

Elisha V. Charley, MCRP

Clinical Assistant Professor Indigenous Placekeeping & Design
Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, and Environmental Design
The Design School, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
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Enrolled member of the Navajo Nation

Education

Ph.D. in Urban Planning, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 08/2019-Present

- Area of Concentrations: Indigenous planning framework focusing on housing data justice and mapping housing marginality in Native American communities.
- Advisors: Dr. Jose-Benito Chavez and Dr. Michelle Hale

NCP 101 Fundamentals Week Certification of Completion, Oweesta Corporation - Native Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Practitioner Certification Program, February 16, 2024.

Master of Arts in Community, Regional, and Planning (MCRP), University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2017

- Area of Concentration: Physical planning and Indigenous planning, with an emphasis on the intersection of green infrastructure, cultural landscapes, and community-centered design approaches.
- Advisors: Dr. Theodore (Ted) Jojola, Ph.D., and Moises Gonzales, MUD.

Bachelor of Applied Science in Interior Design, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ 2012

- Area of Concentration: Interior Architecture and Sustainable Design

Peer-Reviewed Journal Publications

Nihok'aa Diyin Dine'é Bikéyah, **Charley (Navajo Nation), E. V.**, Lopez-Huertas (Maya K'iche'), M. J., & Shirley (Navajo Nation), M. P. (2025). Restoring our tomorrow: planning for who we are. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 0(0).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/11771801251363133>.

Charley, E., Sing Chi T., & Yusaf, S. (2025). *Classroom in the "Working Landscapes" of Contaminated Soil*. *Journal of Architectural Education*, 79:1, 57-69, DOI: 10.1080/104648883.2025.2463302

Charley, E., Varfalameyeva, K., Alsanad, A., & Solis, P. (2022). Mapping for Resilience: Extreme Heat Deaths and Mobile Homes in Arizona. In *Youth Mappers - Undecided* (p. Chapter 12). Springer Nature.

Public-Facing Publications

Varfalameyeva, K., Solis, P., Phillips, L., **Charley, E.**, Hondula, D., & Kear, M. (2021). *Heat Mitigation Solutions Guide for Mobile Homes* (Knowledge Exchange for Resilience Briefings Series, p. 44). Arizona State University. <https://hdl.handle.net/2286/R.2.N.162992>

Working Papers

Charley, E. (2026). Navajo Nation Land Use and Housing Conditions: Towards an Indigenous Planning Framework

Teaching

Arizona State University, Clinical Assistant Professor

- Co-Instructor, **DSC 494/523 Resources Driven Construction & Design** Spring 2026
This course explores accessible approaches to resilient architectural design and construction, with a focus on resource-constrained communities. Students will study the built or community environments of Indigenous communities, considering the persistent barriers to construction and development they face and the resilience embedded in traditional practices. The course focuses on regional and locally sourced materials, traditional stewardship, and cultivation practices. Students will explore sustainable applications, efficient construction methods, and the resurgence of place-based building traditions through placekeeping. The course highlights culturally relevant, sustainable, and scalable solutions that address infrastructure challenges while honoring Indigenous knowledge and architectural resilience.
- Instructor, **EDS 402 Environmental Design Synthesis 2** Spring 2026
This course is the second part of a two-semester sequence following ED2 401: Environmental Design Synthesis 1. It builds upon the research inquiries, questions, and design challenges introduced during the first semester. Students will further develop and advance their initial design project through a comprehensive synthesis process that demonstrates their research integration, design framework, and critique. Additionally, students will explore constructive, solution-oriented strategies that address their design research topics. The findings will be communicated through written analyses and visual representations.
- Instructor, **DSC 519 Design Data Collection Analysis Research and Representation** Fall 2025
This course explores emerging theories and practices in Indigenous Planning, Architecture, and Construction through research and critical analysis. Drawing on guest speakers, selected readings, and case studies from the U.S., Canada, and international contexts, the course examines Indigenous-centered projects and methodologies. Where possible, traditional models, processes, and protocols are used as foundations for critical thinking and inquiry. As a transdisciplinary course, it integrates perspectives and approaches from architecture, community planning, sustainability, research methodology, construction management, tribal governance, and leadership, offering students a holistic understanding of Indigenous-led Design and development.
- Instructor, **LAP 311: History of Landscape Architecture,** Fall 2025
This course explores local and global history of landscape architecture through the lens of ecological design and framework. Students will analyze diverse landscapes as reflections of cultural values, environmental adaptations, and ecological perspectives. The course will integrate a range of learning tools, including visual lectures with historical diagrams and case studies, quizzes, weekly assignments, and a final project.
- Co-instructor, **LADE 362: Landscape Architecture Studio,** Spring 2025
Co-designed and taught a studio course emphasizing the fundamentals of site planning and design, including key components and processes essential to such projects. The course aimed to develop students' understanding and practical skills in a design and planning process that is both sequential and iterative.

- Instructor, **LAP 494/598: Creative Placemaking**, Spring 2025
Developed and delivered a course introducing Indigenous frameworks and perspectives in architecture and planning. Students engaged with Indigenous scholarship, guest lectures, and critical discussions to explore historical contexts, analyze present-day challenges, and envision future possibilities for Indigenous communities.
- Co-instructor, **LAP 311: History of Landscape Architecture**, Fall 2024
This course challenged traditional, linear approaches to history that center Western perspectives, particularly within the U.S. context. Instead, it encourages creative engagement through drawing exercises and dialogue-based assignments, allowing students to explore and express their understanding in dynamic and inclusive ways.
- Serve as faculty member and academic reviewer for the Landscape Architecture and Indigenous PlaceKeeping and Design programs
- Collaborated on *Cultivating the Future*, a film-based outreach initiative aimed at engaging high school students in landscape architecture and Indigenous design. Spring 2025
Co-developed and delivered lectures on navigating college pathways and financial planning, highlighting the influence of Indigenous PlaceKeeping on my professional journey in planning.

Navajo Technical University, Assistant Professor

Building Information Modeling (BIM) program,

8/2012-05/2019

- Established and launched an Associate of Applied Science in Building Information Modeling (BIM) program at NTU (August 2013).
- Co-developed and implemented an articulation agreement with the University of New Mexico's School of Architecture and Planning to support NTU-BIM students in pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Planning at UNM (December 2017).
- Promoted from Lecturer to Assistant Professor (August 2018)

Collaborative Research

- **Indigenous Research Fellow** - Nááts'íilid Initiative, Dennehotso AZ, 01/2023 – 01/2025
 - Remote position
 - Collaborated on team projects focused on housing co-development in Dennehotso, AZ
 - Co-created archival projects and design models aligned with the Nááts'íilid Initiative's Indigenous and decolonial frameworks
 - Conducted community engagement through story-based interviews centered on Nihok'aa Diyin Dine'é structures and relationality
- **Graduate Research Assistant** – ASU Knowledge Exchange for Resilience, ASU Main campus, 07/2020-05/2023; 05/2019-08/2019 (summer intern).
 - Hybrid position
 - Deployed and maintained I-buttons in the field (Mesa, AZ) to collect temperature data for environmental monitoring
 - Conducted research on mobile home construction methods, materials, and housing policies; presented summer research findings and proposed future research methods
 - Contributed to an internal research report published in the ASU KEEP digital repository
- **Research Associate** - Collaborated with the University of New Mexico School (UNM) School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P), Indigenous Design Planning Institute (iD+Pi) 03/2018 – 08/2018

- Hybrid position
- Supervised student teams in the field to collect LiDAR data on Indigenous architecture in collaboration with tribal members from Zuni, Isleta, and Santo Domingo Pueblos
- Developed student-led projects focused on Indigenous architectural and cultural preservation using LiDAR technology and 3D modeling software
- Co-created 2D and 3D architectural deliverables for public exhibitions hosted by the UNM Indigenous Design and Planning Institute (iD+Pi)
- **Research Associate** - NSF-ATE Metrology Certification Project Grant, Center of Digital Technologies NTU, Crownpoint, NM, 5/2016-8/2016.
 - Hybrid position
 - Supported the development of an International Metrology Certification program for Tribal students at Navajo Technical University
 - Collaborated with Revit technicians from Dekker/Perich/Sabatini (DPS) to integrate laser scan data into Autodesk Revit, ReCAP, and InfraWorks
 - Co-developed research findings with students, producing internal reports and project-based outcomes to enhance best practices within the NTU-BIM curriculum
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- **Faculty Mentor** NASA CIPAIR & MUREP Research Grant, Center of Digital Technologies NTU, Crownpoint, NM, 05/2013-08/2013.
 - Hybrid position
 - Contributed to strengthening the Digital Manufacturing curriculum within the Advanced Manufacturing Engineering bachelor's program
 - Supervised interns and managed project assignments focused on the use of Faro VirtuSurv and PointSense Plant software
 - Conducted field laser scanning, integrated point cloud data, and performed reverse-engineering through 3D modeling
 - Co-developed internal research reports documenting findings and recommendations

Media

- Announcing the 2023 Native Nations Institute Graduate Student Research & Travel Awardees. (2023, October 24). [Higher Education]. *The University of Arizona Native Nations Institute*. <https://nni.arizona.edu/news/2023-graduate-student-research-and-travel-awards>
- Perez, S. (2023, November 9). Empowering Indigenous Communities on Economic Self-Development. ASU's American Indian Studies and urban planning units team up to help build culturally centered and community-driven solutions. *ASU News*. https://news.asu.edu/20231109-empowering-indigenous-communities-economic-selfdevelopment?%7b_src%7d=news-story
- Gabir, F. (2023, October 16). "A Recipe For Disaster": The Negative Links Between Extreme Heat & Housing Insecurity. Experts are looking toward change as rising temperatures become critical to the livelihood of residents in the Valley. *The State Press*. <https://www.statepress.com/article/2023/10/magazine-a-recipe-for-disaster#>
- Alisa Reznick, "Visualizing Arizona heat through maps", ASU Now: Access, Excellence, Impact. July 3, 2019. Obtained 1/27/2020. <https://asunow.asu.edu/20190705-visualizing-arizona-heat-through-maps>
- Carolyn Gonzales, "UNM professor and class win national planning award", *UNM Newsroom*, June 19, 2017. Obtained 01/27/2020. <https://news.unm.edu/news/unm-professor-and-class-win-national-planning-award>
- Native News Online Staff, "NTU'S BIM PROGRAM TO CELEBRATE IT'S YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT WITH AN OPEN HOUSE". *Native News Online*, April 25, 2018. Obtained

Invited Talks, Guest Lectures, and Presentations:

2026

- **Charley, E.**, and other panelists (05/20/2026). Reimagined Places Responsive adaptation of land, buildings, and materials {Conscious Design Observatory, 10 am EST, Online conference}
- **Charley, E.**, (03/13/2026). Place-Based Agency Everyday Acts of Community-Making & Place-Keeping, [Design Corps Continuing Indigenous Design Conversations virtual conference, 12pm-1pm EST]
- **Charley, E.**, and other panelists (02/05/26) Session 1: *Indigenous Planning + Design is Actualizing the Community-Building Work in AIS*. [American Indian Studies Association 2026 Conference, 3:30 pm – 5 pm, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM]
- **Charley, E.** (01/16/26) *Sense of Place and Mental Atlas activity* [Native Narratives Center for Imagination in the Borderlands, 1 pm – 4 pm, Arizona State University, Durham Hall 607, Tempe, AZ]

2025

- **Charley, E.**, (10/24/2025) *Place Knowing, Everyday Acts of Community-Making & Place-Keeping*. [A Place to Call Home: Indigenous Public Interest Design Institute Online Discussion, 9:00 am – 9:30 am, Zoom]
- **Charley, E.**, (09/24/2025) *Working the Landscape in Navajo Nation* [Housing Process course, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm, Zoom with the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.]
- **Charley, E.** (08/14/2025) *Sense of Place* [The American Indian Student Support Services Spirit Week, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ]
- **Charley, E.** (05/27/25) *Cultivating the Future Filmed Interview* [High School online courses - Herberger Online Learning 11 am – 3 pm, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ]
- **Charley, E.**, and other panelists (02/07/2025) *Restoring Our Tomorrow: Planning For Who We Are*. [American Indian Studies Association 2025 Conference, 11 am – 1 pm, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ]

2024

- **Charley, E.**, and other panelists (11/07/2024) *Honoring Ted Jojola: Holding Space for the Future of Indigenous Planning*. [Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning 2024 Conference, 6:30 pm – 8 pm Seattle, WA.]
- **Charley, E.**, (11/06/2024) *Working the Landscape in Rural American Indian Reservation*. [2024 Planners Network Bi-Annual Gathering, 1 pm – 1:30 pm Seattle Public Library, Seattle, WA]
- **Charley, E.**, and other panelists (04/06/2024) *2024 Indigenous Scholar Symposium*. [The Women's Council of Indigenous Doctoral Scholars 12 pm – 1 pm Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ]
- **Charley, E.** (02/21/2024) *Housing in Rural American Indian Reservations and Co-development Approaches to Housing Production in the Navajo Nation through Sweat Equity*. [The Housing Process class at the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Community, Regional, and Planning] 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. UNM Albuquerque, NM (virtual lecture)
- Shirley, Michaela., **Charley, E.**, Low, Maggie., Lopez-Huertas, Joaquin. (02/02/2024) *Indigenous Planning and Well-being*. 3:45 pm – 5:15 pm. 2024 25th Annual American Indian Studies Association Conference Indigenous Wellbeing, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

2023

- Holguin, Carmi., **Charley, E.**, Dukepoo, Cara. (9/21/2023) *Co-development Approaches to Sweat Equity Home Projects in the Navajo Nation*. 10 am – 11 am. 2023 Western Planners Conference, Anchorage, Alaska.

- Tewa, Rae L., **Charley, E.**, De Mesa, Alycia., Brown, Kevin. (04/21/2023) PhD Student Panel at the Indigenous Scholar Symposium. Arizona State University Women Indigenous Council Doctoral Scholars. 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm. ASU Tempe, AZ.
- **Charley, E.** (01/19/2023) *Qualitative Research Methods in Indigenous Planning Theoretical Framework*. [Engineering for Humanity course at Arizona State University School of Human Evolution and Social Change]. 10:30 am – 11:30 am. ASU Tempe AZ.

2022

- Hale, M., Chavez, J.-B., & **Charley, E.** (03/02/2022). *Food Stands & Navajo Flea Markets: Using Planning Tools to Tell the Story* [American Indian Studies Association]. 3:00pm-4:00pm, Arizona State University, Tempe AZ.

2018

- **Charley, E.** (07/2018) *Dine (Navajo) Architecture and Planning Research* [5th Annual TCU Faculty Research Convening hosted by American Indian College Fund (AICF)]

2017

- Halliday, Scott., **Charley, E.** (10/2017) *LIDAR Technology and Preservation* [Technology Preservation and Tradition in New Mexico Workshop]. Santa Fe New Mexico
- **Charley, E.**, Shirley, M. (07/2017). *Tribal College and University (TCU) Articulation Agreement with Traditional University* [4th Annual TCU Faculty Research Convening hosted by AICF]

Teaching and Instructional Activities

- **Teaching Assistant** PUP 579 Planning Methods 2, School of Geographical Science and Urban Planning, Arizona State University. 01/2022-05/2022
 - Remote position
 - Evaluated student assignments and provided constructive feedback to support academic improvement
 - Assisted professor with administrative tasks, including course management and communication support
- **Assistant Professor:** Building Information Modeling program at Navajo Technical University, Crownpoint, NM
 - DFT 101 Entry Computer-Aided Drafting (CAD)
Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Fall 2016, Fall 2017,
 - DFT 120 Computer-Aided Drafting 1
Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Fall 2019
 - DFT 220 Computer-Aided Drafting 2
Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019
 - AMT 311 Laser Scanning Methods & Techniques
Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017
 - DFT 112 Architectural Drafting
Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018
 - DFT 212 Architectural Drafting 2
Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019
 - DFT 240 Building Codes
Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019
 - DFT 250 Construction Management/Estimating
Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019

Professional Recognition

Recipient of the 2017 American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Student Project Award for “Contribution of Planning and Temporary Issues; The Secondary Dwelling Unit (SDU+U) study.”

Fellowships and Scholarship Awards

Ph.D. Urban Planning program at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

- Recipient of Native Forward Scholars Fund
- Recipient of ASU-Graduate College University Grant
- Recipient of ASU-Interdisciplinary Enrichment Fellowship
- Recipient of ASU-Knowledge Exchange for Resilience Fellowship
- Recipient of ASU-Graduate College Fellowship
- Recipient of The Frank, Harrison, and Harry Austin Voting Rights Scholarship
- Recipient of Navajo Nation Graduate Scholarship
- Recipient of the Navajo Nation Chilchinbeto Chapter Scholarship

Master of Arts in Community, Regional, and Planning at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

- Recipient of UNM-JB Jackson Scholarship Award, 2017
- Recipient of American Indian College Fund Mellon Fellowship, 8/2016-5/2017
- Recipient of Navajo Nation Graduate Scholarship, 8/2015-5/2017

Bachelor of Applied Science in Interior Design at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

- Recipient of the Navajo Nation Undergraduate Scholarship
- Recipient of the American Indian Services Scholarship for Native Americans
- Recipient of Chilchinbeto Chapter Scholarship
- Recipient of NAU-Continuing Higher Education Scholarship

Experiences

- **Design Automation Group (DAG) Tech Support** – Jacobs BIAF Advance Facilities & U.S. Federal Solutions Dept., Tempe, AZ, 03/2019-03/2020.
 - Hybrid position
 - Managed automation workflows for 3D software projects to enhance design efficiency
 - Provided technical support for users of AutoCAD, Revit, and point cloud data applications

Professional Memberships

- The American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers, board member 2023-Present
- American Planning Association, student member, Arizona Chapter, 2019-Present
 - Western Planner - Tribal and Indigenous Planning Interest Group
- ASU Women’s Council of Indigenous Doctoral Scholars, student member 2021-Present
- ASU American Indian Graduate Student Association, student member 2019-Present
- The American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers, board member 2023-Present