Dalia Munenzon

Presidential Frontier Faculty

Assistant professor of urban design at the University of Houston's Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and Design, where she focuses on researching and teaching adaptive strategies and resiliency methods for sustainable communities and infrastructure. With a background in urban systems design, environmental planning, and architecture, she works with local communities to create resilient cities and urban environments.

Dalia is a recipient of the prestigious 2022 SOM Foundation Research Award, the AIA Upjohn Research Award, and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Gulf Futures Design Studio award.

Adapting Cities for Extreme Climate

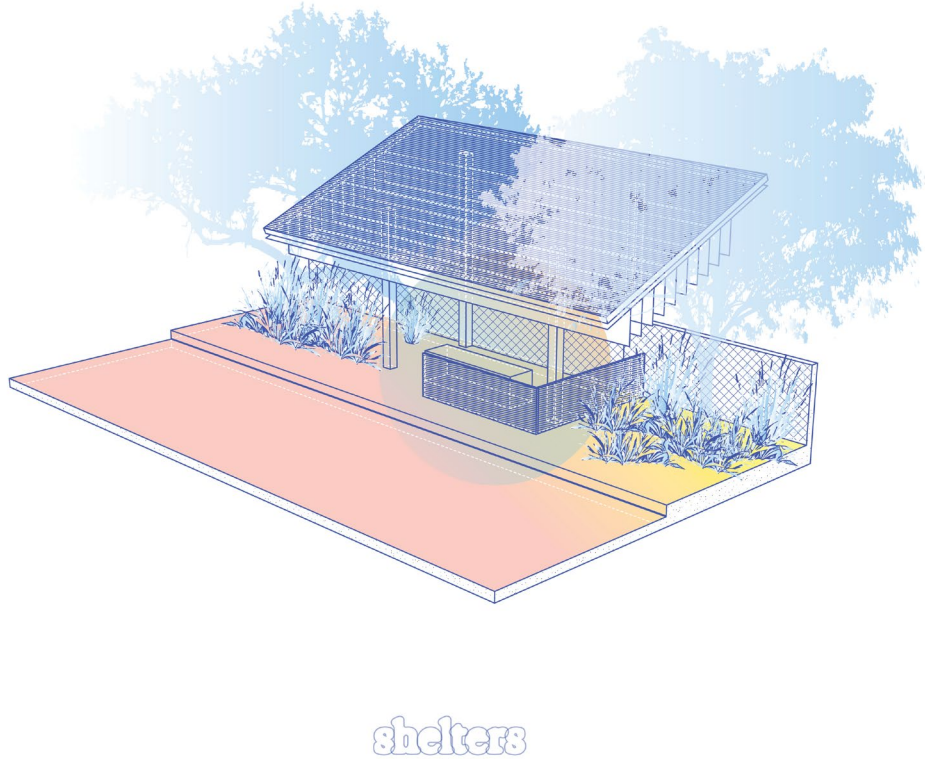
Our research focuses on collaborating with local communities to develop resilient cities and urban environments. We explore climate adaptation as a catalyst for transformative change in urban settings, investigating infrastructure systems, co-designing future visions, and analyzing the regulatory and policy frameworks necessary for implementation. Our work seeks to advance the conversation on design as an interdisciplinary practice, integrating community engagement, cultural traditions, regulatory challenges, economic considerations, landscape dynamics, and the built environment.

Collective Comfort: Airing on Possibilities

- 2023 AIA Upjohn Research Award $25,000
- 2022 SOM Foundation Research Prize $40,000
- Exhibition at the Center for Design and Architecture in SF

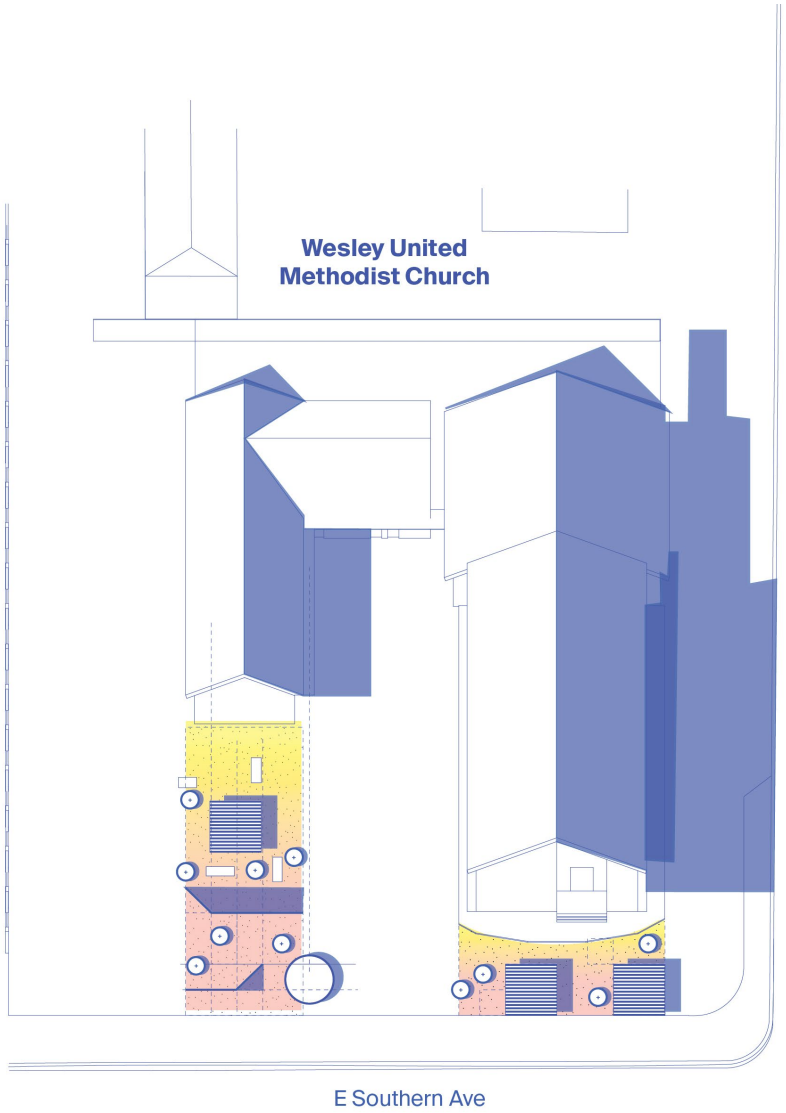
Collective Comfort explores how cooling centers can serve as climate resilience hubs and educational spaces in desert cities facing extreme heat. Moving beyond emergency relief, this project develops an Urban Code for Heat Resilience, integrating shade equity, passive cooling, and walkability into urban infrastructure. By advancing architectural and material innovations, Collective Comfort envisions self-sustaining microclimates that mitigate extreme heat through adaptive design and integrated urban systems.

Collaboration with Liz Galvez at UC Berkeley



HEAT IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT, PHOENIX, AZ

Team:
Sultana,Rubaiya; Marco Chapa, Gabriel Castaneda



SHADE ACCESS

Team:
Sultana,Rubaiya; Marco Chapa, Gabriel Castaneda

Adaptive Ecofutures: Shaping the Gulf Coast of Tomorrow Design Studio

- 2024 National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine: Gulf Coast Climate Futures. PI $748,848

The program explores interdisciplinary approaches to climate adaptation, urban resilience, and ecological restoration. Students participating in the studio will have the opportunity to address pressing local issues, including watershed management, coastal planning, and energy transition, to reimagine the built environment of the Gulf Coast.

Students will collaborate with environmental science, engineering, public health, and urban design experts on projects addressing the risk of extreme weather events and community well being.

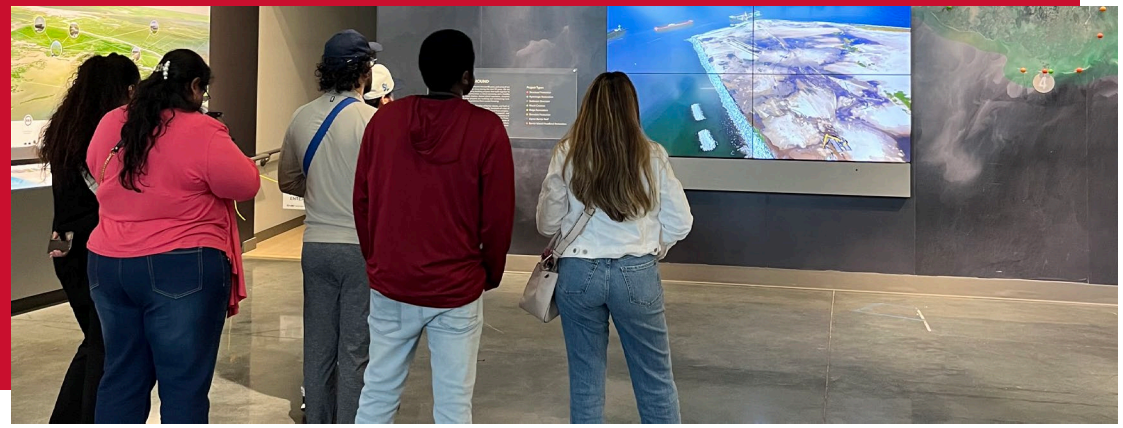


Image – visit at UHCC and the LSU Mississippi River Model

LEARNING FROM PRACTICE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH