

THE NEW SCHOOL'S PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN ANNOUNCES \$200,000 GIFT FROM THE SARA LITTLE TURNBULL FOUNDATION

THE
NEW
SCHOOL

October 4, 2018 – The New School’s Parsons School of Design today announced a \$200,000 gift by the Sara Little Turnbull Foundation to advance the university’s Parsons Scholars Program, a free multi-year, need-based college preparatory program designed to remove social and financial barriers that prevent motivated teens from pursuing education and careers in art and design. This is the inaugural gift by the Sara Little Turnbull Foundation.

Born Sara Finkelstein in New York City in 1917, Sara Little Turnbull attended Girls Commercial High School in Brooklyn. In 1935, she won a city-wide design competition, resulting in scholarships to Parsons School of Design, where she graduated in 1939. She served on the Parsons Board from 1967 – 1970.



Sara Little Turnbull by Joe Budd, Courtesy of Metropolis Magazine

As a design editor, product designer, design consultant, and educator, Sara Little Turnbull made a lasting impact on the lives of her students as well as business and design leaders around the world. The inaugural grant by the Foundation furthers Ms. Turnbull’s longstanding commitment to students from traditionally underrepresented communities by supporting their engagement with design.

“I see design as essentially creating order. But I also encourage students to learn from their own experience, at times letting their minds meander to discover the unexpected and the creative accident,” Ms. Turnbull told *Metropolis Magazine* in 2000. This vision of the transformative power of design is at the core of The New School and Parsons’ mission and curriculum.

“Parsons is grateful to the Sara Little Turnbull Foundation for their generous gift that will support young artists in their educational pursuits,” said Joel Towers, executive dean of Parsons School of Design. “Parsons Scholars is a vital part of the Parsons community, and we are thrilled that the program will continue to make design an accessible career path for historically underrepresented students.”

Parsons Scholars have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of studio subjects in the Pre-College Academy and Summer Intensive Studies programs, where they acquire skills and knowledge that will help them gain admission to and succeed in colleges of art and design. In addition to taking classes, accepted students participate from 10th grade through 12th grade, learning through workshops and field trips to gain exposure to art and design fields. Students earn college credit and a Pre-College Certificate from Parsons upon successful completion of the Parsons Scholars program.

“The Foundation’s investment in Parsons Scholars, as well as other work underway to honor Sara’s legacy, will fuel the future of design at the intersection of culture and business,” said Dorothy Dunn, Special Trustee, Sara Little Turnbull Foundation. “We firmly believe that the future viability of design will depend on bringing diverse perspectives, experiences and talent into the fields.”

The Sara Little Turnbull Foundation supports underrepresented youth in design education and the advancement of women in professional communities of design practice and leadership. The Foundation also supports public education in design at the intersection of culture, business, and education.

About Sara Little Turnbull

Sara Little Turnbull (1917 – 2015) was a trail blazing designer and design consultant who operated at the nexus of design, culture, commerce, and education.

As “corporate America’s secret weapon,” she worked with major companies as a designer and design consultant. Her clients included 3M, General Mills, Corning, Coca-Cola, Proctor & Gamble, Neiman Marcus, Macy’s, DuPont, Ford, Pfizer, Revlon, Elizabeth Arden, Lever Brothers, Motorola and NASA, among others. Describing her practice as “applied cultural anthropology,” she found inspiration during global travels, from close observation of the natural world, and through research sparked by her keen curiosity. She brought an interdisciplinary and anthropological approach to product development. She also championed the consumer experience, setting the stage for human values in commerce.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

79 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10003
www.newschool.edu

PRESS RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Amy Malsin,
The New School
212-229-5667 x 3094
malsina@newschool.edu

Follow @TheNewSchool



Artifacts she gathered during her travels and documentation of her design process became The Sara Little Center for Design Research, formerly at the Tacoma Museum of Art, now re-established in Seattle as the Sara Little Turnbull Design Institute. She also founded the Process of Change Laboratory for Innovation and Design at the Stanford Graduate School for Business, where she taught an interdisciplinary approach to design.

Sara Little Turnbull created a Foundation Trust as a vehicle to support her passion for design education and women in leadership roles. Although the Trust was formally created in 2015, it is in 2018 that the Foundation is launching as the result of a decision made by The King County Superior Court, Washington State.

“Sara and her work were catalytic. In this spirit, the Foundation hopes to inspire other business and design leaders to support Parsons Scholars as well as other programs that engage diverse youth in design,” explained Dorothy Dunn.

[The New School's Parsons School of Design](#) is one of the leading institutions for art and design education in the world. Based in New York but active around the world, the school offers undergraduate and graduate programs in the full spectrum of art and design disciplines, as well as online courses, degree and certificate programs. Critical thinking and collaboration are at the heart of a Parsons education. Parsons graduates are leaders in their respective fields, with a shared commitment to creatively and critically addressing the complexities of life in the 21st century.