

Name: Hannah Neloms

Major: Architecture

Minor: Engineering

Hometown: Houston, TX

Faculty Advisor: Wes Hiatt

Project Title: *Between Borrowing and Belonging*

Brief:

Hannah Neloms class of '26 is an architecture major with a minor in engineering. Her project: *Between Borrowing and Belonging*, documents the spread of Little Free Libraries through Bethlehem, PA and proposes an architectural intervention around these boxes to create genuine community space. Hannah is originally from Houston, TX. Her Faculty Advisor is Wes Hiatt.

When I was young, the library was one of the few places I could exist without explanation. I could claim a corner and feel both sheltered and part of something larger. No one questioned my presence. There was no transaction required, no expectation to perform. That experience taught me something fundamental about what a space can give a person.

Then I left home for university and lost access to that environment. That's when I started noticing Little Free Libraries, small wooden boxes appearing at the edges of front yards and street corners. They kept me connected to reading, but they couldn't replace what I had lost. The community, the programs, the feeling of a space designed to hold you, none of that fit inside a box.

That is where *Between Borrowing and Belonging* comes in. Through fieldwork, photography, and mapping across Bethlehem, PA, I documented public libraries and the scattered network of Little Free Libraries throughout its neighborhoods. This architectural intervention proposes something between the two: a space anchored by a Little Free Library, designed for gathering, reading, and discussion; built by the community, for the community, free from the authorities that have long decided what knowledge people deserve access to.