

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Professional Summary: Asa is a multidisciplinary design, planning, and communications professional who integrates human-centered storytelling with place-based urban design, planning, and community engagement. Trained as a landscape architect (MLA 2014), urban designer, journalist, and documentary filmmaker, he weaves his expertise in design strategy, videography, public engagement, and strategic communications. A two-time National News Emmy Award-winning journalist, Asa excels in project and client management, and producing compelling multimedia storytelling products for diverse audiences. He is a keynote speaker, conference presenter, and a university-level instructor specializing in the power of storytelling to drive inclusive public engagement, urban planning, and design.

Objective:

- a.) **seeking new partnerships/opportunities as a subcontractor with my LLC** to contract as lead community-based storytelling, video production, community engagement, facilitation, and visually engaging report production and writing services supporting a larger Prime (planning, architecture, engineering, construction, or related).
- b.) **exploring full time opportunities** with a firm that needs multidisciplinary leadership, collaborative project management, improved storytelling, video/content production, BD, and A/E/C marketing experience (7 years).

Core Competencies:

- Urban Planning & Urban Design with specialization in Community-based Storytelling & Engagement Facilitation
- Strategic Design, Marketing, Strategic Communications, Graphic Design, & Project Management
- Public Speaking, Thought Leadership, & many Conference Presentations/Keynote Addresses
- Videography, Filmmaking, Drone Services, & Multimedia Production (one stop shop for all video production)
- Proposal RFP Development (A/E/C+Planning), Writing, Copy Editing, Management, & Business Development
- Graphic Design, Branding, Content Creation, Report Writing, Production, & Copy Editing

Director of Strategic Design & Communications; Storytelling Practice Lead

Renaissance Planning Group: Charlottesville, VA

Nov. 2020 - Feb. 2025

- **4+ years in urban planning/consulting leadership role** overseeing all public communications, storytelling, and strategic marketing, while also producing planning reports, engagement materials, and workshop facilitation with communities and clients at the federal, state, and municipal levels.
- **Storytelling Practice Lead:** led strategic storytelling, multimedia content production, and engagement initiatives integrating planning, design, and analytics into a wide range of urban planning projects for public and private clients.
- Served as the **Marketing Director, Communications Director, and Proposal Supervisor** all in one unique, hybrid role managing a team of graphic designers and proposal staff while overseeing RFP response development/process.
- Produced **40+ multimedia community-based storytelling products**, including documentary-style *Community Vision Videos*, public engagement storytelling, animated explainer videos, site tour videos, and other video content.
- Directed and created public-facing engagement, visual content creation, report production, logo creation, and branding for major federal, state, and local planning and transportation agencies.
- Built Renaissance's **first in-house video production studio**, procuring professional-grade DSLR cameras, drones, A/V gear, and editing equipment/software.
- Led **website design, content creation, social media, and branding** ensuring consistency in all marketing materials.
- Invited to deliver **Keynote addresses and presentations** at national and state conferences, including:
 - » Keynote Address: **Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC) Annual Meeting** (2024)
 - » Keynote Address with Film Screening: **Restoration Housing's Preserve Campaign 10-Year Anniversary** (2024)
 - » APA-VA Conference Session: **The Power of Storytelling for Planning & Inclusive Public Engagement** (2024)
 - » APA-VA Webinar: **Storytelling, Not Yelling: Toward Inclusive Public Engagement** (2024)
 - » APA National Planning Conference NPC23: **Storytelling Not Yelling, Toward Inclusive Engagement** (2023)
 - » APA-VA Conference Session: **Storytelling, Not Yelling: Toward Inclusive Public Engagement** (2023)
 - » AIA Exchange East Conference: **Storytelling Toward Inclusive Public Engagement & Urban Design** (2023)
 - » SMPS Conference Session: **Finding Your Sweet Spot for Video & Content Marketing** (2020)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE *(cont.)*

Marketing Specialist | VMDO Architects: Charlottesville, VA

Apr. 2018 - Oct. 2020

- Managed content marketing strategies, communication goals, and video storytelling with in-house media production.
- Created original video content, wrote blog content, graphic design content, award submissions, promotional campaigns, website, and social media features supporting VMDO's thought leadership and marketing goals.
- Executed strategic marketing goals and BD plans collaborating with Principals and PMs to ensure high-quality materials, digital presence, engagement, and client experience (Cx) related to VMDO's mission and project work.
- Excelled in fast-paced A/E/C Marketing: Produced proposals, RFP submissions, conference materials, client interviews, and presentations executing BD strategies and helping VMDO win work and major projects.
- Procured and managed in-house video production studio with new cameras and technology; FAA Certified Drone Pilot.
- SMPS Conference Speaker: *Finding Your Sweet Spot for Video & Content Marketing* (Feb. 2020).

Adjunct Faculty, Urban Planning | School of Architecture: University of Virginia

Jan. 2018 - May 2018

- **PLAN 2020: Introduction to Urban Design Studio**, a 4-credit design studio in Dept. of Urban & Environmental Planning.
- Taught design fundamentals in Design Studio setting and led students on tours of local public spaces, urban renewal history in Charlottesville, and developed schemes for "constellations" of new public spaces in city's racialized terrain.
- Developed curriculum of urban planning history, evidence-based design, cultural landscape approach, & design thinking.

Founder/Owner | ACE Creative LLC: Charlottesville, VA

Oct. 2017 - Present

- Founded LLC with asaeslocker.com specializing in community-based storytelling, video production, & graphic design.
- Produces HD video and multimedia editing in Adobe Premiere Pro for range of clients from federal to local non-profits.
- Designed curriculum for *Thriving Cities Leadership* program; co-taught UVA J-Term 2018 *Thriving Cities, Hack The City*.
- Keynote Address: Center for Non-Profit Excellence, *Storytelling & Communication Design* (2019, Charlottesville)

Director of Program Development | Thriving Cities: UVA Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture

July 2015 - Oct. 2017

- Directed strategic communications, fund-raising, and graphic design for translating complex city data and social science research for cross-disciplinary UVA research group.
- Launched Thriving Cities Studio for collaborative design thinking methods for multimedia storytelling and place-based analysis using MLA design training for engaging diverse communities and spaces.

CREATIVE DIRECTOR & COLLABORATIVE DESIGNER

- Directed, filmed, edited, and created *Case Study Series* and pioneered *TC's Storytelling Philosophy*.
- Translated urban design research, theory, and data into clear text copy for wide-ranging audiences and products.
- Managed budgets, project planning, staff of designers, researchers and hired a dozen+ UVA student researchers.
- Cultivated strategic partnerships and wrote grants with many UVA groups; Urban Planning, Architecture, Center for Design & Health, Resilience Initiative, Environmental Sci, Med School, Public Health, Darden, Curry School, etc.
- Built funding strategies, partnerships, and won grants in many cities - Richmond, Durham, Columbus, and Memphis.
- Creative Director of Institute (IASC) with new re-branding campaign, website design, logos, and animations.

Special Projects Director & Lecturer | School of Architecture: University of Virginia

Aug. 2014 - June 2015

PROJECT DIRECTOR: Established the *Center for Cultural Landscapes (CCL)*

- Managed project goals, communications, budgets, grants; designed and executed *Cultural Landscape Atlas*.
- Conceived, wrote, and won \$60,000 grant - UVA Faculty Research Grant *Crowd-sourced Cartography*.
- Advised local creative place-making NEA *Our Town* grant with design thinking and engagement strategies.

DESIGN THINKING FACILITATION

- Led design thinking at UVA Social Entrepreneurship Summit *Redefining Social Space & Entrepreneurship*. Feb. 2015
- Coordinated media teams with design thinking for A-School all-student Vortex Competition. Jan. 2015
- Programmed design thinking sessions at UVA Medical School *Constructing for Health Symposium*. Nov. 2014

COURSE DEVELOPMENT & TEACHING

- Developed curriculum for public speaking, design thinking methods & visual communication strategies.
 - » *SARC-5555 Design Communication & Public Speaking* (two consecutive semesters taught). Fall 2014 - Sp. 2015
 - » *SARC-6000 Common Course*: urban theory requirement for all grad students; based on Jane Jacobs. Fall 2014

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE *(cont.)*

Filmmaker & Director | ***Landscapes of Longevity*** Documentary Film (73 minutes: 2014)

- Filmed, edited, researched, produced, and co-Directed award-winning feature-length documentary film (2013 - 2014).
- Traveled the globe filming *Blue Zones* - locations characterized by extraordinary health and longevity, i.e. Sardinia Italy, Okinawa Japan, Loma Linda CA, and interviews with US experts to reveal the impact of place/community on health.
- Premiered at **2014 Virginia Film Festival** with dozens US screenings, panel presentations, and recognitions.
- Translated complex public health research and urban design analysis into film's core themes with 60+ interviews.
- Built successful funding campaign over \$25,000 of diverse UVA departments, local groups, and donors.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION for ***Landscapes of Longevity***:

- **2015 ASLA Award of Excellence** | American Society of Landscape Architects.
» *Landscapes of Longevity* - awarded the highest national recognition by ASLA.
- **2015 VA-ASLA Award of Excellence in Communication** | American Society of Landscape Architects, VA Chapter.
- **2014 ASLA Award in Research** | American Society of Landscape Architects.
- *Benjamin Howland Traveling Fellowship* 2013, \$10,000 | Landscape Architecture Dept., UVA.

Investigative Journalist & News Producer | ABC News: New York, NY

June 2003 - 2011

- **Eight-year career at ABC News producing award-winning national news stories** for *World News Tonight*, *20/20*, *Good Morning America*, and *Nightline* while working in the *Investigative Unit* between 2005 - 2011.
- Specialized in investigative reporting, writing, field producing breaking news, and long-form storytelling.
- Created video/graphic elements, data integration, and research for human-centered stories for national audiences.
- *Investigative Reporters & Editors Assoc. (IRE)* member; 2009 IRE Conf. Speaker and Emerging Leader recognition.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION:

- **2008 National News Emmy Award** Investigative Business Reporting | National Academy of Arts & Sciences.
The Multi-million Dollar Appeal: a two-part ABC News *Nightline* report on "big coal" and politics.
- **2006 National News Emmy Award** Outstanding Investigative Journalism | National Academy of Arts & Sciences.
Conduct Unbecoming: a year-long "Money Trail" series on political fundraising during the 2006 elections.

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP

- Board Member, Historic Germanna Foundation, 2024 - present.
- Board Member & Coach, Monticello Little League, 2023 - present.
- ASLA Member, American Society of Landscape Architects, 2011 - present.
- SMPS Member, Society of Marketing Professional Services, 2018 - present.
- Center for Cultural Landscapes, Affiliate Member | School of Architecture, UVA 2014 - 2016.
- Trinity Presbyterian Church: Eagles Wings Special Needs Ministry Leader & Volunteer | Charlottesville, VA 2013 - 2020.
- President, Student Association of Landscape Architects | School of Architecture, UVA 2012 - 2013.
» Created *Design + Politics Symposium*; Launched Habitat for Humanity partnership & Adopt a Stream at Meadow Creek.

SKILLS & INTERESTS

- Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro video editing, ArcGIS's StoryMap.
- Videography/Photography: Canon 5D Mark IV full-frame DSLR camera for HD/4K filming & full film-making equipment.
- Aerial Drone videography (FAA Certified Pilot) with Mavic Pro2 & Mavic Air 2S drones.
- Microsoft Office tools, Excel, Power Point, Word, Microsoft 365; all Google Drive; Smartsheet, Salesforce, Sharepoint.
- Website development & content management experience with WordPress, Squarespace platforms.
- Design Thinking methods/creative problem solving; Business Model Canvas, Value Proposition Design.
- Team sports, softball, scuba diving, DIY electric bikes, DIY tree houses, backyard chickens, & urban gardening.

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA | Charlottesville, VA - Graduation May 2014

Masters of Landscape Architecture: *LAR Departmental Fellowship Recipient*

- **Raven Society:** Academic Honors Society Member
- **Commencement Speaker** for School of Architecture all-school Graduation Ceremony 2014

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY in ST. LOUIS | St. Louis, MO - Graduation May 2003

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science: *Eliot Honors Academic Recognition*