



VIOLA YEUNG, IIDA, NCIDQ
Interior Designer at Sechrist Design Associates

Raised in Vancouver, BC, Canada, Viola brings a modern West Coast perspective to design while practicing in Vancouver and Seattle. The evolution of her career has given her the opportunity to design multiple project types from commercial to residential projects from North America to Asia. Her area of expertise is centered around holistic design concepts with inspirations from local surroundings and global approaches. Inspired by nature, sustainability and innovative materials, Viola has worked with various team members to create intriguing interiors for each project. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, cycling, and skiing to connect with the world. She also appreciates traveling to various cities to study art, culture, food, architecture, and interiors. She believes in living in harmony with nature and designing spaces with a balance between form and function.

Q: Brief intro/What type of work do you do/ where do you work?

A: I started my interior design studies at BCIT and completed my accredited degree at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. After graduating, I had the opportunity to work on hospitality projects in Vancouver. The opportunity led me to expand my career working in Seattle while designing for Microsoft, Yahoo!, Verizon, Hyatt Hotels, Marriott Hotels, etc.

Currently, I am working at Sechrist Design Associates where my focus is on multi-family, senior living and single family.

Q: When did you decide to take the NCIDQ Exam? How did you decide what order to take them in?

A: Taking the NCIDQ Exam has always been my goal to elevate my knowledge and career. I decided to take the exam after working in the industry for a few years and after completing my work experience hours to meet the application requirements.

Q: Did you fail any exams/retake any? How did you stay motivated through that process?

A: Fortunately, I did not fail or retake any exams. I stayed motivated and determined by focusing on the goal of passing and making sure that I understood the content.

Q: How long did you study for the exams? What did you use to study?

A: I started studying in January of 2020 with the

goal of taking the NCIDQ Exam in spring of 2020. When the pandemic cancelled the opportunity to take the exams in the spring, I started studying again in the summer from August to October to take the fall 2020 exams. I used Q Practice, Quizlet, textbooks, IIDA study groups, flash cards and practice exams to study.

Q: What advice would you give to current students that you wished you had received?

A: Find a mentor and a firm that will help you grow your career as a designer.

Q: Why did you become NCIDQ Certified/why was it important to you?

A: I became NCIDQ Certified so that I could have the knowledge to design for the safety, health and well-being of others. It gives me confidence when designing by knowing what considerations to make when designing. It has also benefitted my clients, team members and consultants as informed decisions were made on a regular basis with the knowledge I have gained from studying for the exams.

Q: How has having an NCIDQ Certificate benefited you and your career?

A: Having my NCIDQ Certificate has benefited my career by opening up more doors to job opportunities. I have been reached out to by more recruiters since I have been licensed, and employers value the NCIDQ Certification when looking for new hires.

Q: Have you/are you interested in pursuing any other credentials/certifications or licensure/registration/certification in a jurisdiction? If so, please provide those details.

A: I am interested in pursuing the WELL AP certification.

Q: What could the industry do to overcome obstacles from diverse individuals being represented and having equal opportunity?

A:

- Promote diverse individuals in leadership and management positions
- Establish mentoring opportunities for diverse individuals
- Create college recruitment programs focusing on diverse individuals
- Provide internships and scholarships targeting diverse individuals
- Create an inclusion council or diversity task force

Q: Anything else you'd like to share?

A: Committing to studying for a few months is worth it in the long run. Having your NCIDQ Certification is something that would benefit you for the rest of your career. When studying, take breaks and clear your mind every once in a while to avoid burning out. For me, studying in the morning and afternoon helped with retaining information. Repetition and taking practice exams also helped me understand and learn the content.