



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION for
OLMSTED
PARKS

WAYS TO ENGAGE OLMSTED 200 OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

April 26, 2022 marks the 200th birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted – social reformer, journalist, public official, urban planner and founder of American landscape architecture. Olmsted and his successor firms designed thousands of landscape projects across the country, transforming American life and culture. His democratic vision of public parks and their capacity to bring communities together is more important than ever.

*The national **Olmsted 200 campaign** is asking secondary schools, colleges and universities to engage students in exploring the many ways in which Olmsted’s work and values can address today’s challenges. We are urging institutions across the country to use this landmark to educate about this American visionary.*

The following outlines various opportunities – for students, faculty and administrators. If you have questions, contact Dede Petri at petridede@naop.org.

FOR STUDENTS

- 1) Read and explore the resources in the Library about Frederick Law Olmsted.
- 2) Explore the website of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, www.naop.org, www.olmstedonline.org, and Olmsted 200, www.olmsted200.org.
- 3) Explore Olmsted on the Internet.
- 4) Consider writing a paper about Olmsted in history or science courses. For example, research might explore:
 - a) What is Olmstedian design? Compare the design of an FLO designed park with that of a park designed by another landscape architect in America: ie, Grand Rounds in Minneapolis by HWS Cleveland; or Druid Hill Park in Baltimore; or Forest Park in St. Louis; or Kessler Parks in Kansas City.
 - b) What is Olmstedian design? Examine the difference between FLO park designs and those of European parks. (in design elements and in intended social effect).
 - c) Explore the history of design, construction and maintenance, preservation and sustainability, of a particular Olmsted park. (For example: Keney Park, Hartford, CT; Broad Branch Park, Newark NJ; Druid Hills Linear Park, Atlanta)

- d) What was Olmsted seeking to reserve/preserve in Yosemite Valley? What happened to the management of Yosemite Reservation in years following his report?
- e) What was the effect of what Olmsted called the “Spoils of the Park” on the management of Central Park? Is this a relevant concern today?
- f) What did Olmsted observe as the effect of slavery on the major elements of the society of the slaveholding southern states? What did Olmsted see as the solution to the problem of slavery in the United States?
- g) Explore and explain Olmsted’s collaboration with engineers and inclusion of engineering solutions in his commissions—including earth-shaping, drainage and sanitary engineering.
- h) Explore Olmsted’s collaboration with architects and instances of his own architectural design and the principles he applied in this work.
- i) Examine Olmsted’s “democratic vision” as expressed in his landscape architecture or other professional endeavors.
- j) Explore whether and how Olmsted’s experience in the U.S. Sanitary Commission influenced his later professional work.
- 5) For students in schools with an Olmsted landscape, see research ideas below.
- 6) Enter the Olmsted 200 essay competition. See below.

EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

- 1) Publicize Olmsted 200 on the radio or in campus publications.
- 2) Sponsor a Cleanup day on the grounds of the school.
- 3) Promote student engagement through one or more of the existing student organizations or organize an ad hoc Olmsted Club.
- 4) Visit a park in a local city, learn about its history, design, and uses, volunteer to help clean it up, and enjoy its facilities.

ENTER THE OLMSTED 200 ESSAY COMPETITION.

The National Association for Olmsted Parks and Olmsted 200 are sponsoring an essay competition to encourage independent scholarship about Olmsted.

Open to high school students, grades 9 – 12

Deadline. January 15, 2022

All winners will receive a copy of *The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm*, membership in the NAOP Network, and publication of their papers on the *Olmsted 200* and NAOP websites. Winners will also be invited to the Olmsted 200 Birthday party in Central Park, April 26, 2022.

For more information, go to Olmsted 200, www.olmsted200.org, and visit Student Resources.

FOR STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS WITH AN OLMSTED CONNECTION.

www.olmstedonline.org

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89105768915&view=1up&seq=2>

See [*The Master List of Design Projects of the Olmsted Firm.*](#)

- 1) Examine the Olmsted Firm plans for your campus and find out what exists – and what doesn't – in the landscape today. Examine contemporaneous documents and find out institutional reaction to the Olmsted Firm plans: Trustee minutes, student newspaper, etc. Write about what you find and/or create an exhibit.
- 2) Examine the Olmsted firm's plans for adjoining properties, if any, and consider a way to work with others to shed historical light on these plans and the Olmsted firm's involvement.
- 3) Work for signage on your campus about Olmsted.
- 4) Organize public tours of the campus to explore the Olmsted design – what happened and what didn't. What would the campus look like today if the Olmsted firm's designs had been fully followed?
- 5) Ask the governing board officially to recognize Olmsted as part of the campus history and to set aside a day to celebrate Olmsted 200.
- 6) Celebrate Olmsted's birthday on campus on April 26, 2022.
- 7) Familiarize yourself with Olmsted Firm plans for other school campuses
- 8) Create a field trip to other sites with Olmsted designs, especially those at other school campuses.

FOR FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS

- 1) Incorporate Olmsted into the American history and science curricula. Develop a special curricular unit for 2022.

Example: [*Cotton Kingdom, Now*](#) --A course by Sara Zewde at Harvard's Graduate School of Design examines Frederick Law Olmsted's reportorial trip through the South for the New York Daily Times and lessons for today.

- 2) Promote a Park Design competition for students; winning designs to be displayed in 2022.
- 3) Promote the National Olmsted 200 Essay Competition.
- 4) Prepare an Olmsted exhibit in the Library or elsewhere on campus. See below for a **special exhibit being made available by Olmsted 200.**

- 5) Promote a series of lectures on Olmsted by visiting scholars. Ask the National Association for Olmsted Parks for a list of speakers, info@naop.org. Make the series available to the public and promote it on the Olmsted 200 national calendar, www.olmsted200.org.

FOR SCHOOLS WITH A CARILLON

Olmsted 200 and NAOP are also sponsoring a carillon composition competition, Inspired by Olmsted, in conjunction with the Guild of Carillonneurs --North America.

For more information: www.olmsted200.org

Deadline for submissions: July 1, 2021

Carillonneurs across the country – and especially at campuses with an Olmsted connection – are encouraged to play the winning compositions throughout the 2022 anniversary year. The compositions will be available for download on the NAOP and Olmsted 200 websites. The winners will be announced on January 1, 2022.

VISIT FAIRSTED

For those in the Boston area, plan a trip to Fairsted, the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. Reservations must be made in advance by contacting Supervisory Park Ranger, Brianne Cassetta, brianne_cassetta@nps.gov.

PARTICIPATE IN OLMSTED 200 EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Events, lectures, tours and activities are scheduled across the country. For the latest schedule, please visit: www.olmsted200.org. Schools as well as students and their families are invited to events from the fall of 2021 throughout 2022.

HOST an OLMSTED EXHIBIT

Olmsted 200, in conjunction with the Oak Spring Garden Library, is pleased to offer an Olmsted Exhibit, curated by Caroline Mesrobian Hickman, PhD, lecturer at the University of Maryland, School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, for all schools and institutions.

The exhibit consists of 23 panels and accompanying text – downloadable – to create an on-site exhibit for your school library or other space.

Participating institutions must register for the exhibit. There is no cost except for reproduction of the panels and text. Institutions are invited to add local material related to the exhibit. Go to www.Olmsted200.org to learn more.

SIGN UP!
OLMSTED LECTURE AND Q & A SESSION
WITH JOHN STAUFFER, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, AMERICAN STUDIES,
AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Professor Stauffer writes and lectures on the Civil War era, anti-slavery, social protest movements, and photography.

The virtual lecture will be scheduled in late 2021 or early 2022. To sign up, please indicate your interest by contacting info@naop.org.

BECOME AN OLMSTED 200 SCHOOL

Schools that engage Olmsted 200 in any way may be **showcased on the *Olmsted 200* website and designated an *Olmsted 200* School!** Let us know what you are doing at info@olmsted.org so that we can share your efforts.

Olmsted 200 is managed by the National Association for Olmsted Parks, along with the American Society of Landscape Architects, The Garden Club of America, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, City Parks Alliance, National Recreation and Park Association, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, The Trust for Public Land, American Public Health Association, and the Landscape Architecture Foundation. For more information, tools and resources, visit www.olmsted.org.

January 20, 2021