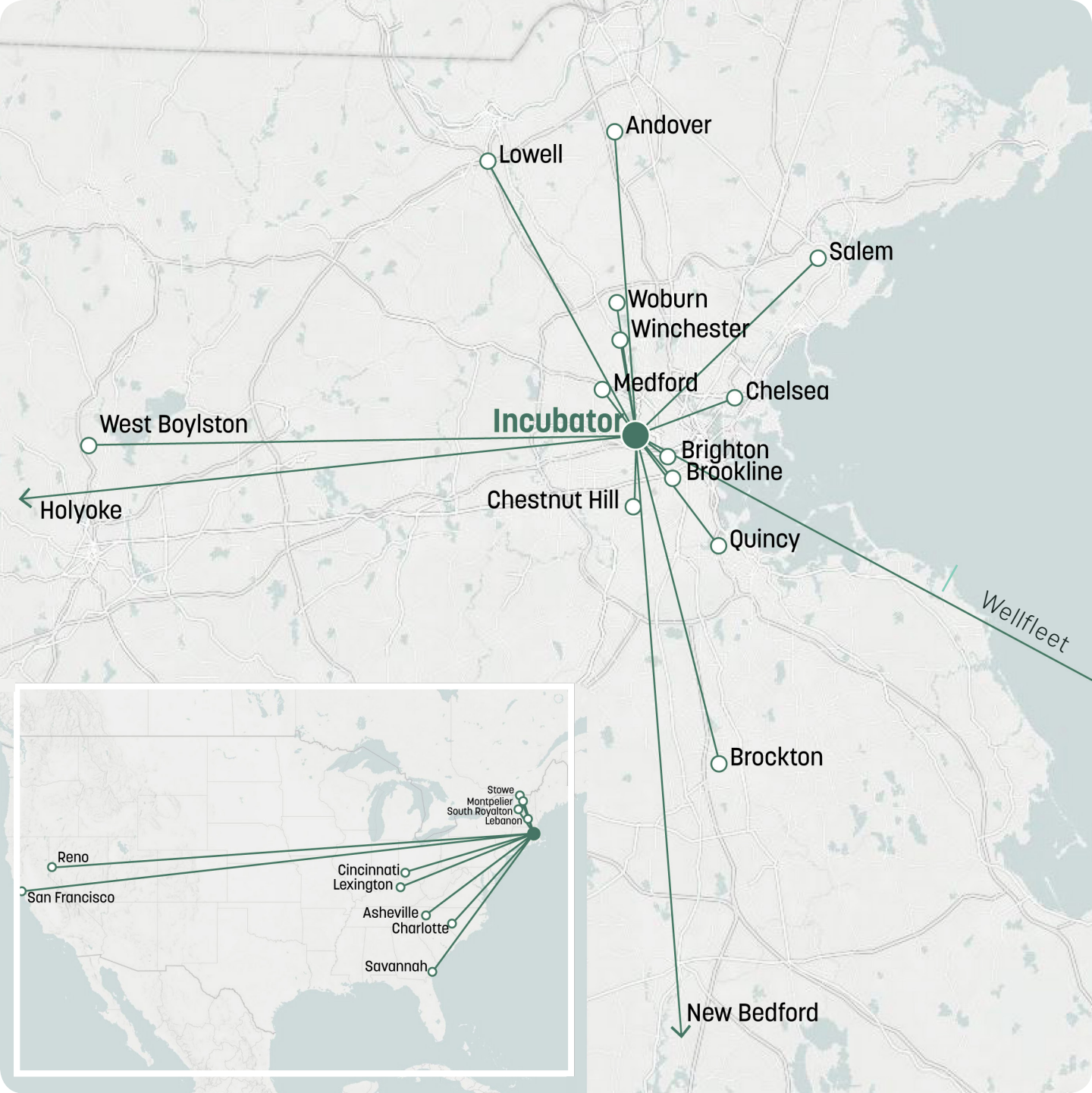
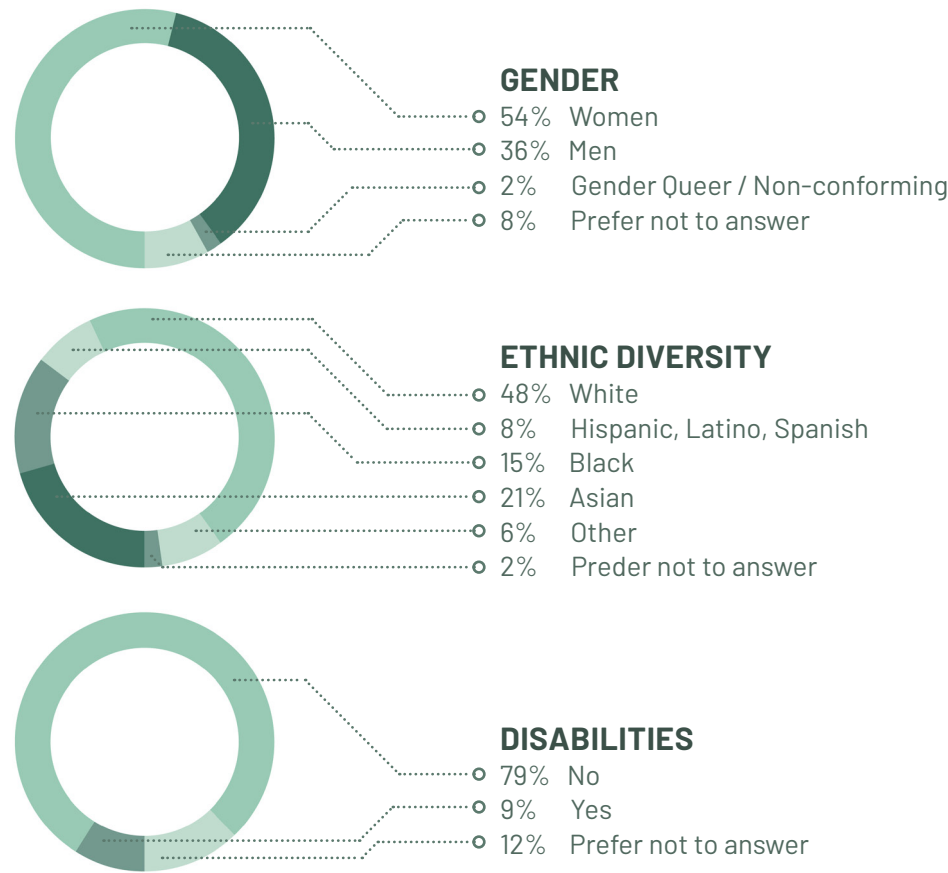
73 individuals responded to the call for proposals

representing

9 Boston communities

2 Greater Boston cities

3 Gateway Cities



APPLICANT DISTRIBUTION MAP

# RESEARCH & EXPERIMENTATION



## PITCH NIGHT

In the inaugural year, the Sasaki Foundation Design Grants finalists pitched their ideas for projects that address climate adaptation, new models for housing, transit access, and creative community building.

**140+** attendees including designers, entrepreneurs, investors, civic leaders, and corporate and nonprofit leaders

**45+** organizations in attendance

## 2018 COHORT OF RESEARCH TEAMS

The Sasaki Foundation provided an opportunity midway through the grant cycle for all research teams to work with design professionals from Sasaki to create their narrative for their projects.

**\$75,000** awarded to **5** research teams

the Sasaki Foundation grants funded **58%** of the research teams' collective project budgets

**15** organizations represented in the **5** research teams

## 2018 DESIGN GRANTS

CHARLES RIVER FLOATING WETLANDS

EASTIE FOR EASTIE

G|CODE HOUSE

THE ECHOLOCATOR

PLEASE TOUCH THE ART



# CHARLES RIVER FLOATING WETLANDS

PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO CLIMATE ADAPTATION

LAURA JASINSKI, VANESSA NASON, MAX ROME, PENELOPE TAYLOR

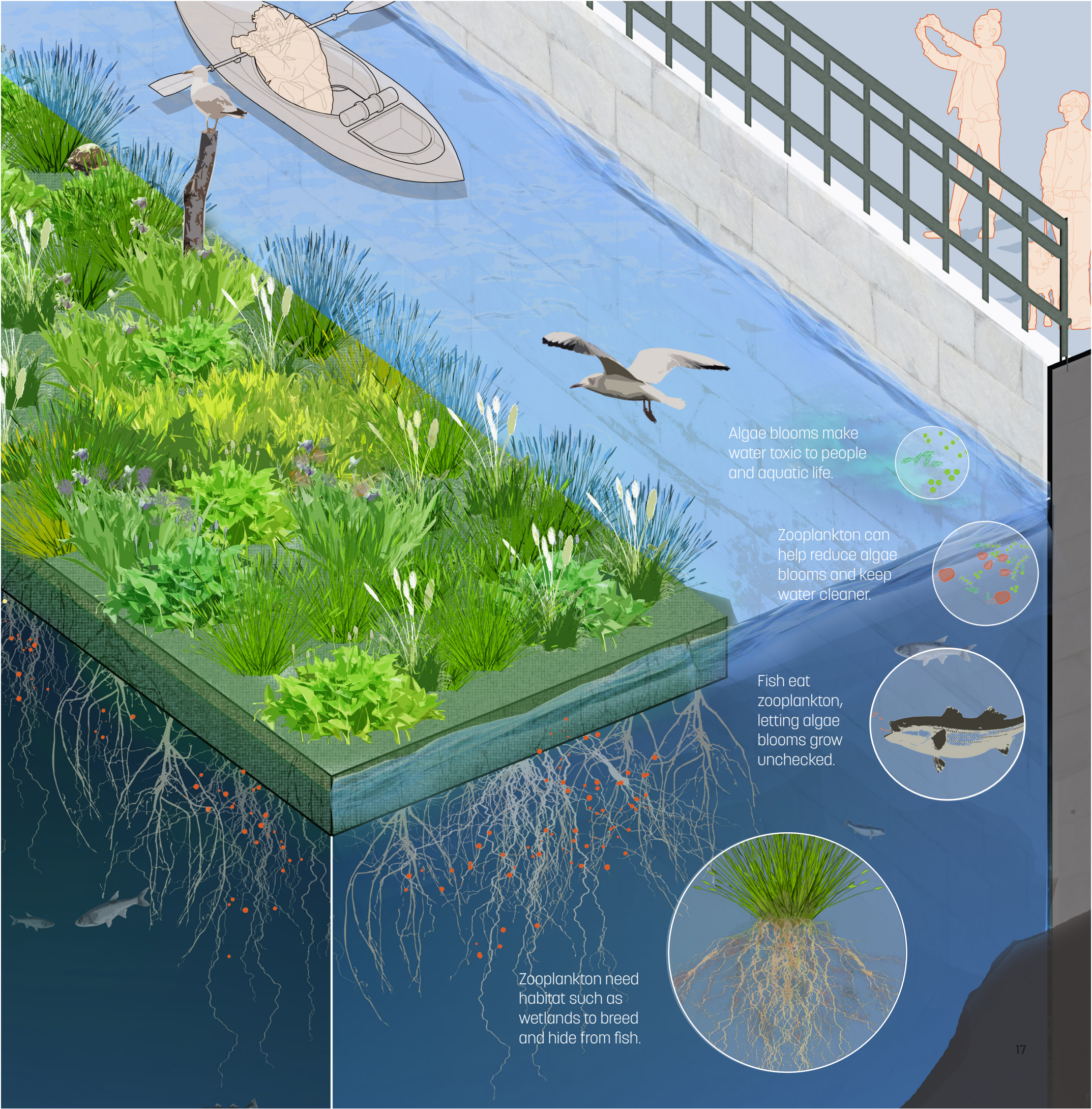
In 1995, the EPA launched the Charles River Initiative, which included the objective of a swimmable river. Although significant progress has been made through vast reduction of combined sewer overflows, this goal remains elusive. Our project explores a complementary approach aiming to reduce harmful algal blooms by enhancing zooplankton populations using floating wetlands. The goals are to create a visually impactful wetland installation, document the impact on zooplankton population and water quality, and educate the public about the relationship between river ecology, pollution, and water quality in order to work toward a healthy and swimmable Charles.

“The team from Sasaki asked great questions and were able to really understand our idea and help us figure out how to move forward with the design. They were able to take everything we have been thinking about and represent it visually in a way that tells the whole story.”

- Max Rome, Northeastern University PhD candidate (Charles River Floating Wetlands)

RIGHT IMAGE: FLOATING WETLANDS CONCEPT

CHARLES RIVER FLOATING WETLANDS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASAKI



**EASTIE FOR EASTIE**  
*PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO CLIMATE ADAPTATION*  
*NEW MODELS FOR HOUSING*

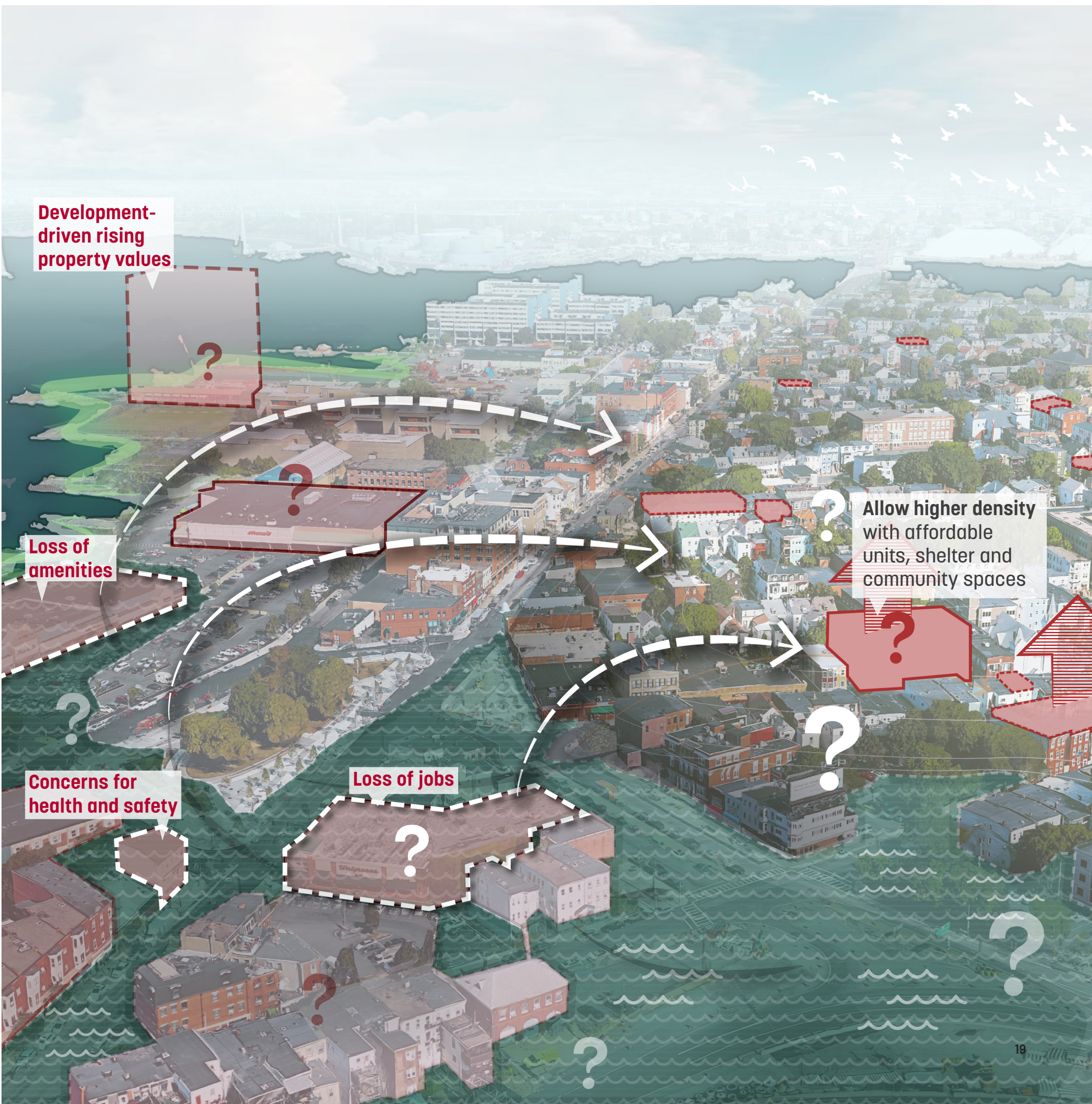
**COLLYN CHAN, MARIO GIAMPIERI, KELLY MAIN, KANNAN THIRUVENGADAM**

East Boston is a coastal neighborhood faced with rising sea levels and intensifying development pressure. Instead of trying to strictly preserve in place or be pushed out as development pressure increases, this project promotes using land pooling, land readjustment, and community land trusts as an alternative path forward. We will engage with several community partners to identify barriers to climate adaptation faced by residents in Eastie. Through a participatory design process, the team will co-create a series of design and policy proposals that Eastie can use to stay in place, preserve or increase housing availability, and minimize climate-change related risk.

“Working with the resilience team at the Sasaki Foundation was a great opportunity to dig down into the complexity of retreat and relocation and how to fully communicate that through graphics and approachable language. Everyone was supportive and very knowledgeable. Together, we produced impactful graphics and received useful one-on-one feedback for shaping the project moving forward.”

- Collyn Chan, MIT PhD Candidate (Eastie for Eastie)

**RIGHT IMAGE: EAST BOSTON MAP**  
FOR EASTIE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASAKI



**G|CODE HOUSE**  
NEW MODELS FOR HOUSING  
CREATIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING

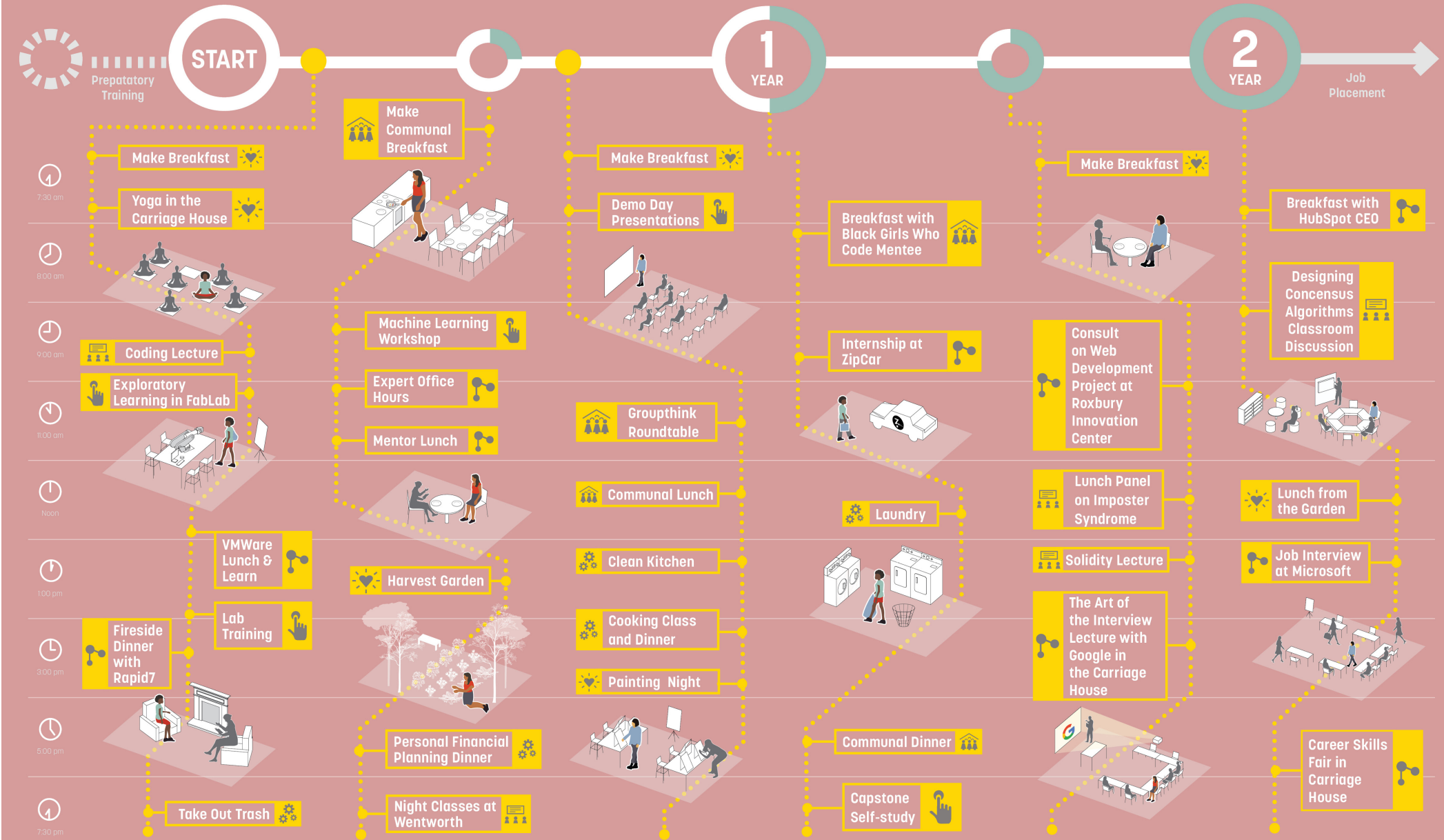
**RIZEL BOBB-SEMPLE, LINDSAY NUON, BRIDGETTE WALLACE**

G|Code House is a proposed pilot program that will serve young women of color ages 18 to 25 who have an interest and/or aptitude for computers or technology, but don't know how to develop their interest or understand the opportunities. Designed as a co-living, -learning, and -working community, these women will attain technology instruction and skills, gain employment experience, and find support in a safe, focused home. The house is designed to improve outcomes of disconnected youth. The program consists of nine months of in-class training, six months of an internship/co-op, and nine months of specialty training.

“G|Code House is honored to be a part of this inaugural Sasaki Foundation Design Grants cohort and its mission to include equity and inclusion in planning and design. It takes a village to do this work that we hope will be impactful and life changing.”

- Bridgette Wallace, G|Code House

**RIGHT IMAGE: WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY LIKE AT THE G|CODE HOUSE?**  
G|CODE HOUSE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASAKI



**THE ECHOLocator:**  
**EXPANDING CHOICE IN HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES**  
*NEW MODELS FOR HOUSING*  
*INNOVATION IN TRANSIT AND ACCESS TO MOBILITY CHOICES*

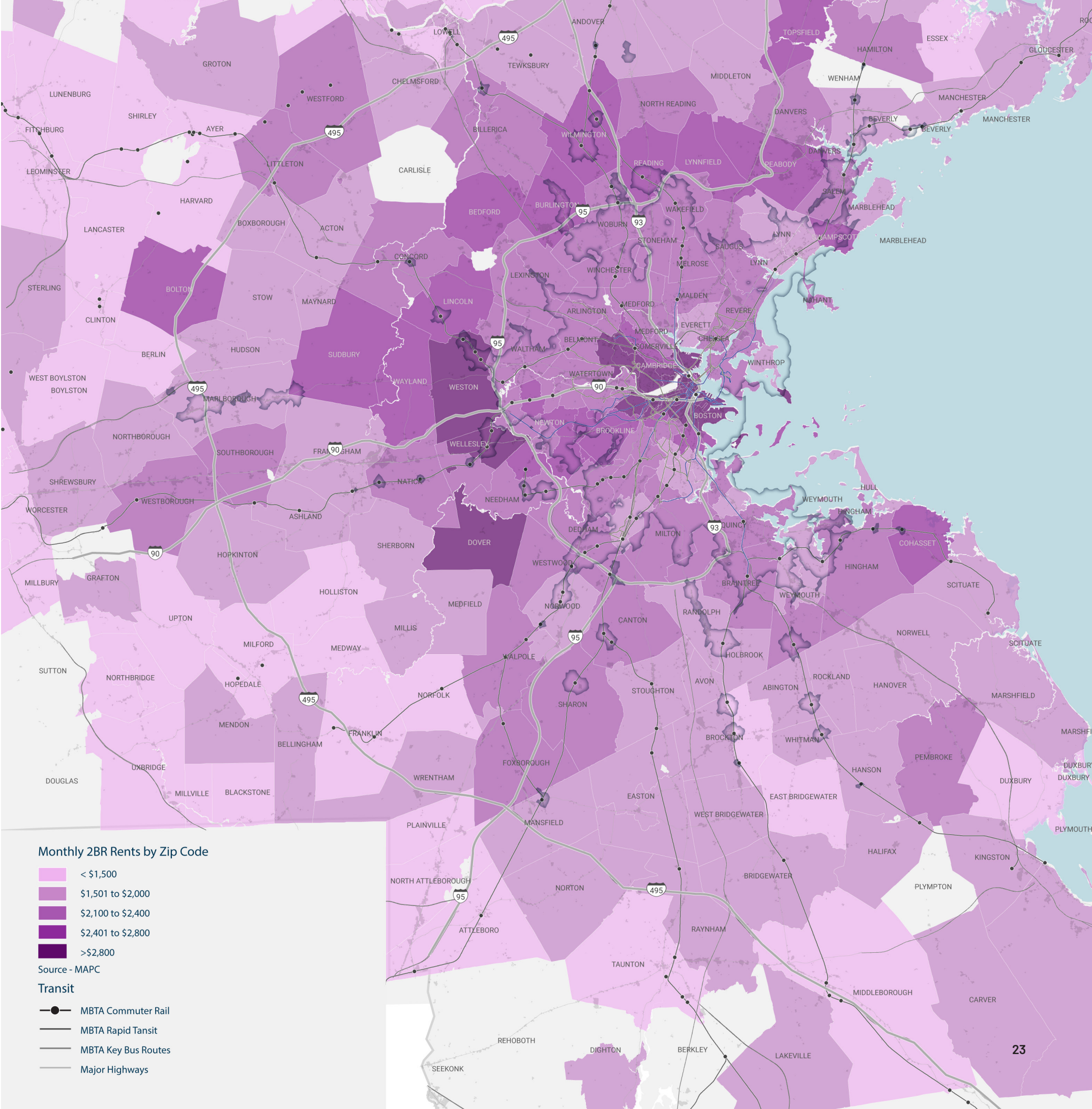
**NICHOLAS KELLY, ANSON STEWART, ROBERT TERRELL**

Low-income tenants face significant housing barriers when attempting to rent housing in the Boston metropolitan area, deepening segregated housing markets throughout the region. A new digital interface, the ECHOLocator, will provide housing choice voucher holders with customizable information on communities that are both affordable and serve their public transit needs. We will use this opportunity to pilot and refine the tool alongside our clients, as well as expand it across our 15,000+ voucher holders and to housing authorities nationwide.

**“The charrette was incredibly helpful for a number of reasons. It helped our team step back and rethink our user experience from the ground up. Working with Sasaki’s team of designers and planners, we were able to quickly design extremely helpful materials for our project that will be incredibly useful for clients. The combination of Sasaki’s design-oriented thinking and technical expertise were really invaluable for us.”**

– Nick Kelly, MIT PhD candidate (ECHOLocator)

**RIGHT IMAGE: RENTAL MAP**  
FOR ECHOLocator IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASAKI



# PLEASE TOUCH THE ART

CREATIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING

KARISSA COADY, SANDRA JAFFE, MATT JATKOLA, GEORGINA KLEEGER, TANJA MILOJEVIC, ANELEISE RUGGLES

“Please Touch the Art” is a tactile art exhibit and companion humanities exhibit accompanied by a curator’s talk and panel discussion at the Mosesian Center for the Arts. The exhibit will provide a multi-sensory art experience that is accessible to all audiences, taking special care to provide an immersive, tactile experience for visually impaired community members. Blind scholar and *More than Meets the Eye, What Blindness Brings to Art* author Georgina Kleege will guest curate. The exhibit will include a gallery that is dedicated to the history of accessibility in arts programming.

“The Sasaki Foundation provided our team with invaluable resources that have been vital in elevating the standard for what success of this project looks like. The design charrette that our team participated in produced a strategy for wayfinding and accessibility that we would not have been able to achieve without the expertise and resources of the Sasaki designers.”

- Aneleise Ruggles, Mosesian Center for the Arts (Please Touch the Art)

TOP IMAGES: GEORGINA KLEEGER TOUCHING ARTWORK BY ELISABETH HIGGINS O’CONNOR (LULLABY/LAMENT, 2017) DURING A HAPTIC ENCOUNTER EVENT AT THE CONTEMPORARY JEWISH MUSEUM (THE CJM) ORGANIZED BY CECILE PURETZ  
ARTWORK COMMISSIONED FOR JEWISH FOLKTALES RETOLD: ARTIST AS MAGGID, ON VIEW AT THE CJM, SEPTEMBER 28, 2017–JANUARY 28, 2018

PHOTOS BY GARY SEXTON PHOTOGRAPHY

BOTTOM IMAGE: SITE MAP  
FOR PLEASE TOUCH THE ART IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SASAKI



## GIRL UNINTERRUPTED

The Sasaki Foundation supported the Girl UNinterrupted project, which brings transparency to current challenges that emerging designers face. The project creates a bridge between generations while sharing perspectives and best practices in order to empower emerging designers to have a proactive voice in their future. Their goal is to collectively build a culture of equity in the architecture field where the full potential of all designers can evolve. This project has since expanded to four major cities: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington DC.

## BSA ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN DAY

The Incubator at Sasaki hosted BSA Architecture and Design Day, promoting the power of design. Sasaki welcomed students from Boston Public Schools' Brighton High School to spend a day exploring career opportunities in the design field. Students toured the office, then took their newly acquired ideas and spent some time creating their own personal learning space, imagining a place where they can focus, study, and prepare themselves for doing their best work. They ended their day with one-on-one interviews with Sasaki designers to talk about how best to pursue a career in design. Partners for this event were the Boston Society of Architects and Boston Private Industry Council.

## HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Sasaki Foundation welcomed Rachel Lee and Shemar Stewart as part of the High School Internship program. The Sasaki Foundation strives to increase social equity and access in design on a regional scale. In support of this goal, the Foundation funds a six-week high school internship program that offers young students the opportunity to explore architecture and design at Sasaki over the summer. The two interns came to Sasaki in early July to explore their interests in design at a professional workplace. The program featured a mentorship and shadowing component, as well as a short design charrette.

"We hope to introduce students to design as a problem-solving tool, and empower young people who perhaps would not have considered the design industry as a viable career path. Sometimes design can feel inaccessible. We are striving to show the next generation that design is for everyone."

- Meredith McCarthy, Sasaki architect and coordinator for the internship program



## SHARE THE IMPACT



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[www.sasakifoundation.org](http://www.sasakifoundation.org)

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