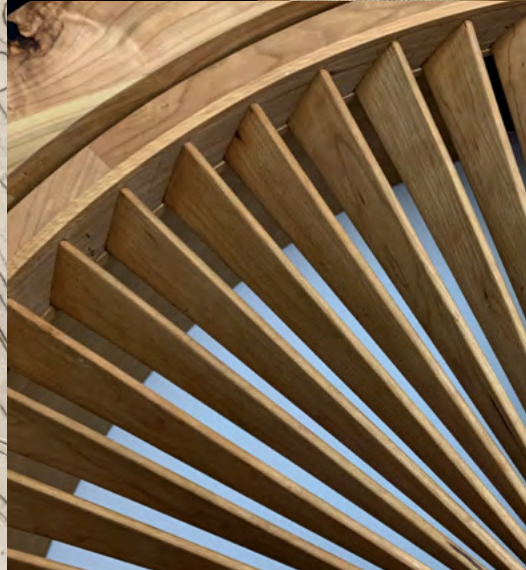


# AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE BUILDING ARTS



EDUCATING TOMORROW'S ARTISANS



“A man who works with his hands is a laborer;  
a man who works with his hands and  
his brain is a craftsman;

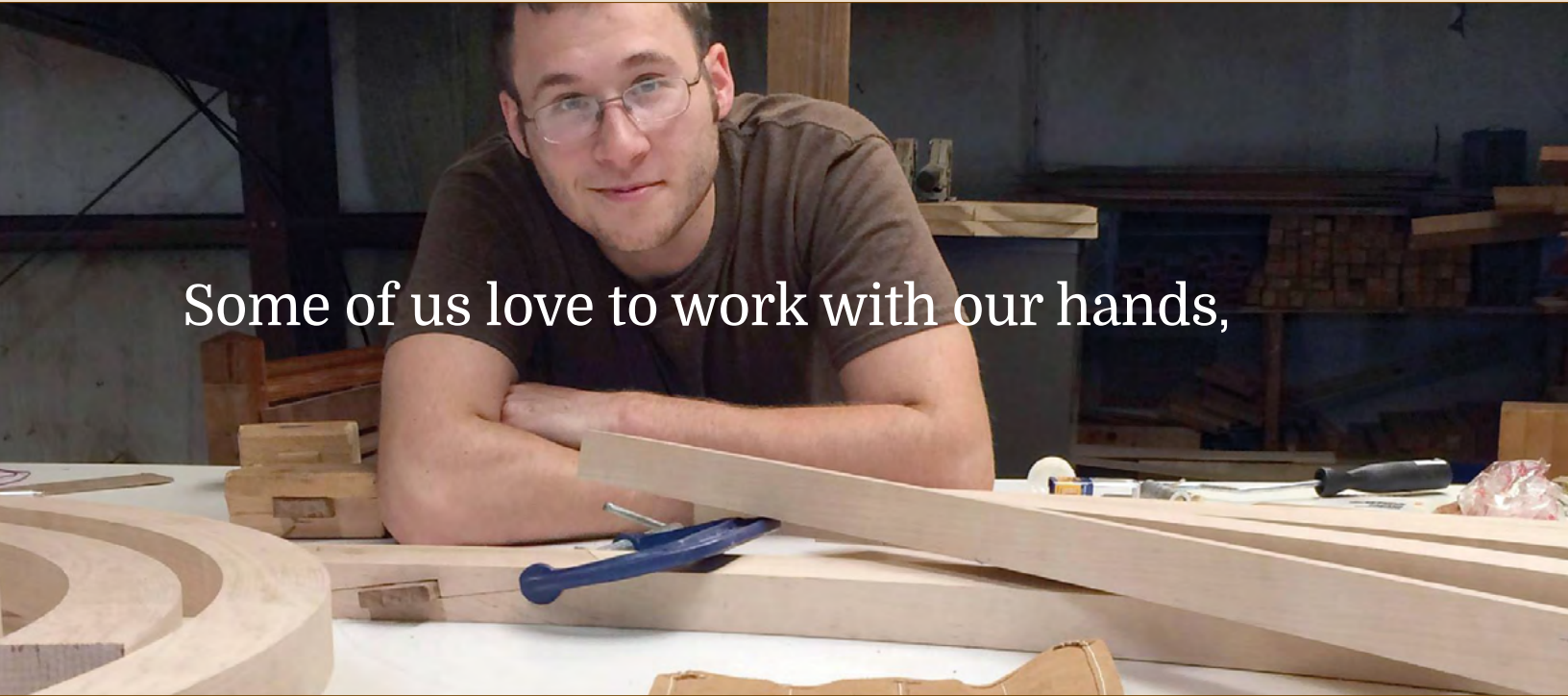


but a man who works with his hands  
and his brain and his heart  
*is an artist.”*

LOUIS NIZER, ARTIST, AUTHOR, LECTURER (1902-1994)

# Some of us want more out of a career

than putting in a 9-to-5 day behind a desk, counting the hours until we're free to do the things we enjoy.



Some of us love to work with our hands,

but are looking for a more rewarding career than simply providing labor.

Some of us are creative thinkers who express ourselves through our art, yet worry that it's hard for artists to earn enough to provide a higher standard of living for themselves and their families.

**Well here's the good news:  
You can make a living doing something you love.**

At the American College of the Building Arts, we train artisans to foster exceptional craftsmanship and preservation. ACBA is more than a trade school, offering a four-year bachelor's degree integrated with a liberal arts core curriculum that prepares graduates for a successful future doing something they love.





# What we do

At ACBA, we are training the next generation of professionals to fill a critical gap in today's workforce. A recent survey shows 89% of ACBA's past three graduating classes are employed in the fields for which they studied at the College.\*

Beginning in the late 20th century, the last generation of highly skilled tradespeople with the knowledge and experience of old-world craftsmanship began aging out of the job market, with no new generation being trained to take their place.\*\*

Owners of historic buildings as well as federal and local agencies charged with the preservation and repair of our cultural resources are desperately trying to find traditionally trained artisans to build and restore our national treasures.

*\* Based on a third-party survey in 2022. The results show 81 of 91 students employed in their field across the past seven years.*

*\*\* Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation, Whitehill Report, 1968.*



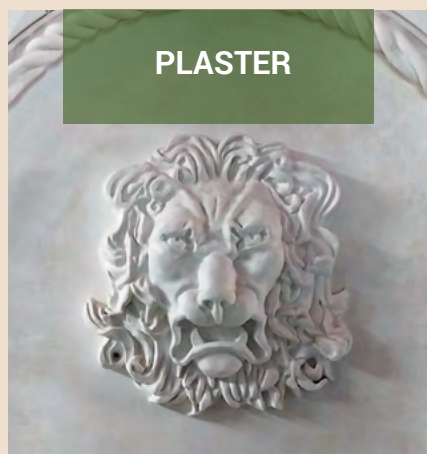
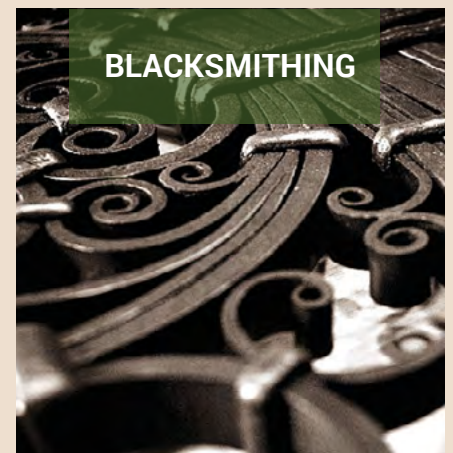


# Our academic programs

ACBA is a unique college in America that offers a four-year baccalaureate degree in the traditional building arts coupled with a core liberal arts foundation.

In addition to general education classes, students spend 10-15 hours a week in the trade workshops, working one-on-one with seasoned mentors to learn the artistry and hands-on skills of their craft.

**Students can earn a Bachelor of Applied Sciences in one of the following specializations: Architectural Carpentry, Timber Framing, Blacksmithing, Plaster, Architectural Stone, and Classical Architecture and Design. Or, students can receive an Associate of Applied Science in the Fundamentals of Architectural Carpentry & Timber Framing, Blacksmithing, Plaster, or Architectural Stone.**



# Why integrate the liberal arts with professional trade training?

Our general education core curriculum provides students with the broad-based knowledge of a liberal arts education in a way that is **directly applicable** to your professional trades training.

Our science classes teach you the dynamics of why building materials behave the way they do. Philosophy, English and history courses teach you what our built environments say about our values as a society and the goals we aspire to.

Preservation classes teach applied methods of restoration, in addition to theory. Math and modern language classes give you the practical skills to become a leader in your field. Entrepreneurial and leadership classes help you to realize your full professional potential.



*"It's not only about learning the trade.*

**Students also learn all the background: material sciences, leadership, how to set up a business plan, how to become a leader."**

PROFESSOR JACK DUNCAN,  
CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN



ACBA graduates understand not only how to do something, but also develop the **creative thinking and problem-solving skills** that great artisans need.



# Get out of the classroom and discover the world

## EXTERNSHIPS

To expand their skills and gain valuable real-world experience, all students complete summer externships both nationally and internationally between each academic school year. These externships have provided opportunities for our students to repair windows in the Oval Office of the White House, work on the Capitol Dome in Washington DC, replicate outbuildings at George Washington's Mount Vernon estate, work on Lincoln Cathedral in England, and study under master blacksmiths in Japan and Italy.

Students are required to complete 270 hours of an externship between June and July. Students gain valuable networking contacts as well as real-world shop experience.



# Our Faculty

A one-on-one relationship with some of the best in the business



Since ACBA is a unique institution in America, we have hand-selected faculty from some of the oldest trade-training centers in the world.

At ACBA students are individually mentored by professors who are internationally renowned in their fields and committed to developing artisans who can carry on the time-honored traditions of their trades. They include award-winning craftspeople from England, France and Germany who have worked on historic properties throughout America and Europe. Many own their own companies which requires them to stay well-informed on the latest trends and technologies in their fields.

“I’m excited to teach at a program that I would have gone to had it existed when I was considering college.

*I'm teaching to my tribe.”*

CHRISTINA BUTLER, GENERAL EDUCATION CHAIR,  
PROFESSOR OF PRESERVATION





“We teach modern languages in a way that is directly applicable to students’ careers, while at the same time enhancing their personal lives.”

CHARLOTTE THOMPSON,  
PROFESSOR OF MODERN LANGUAGES



For more information  
about our faculty, please visit  
[acba.edu/  
faculty-and-staff-directory](http://acba.edu/faculty-and-staff-directory)





# Our Students

Because of its smaller student body and low student/faculty ratio, it's no surprise that ACBA students form close relationships with one another, as well as with the College's faculty and staff. The Office of Student Services offers a wealth of resources to help ensure your academic success through mentorships, and a first-year student seminar.

Student Services is also dedicated to helping students adjust to college life and get the most out of their campus experience, with a range of events that bring the campus community together to play hard as well as work hard. From counseling to cook-outs, the Office of Student Services helps students grow intellectually, developmentally and socially.







*Ryan*

CLASS OF 2020  
BLACKSMITHING

"ACBA provided me with an opportunity to fuse hands-on experience with theoretical knowledge. Too often in classrooms, students are given equations or concepts without any grounding or perspectives into what those things actually mean. At ACBA, I learned the entire process. From start to finish, the college gave me the understanding I needed in order to pursue the craft that I love."

**Ryan Woodall**



*Tom*

CLASS OF 2013  
TIMBER FRAMING

"To this day, ten years post-graduation, I still look back fondly on my time at ACBA. The education I received at ACBA set me up for a productive career in the building industry and supplied me with the type of training I don't think I could have gotten anywhere else."

**Tom Podhrazsky**



*Kevin*

CLASS OF 2019  
ARCHITECTURAL  
STONE

"After working with computers for 10 years, I knew I wanted a career change to something more hands-on, but did not know where to begin. ACBA provided me with a way to move in a new direction and helped me develop the skills and confidence I needed to be able to work professionally in a new career."

**Kevin McCarthy**





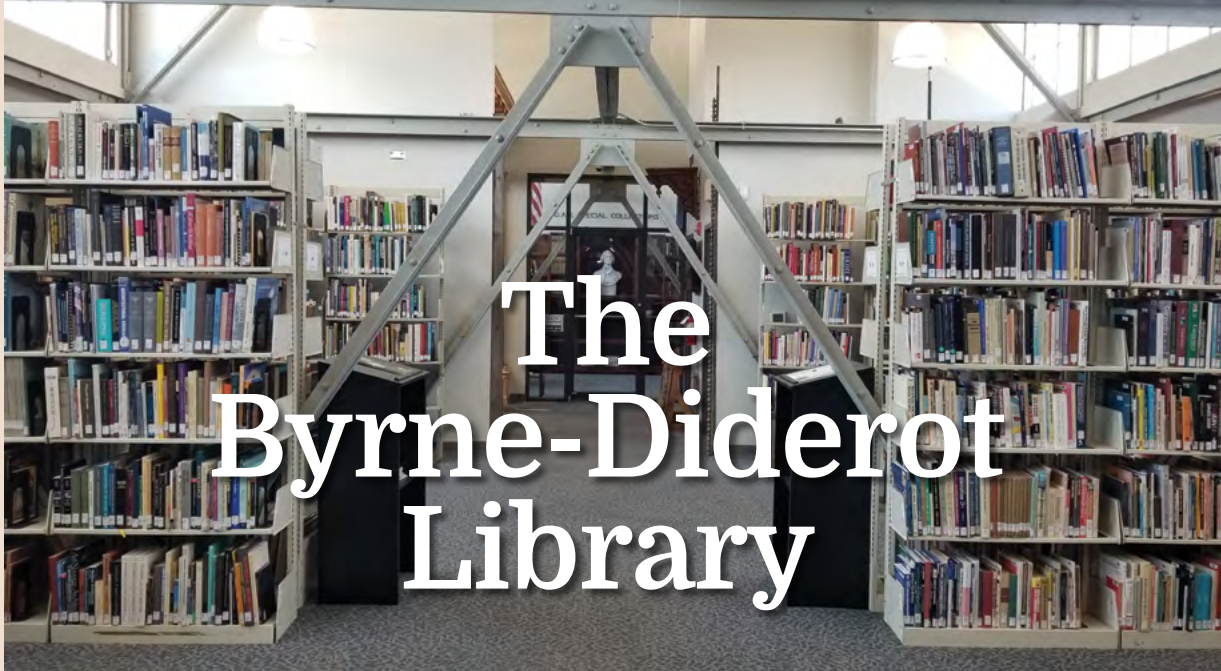
# Our Campus

Each trade has a dedicated workshop equipped with both the modern and traditional tools it needs to excel. ACBA's campus is housed within the award-winning rehabilitated Old City Trolley Barn, c. 1897, located near the heart of Charleston's historic downtown. The 38,000 sq.ft. facility was renovated to provide an ideal modern learning environment and work spaces to accommodate workshops and studio areas.

Students gather during their breaks either in the Student Lounge or out in the courtyard around bench swings and picnic tables they have made in the shops.







# The Byrne-Diderot Library

The Byrne-Diderot Library is integral to the academic environment at the American College of the Building Arts. The library houses a distinct collection of over 16,000 learning resources focused on the building, decorative, and visual arts. The scope of the collection focuses on the six building trades taught at the college, the additional courses in the college's curriculum, as well as related areas of interest.

The library boasts research materials on topics including architectural carpentry, timber framing, blacksmithing, stonework, plasterwork, architecture and architectural history, drawing and drafting, historic preservation, literature, modern languages, woodwork, metalwork, sculpture, masonry, art history, and local, state and national history.

The library's Special Collections contains the college's rare and period books and serials. The highlight of this collection is a selection of antique books on architecture and the building arts that was based on the personal library of President Thomas Jefferson.

The Byrne-Diderot Library's distinguished collection of resources makes it a notable repository of literature on the building arts and sets it apart from similar libraries throughout the nation.



**“Our library’s focus on the building, visual and decorative arts is what sets it apart from other libraries in the Southeast. My goal is to teach students to be self-sufficient researchers through the use of credible academic resources. The greatest satisfaction I take from my work as a librarian is leading another person to the information they need.”**



# Charleston



ACBA is located on the Charleston peninsula, one of the most unique and beautiful cities in the United States. Charleston is recognized by *Travel & Leisure* and *Condé Nast* magazines as one of the top five cities in the world to visit.

With streets lined with live oaks and Spanish moss in the heart of a historic city only moments from breathtaking beaches, **the city itself serves as a perfect laboratory for studying the building arts.**





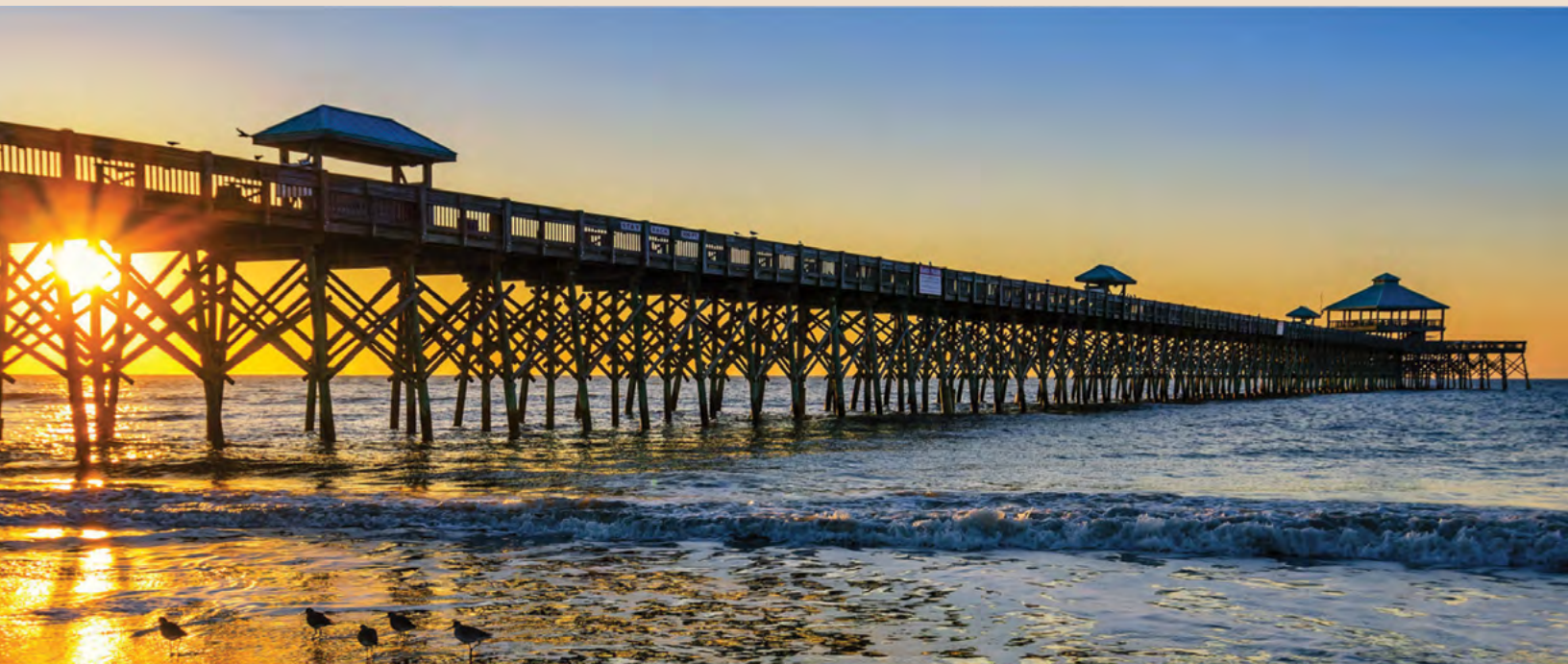


Most ACBA students choose to live in nearby apartment complexes or other traditional housing, often sharing expenses by rooming with one or more classmates.

The College is conveniently located in the "Neck" area of Charleston, right off I-26. This central location makes it easy for students to select housing options downtown, in North Charleston, West Ashley, or other suburbs.



*ProfReader via Wikimedia*



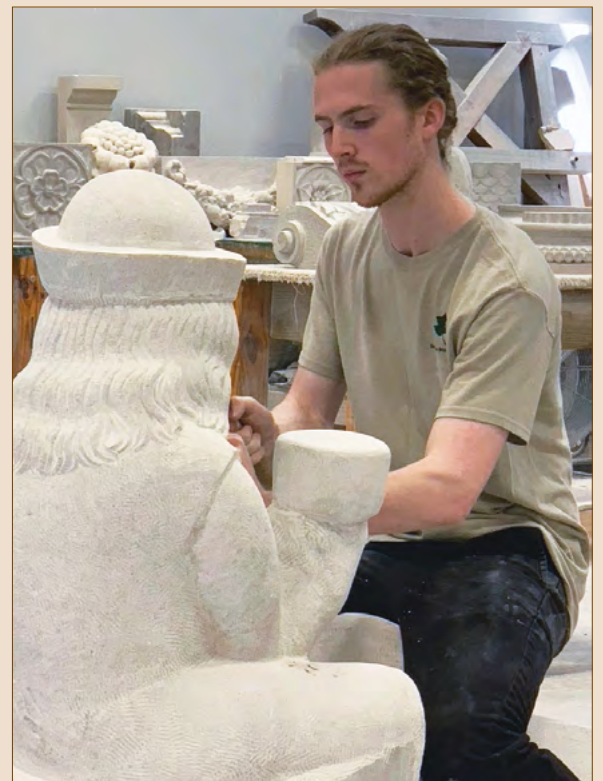




# Architectural Stone

From restoration to new construction, ACBA's Architectural Stone program focuses on conservation and preservation techniques that are highly sought after within an industry with too few traditionally trained artisans and a growing backlog of historic buildings needing maintenance and repairs. Stone students are able to work in traditional and contemporary practice practically anywhere in the world.

ACBA's Architectural Stone specialization creates a student artisan who understands the knowledge, theory, technology and practice within the broad field of stone carving. Among the skills students develop at ACBA is a sense of proportion, balance and scale; the ability to interpret possibilities; and how to use tools of the trade, both traditional and modern.







# Plaster

The Plaster specialization provides a point of convergence for art, architecture, and construction. As a decorative art form related to fine art and sculpture, plaster can enrich and transform any architectural space with endless possibilities. For those passionate about creating interior and exterior spaces, students can earn a degree while developing the highly specialized skills needed for a trade that is both exciting and very much in demand.

This unique and comprehensive program provides solid craft experience with business training that allows graduates to work across the spectrum in both historic and contemporary settings found anywhere around the world. From conservation and restoration to new construction, ACBA's Plaster specialization provides students with a solid background in the skills needed to prepare them for this fulfilling artistic career.



*"Plaster encompasses so much more than lathing walls,*

*including the creation of decorative elements such as crown moldings, ceiling medallions, and other ornamental additions."*

PROFESSOR STEVE KESTER  
PLASTER





# Architectural Carpentry

Freshmen enrolled in ACBA's wood program are introduced to the art and science of working with wood as a building material, the history of woodworking tools, and joinery techniques. In their sophomore year, they develop technical skills such as creating compound roof systems and staircases. By the end of their sophomore year, students choose to specialize in either Architectural Carpentry or Timber Framing.

Upper-level course work focuses on structural restoration, conservation, preservation, research, and documentation.



**“In our architectural carpentry program, students experience seeing something beautiful come into being by their own hands and knowledge.”**

**PROFESSOR MARKUS DAMWERTH,  
ARCHITECTURAL CARPENTRY THIRD-GENERATION  
CERTIFIED MASTER CARPENTER, GERMANY**







# Timber Framing

“We train students not only with time-honored traditional techniques of the past, but *we also embrace the future* and the technologies it offers to continue expanding these crafts.”

PROFESSOR CHARLIE MOORE  
WOOD TRADES INSTRUCTOR AND WOOD SHOP MANAGER

Timber framing is a traditional building method that creates structures capable of bearing heavy weight loads using traditional methods of joinery.

By studying structural woodwork, timber framing students come to understand the overall building process. Their studies include the traditional aspects of timber framing as well as modern technology to restore old structures and to build new ones meeting today's building codes.







# Blacksmithing

In the late 19th century, nearly a quarter of the population listed their occupation as Blacksmith. These were professionals who made practically everything a community needed and fulfilled the role of a problem solver. Then and now they create objects from wrought iron or steel by forging the metal to make such things as tools, gates, railings, furniture, and sculpture. The techniques used to create this range of objects remain largely unchanged.

Blacksmithing as a profession has seen a resurgence in the past few decades as more and more people seek out unique handmade items. The trade requires physical work and has excellent benefits for both your physical and mental well-being. The creativity and opportunities to work on a range of projects - both historic and contemporary - make blacksmithing a highly rewarding profession.







# Classical Architecture and Design

ACBA's Classical Architecture and Design program acknowledges that there is intrinsic value in being deliberate with the design of buildings and cities. In our contemporary age of immediacy and instant gratification, the act of drawing and creating by hand teaches students to apply classical knowledge to all scales of building while learning the practical applications of contemporary building practices. Studying the elements and principles of traditional architecture equips students with the skills necessary to engage with any place and design not only from the student's own predilections, but with an approach that considers what is in the best interest of a particular place and its citizenry. Students learn how the classical tradition has evolved throughout history and how it can inform our built environments today and in the future.

After mastering the art of drawing by hand, students go on to integrate modern 2D and 3D design technologies such as AutoCAD, SketchUp, and REVIT. Design studio classes focus on categories such as fundamental classicism, as well as more complex subjects in residential, secular civic, special topics in rural and preservation, and sacred design. In addition, Classical Architecture and Design students integrate theory and application by taking three elective courses in the other building arts (wood, plaster, iron and stone) during their junior and senior years.





# You can love what you do.

The best way to determine if the unique educational opportunities found at the American College of the Building Arts is the right choice for you is to come by for a visit. Meet our faculty and students and see for yourself what makes ACBA such a special place.

## TUITION:

- **\$9,936 per semester\***
- **\$350 per semester shop fees\*\***
- **\$50 one-time application fee**

*\* To keep this educational opportunity affordable, ACBA has not raised its tuition since its first class enrolled in 2005.*

*\*\* One-time tool and book fees vary by specialization: Iron \$500, Plaster \$400, Stone \$400, Wood \$900, Classical Architecture and Design \$200. Students will own their purchased tools and take them upon graduation.*



## FINANCIAL AID:

Financial aid is available to those who qualify. ACBA is approved for the Title IV program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Title IV is the U.S. DOE federal student loan program using the FAFSA and administering both federal grants and loans.

Through the generosity of our donors, ACBA offers scholarships for qualified students. All scholarships have been designed for students with demonstrated financial need as determined by student's EFC results. ACBA's receipt of each student's EFC will automatically enter them into the pool of available scholarships.

***For more information, contact [finaid@acba.edu](mailto:finaid@acba.edu)***

## APPLY TODAY!

### Contact us

**Director of Admissions  
American College of the Building Arts  
649 Meeting Street  
Charleston, SC 29403**

 **843-577-5245**

 **[admissions@acba.edu](mailto:admissions@acba.edu)**

 **[acba.edu/admissions](http://acba.edu/admissions)**



# AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE BUILDING ARTS

# By the NUMBERS

89%



OF ACBA  
GRADUATES  
ARE EMPLOYED IN  
THEIR FIELD\*

0

NUMBER OF  
TIMES ACBA HAS  
RAISED TUITION

since its first class  
entered in 2005



139

STUDENTS ENROLLED  
IN ACADEMIC YEAR  
2023-2024

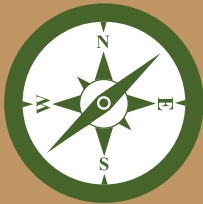
6



SPECIALIZATIONS  
OFFERED AT ACBA

65%

OF STUDENTS  
ARE FROM  
OUT OF  
STATE



8 to 1

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE  
RATIO OF STUDENT  
TO TEACHER



4

ACBA  
STUDENTS  
HAVE BEEN  
SELECTED

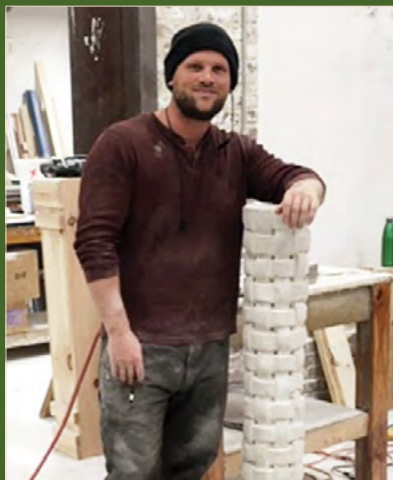
for the prestigious  
Coubertin  
Fellowship in France,  
recognizing 30 of  
the world's most  
promising artisans  
under 30 years old

25  
YEARS  
OLD

Average age of the  
ACBA student body



# BECOME AN ARTISAN...



## APPLY TODAY!

649 Meeting Street, Charleston, SC 29403  
📞 843-577-5245 📧 [admissions@acba.edu](mailto:admissions@acba.edu)

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE  
**BUILDING ARTS**