

# Leave Your Mark on Chicago

## Team JSAA

### The Concept

Thousands of people pass through Union Station everyday trying to get from A to B as quickly as possible. For the majority of people, you would never even know they were there at all. We would like to change that. Our team is proposing building a “Leave Your Mark” wall for the Great Hall at Union Station. The center of this vast, open space is typically void of any activity as people quickly traverse on short diagonals around the perimeter to get to the appropriate platform.

How will we get people to divert from their typical path? By creating a path of our own that anyone can leave their mark on. These pathways will converge to the center of the space where a series of dynamic walls are located, begging to be written on. Each chalkboard wall will have a different prompt such as (but not limited to):

- What is your favorite thing about Chicago?
- What is on your Chicago bucket-list?
- What do you think Chicago needs?
- What do you think Union Station needs?
- Where are you traveling?
- Mark which neighborhood you live in (on a painted map of Chicago)
- The pathway extensions will be a free-for-all, mimicking the sidewalk chalk art.

Each prompt will have a specific #hashtag posted on it so users can share their favorite “mark” on social media sites such as twitter, instagram, and facebook. Our team will then remotely feature the best pictures each day on our twitter/instagram/facebook account, specially made for this installation. By selecting and publishing the best photos each day, this encourages users to visit the installation on multiple days as well as take and post more photos than they otherwise would have. We believe the social media integration is important for this project, because it will help generate more interest in the installation as well as Union Station.

### Implementation

The two walls will be assembled from pre-fabricated wall segments primed and painted with chalkboard paint. Chalk caddies are attached at 6-foot intervals, so writing tools are always accessible. Some portions of the wall are shorter for children and all portions are ADA accessible. The project requires roughly 900sqft amount of space for the wall installation, plus an additional 450sqft of pathways leading to the walls.

### Meeting the Criteria

We designed our intervention to be easy to set up and require minimal maintenance for the 10-day installation. The wall can be easily assembled and deconstructed by a team of four.

Our team is composed of 4 designers with architecture backgrounds, who have gone on to complete a master’s degree in architecture, urban planning, or business. Careful consideration went into the positioning, scale, and accessibility of our design ensuring all user groups will be able to enjoy the installation.

## **Materials**

We will use 4' x 8' sheets of plywood primed and painted with chalkboard paint. The internal structure will be built from 2"x4" wooden frames. The pathways are made from rolled chalkboard laminate.

## **Build Process**

The walls will be built off site and moved to Union Station by truck. Once onsite, the team will assemble the prefabricated walls. Chalk caddies are also screwed onto the walls. The zig-zag form provides structure for our design, requiring no other bracing.

## **Practicality**

Nothing from our installation will need to be taken down or stored overnight. A team member will be available to check the wall at regular intervals.

## **Partners**

The space will be programmed primarily by our team of four recent architecture graduates who have all gone on to pursue a masters degree in related fields such as architecture, urban planning, urban design, and business.

We are also interested in engaging visitors through social media outlets such as instagram, twitter, and facebook to help reroute visitors who otherwise might not have been traveling through Union Station.

## **Experience**

As architecture, design, planning, and business students, we are familiar with design competitions, exhibitions of our design work, and community engagement.

## **Recent Work**

### *Aly Andrews*

- ULI Hines Urban Design Competition/ (2013)
- Vertical Cities Asia Urban Design Competition, Vietnam/Singapore (2013)

### *Jordan Buckner*

- Exhibition at University of Michigan: Civic Friche (2010)
- Installation at University of Michigan: Cnidaria (2011)
- UIUC Small Studio Design/Build: Wash Pack Pavilion (2013)

### *Allison Burrell*

- Composite Fabrication Exhibit: Wood-Fiberglass/Plus-Minus (2013)
- International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam: Squat Hotel (2012)