

My name is Kahlil Ricketts and I am a Masters student studying Interior Design. For all of my undergraduate career I had every intention of continuing my education into law school. However, after giving it much thought, I made the choice to pursue my dream of becoming an interior designer. I ultimately made this decision based on the fact that as interior designers we have the ability to not only create but transform the world around us for the better. My passion for the corporate and commercial market sectors stems from my interest in wellness, wellbeing, and diversity being incorporated into the design of interior spaces.

As a designer I've been inspired by the way the built environment can improve the state of users through purposeful design considerations. Within my time in graduate school, I have come to understand that a key motivator of mine is designing for, and learning about, the needs of underrepresented groups. This motivation to shed light on minority populations drove my graduate research into the lack of acknowledgment and recognition given to African design in our field. In this research I explore topics such as the context and significance of African design forms in our field, the systematic way the "west" has used African forms to "enhance" its interiors while disregarding the originators, as well as the value in reevaluating our primarily "western" design history to show how influential "non-western" forms are to our field. To me, interior design is an opportunity to tell a story through the built interior environment, and through this narrative we help create spaces that are thoughtful, intentional, and timeless.