

# Zannah Matson

**Zannah pursued a B.A. Specialist in Peace and Conflict Studies, Major in Environment and Society, and minor in Urban Studies. She graduated in 2011.**



## **Current Occupation:**

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PhD Candidate, Human Geography, University of Toronto;  
Course Instructor, Ryerson University School of Urban and Regional Planning.

## **Describe your career path after graduation.**

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After graduation, I continued doing research at the University of Toronto Sustainability Office for one year, and then went into a Master of Landscape Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. I worked in exhibition and publication design for a while and am now a PhD Candidate as well as an instructor at Ryerson University.

## **How did your Environment program influence your career?**

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The Environment program was really important to my development and career because it allowed for multiple lenses through which to connect urban design and landscape architecture to both the physical environment and the populations living in cities. Having this perspective was really great when entering into a field that is specifically about the relationship between people and their built environment, but also about building projects within a broader environmental and ecological context.

## **How and why did you choose this career?**

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I chose to go into landscape architecture because in many ways it is the practical application of many of the concepts that I was studying both within the Environment program and Urban Studies. Having the ability to shape urban public space through design allows you to alter many of the environmental impacts of cities and people's behaviour within them, and I was really drawn to that about the profession. Ultimately it is also a great profession for anyone who really feels at home in a more interdisciplinary program, because you draw on skill sets and knowledge from so many different areas to put together a great landscape.

## **What types of experiences are essential?**

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To go into any design discipline, it's essential to also have experience with design or the studio arts to build up a portfolio for the application and skills in representation that will be important as you begin learning in the field. If you're a creative person, make sure you seek out opportunities to develop artistic and design skills through clubs, courses, or additional classes outside the university.

## **Any advice?**

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In addition to developing creative and artistic skills, I found internships with planning firms really helpful while I was in the environment program as a way to understand the structure of the city and how different professions operate within it.