

Biosketch - Alexa Hunt

Alexa Hunt, a native of Des Moines, Iowa, received her BS from the University of Iowa in 2021, majoring in Global Health Studies with a minor in Environmental Policy. In addition to being a student athlete in the Track & Field Team, she has served as a Special Education Paraeducator, taught English in an AmeriCorps program, and worked as a Nursing Assistant in a hospital.

Alexa came to the attention of CARTHA Founder Usha Balakrishnan in a very serendipitous way in October 2021 during a Zoom presentation by Alexa describing her Summer Intern experience designing an inclusive sensory playground at Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement in Mysuru, India. Alexa was designated as a CARTHA Fellow shortly thereafter since she proved to be an excellent fit for a new Fellowship to advance CARTHA's "Musicality in Parks" initiative. With Alexa's interest in pursuing graduate studies in Urban Planning, she will play a crucial role within CARTHA to develop culturally-appropriate programs aimed at creating greater equity.

Alexa will be participating in a series of new cross-sector outreach presentations and academic-practitioner partnerships in which Fellows like her can help CARTHA's work in reimagining park spaces. With other Carthans, Alexa will be assisting with a new Symposium Series titled "Seeking Intergenerational Healing and Grief Relief Solutions: Singing Nooks in Our Public Parks" in a funded partnership with Humanities Iowa. The Symposium Series aims to enable thoughtful new approaches and design solutions to the inclusion of musical elements (such as Singing Nooks) within parks and programming design.

Alexa's response below to CARTHA's typical question to anyone interested in her work, "What are your aspirations for humanity?," provides an opportunity for any reader to reflect upon those things that truly matter in any humanity-centered design process:

"Thinking about my aspirations for humanity is a tough one because I want so much for this world and its people. Equality, justice, basic human rights, and respecting the earth are all at the top of my list, but if I had to choose just one it would be peace, more specifically peace of mind.

Peace in knowing that the air you breathe is not toxic. Peace in knowing that you are safe in your own neighborhoods. That the classrooms your children learn in aren't full of PCBs and are free from violence. Peace in knowing that your daily efforts to be better and to do better are not in vain. As well as knowing that this Earth will be a safe place for future generations.

The mind is a powerful thing. It directly impacts every aspect of our lives. Every interaction, every situation, and every decision. My aspiration for humanity is peace. Peace from worry, fear, hunger, and violence." –Alexa Hunt