

Chicago Architect

AIA Chicago // 2023 AIA Gold Medal Recipient Carol Ross Barney, FAIA

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SUMMER 2023

Carol Ross Barney, FAIA
2023 AIA Gold Medal Recipient // 22

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editor@aiachicago.org

Managing Editor

Dillon Goodson, Affil. AIA Chicago
editor@aiachicago.org

Editor

David Cordaro, Assoc. AIA
communications@aiachicago.org

Drew Clark

drewc@innovativepublishing.com

Designer

Catherine Meany
catherine@innovativepublishing.com

Advertising Sales

Innovative Publishing
advertise@innovativepublishing.com
844.423.7272



Chicago Architect, the primary outreach tool of AIA Chicago, is published four times a year as an authoritative resource for architects, the larger design community, and the public about architecture and related issues of interest to Chicago architects. The magazine communicates industry trends, the value of high-quality design, and the role of AIA Chicago and its members in the world of architecture.

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Dear Members and Friends,

By the time this issue arrives in your mailbox, newly elected Mayor Brandon Johnson will have been sworn in as the city's 57th mayor. We know the critical role that you play as architects and citizens is vital to the future of our city's built environment — which is why, as a chapter, we want to build upon and further those architectural conversations with our elected officials at all levels. We congratulate Mayor Johnson on his election and look forward to working alongside him.

In the creation of our 2021-2023 AIA Chicago Strategic Plan, we heard that members wanted to take a more active role in local, state, and national advocacy efforts. To that end, we're excited to share a recap of some new initiatives that we've rolled out in the first months of the year — and will continue to expand — as a direct result of your priorities. This recap also highlights key AIA Illinois and AIA National advocacy efforts supported by our chapter's members and staff over the past few months.

In late 2022, in preparation for the mayoral election, AIA Chicago convened a built environment coalition of 11 local organizations focused on design and equity in Chicago. Together, this coalition reached out to all eight 2023 mayoral candidates and asked them to complete a seven-question survey on built environment-related issues. I encourage you to read more about this initiative, the partner organizations, and the responses from Mayor Johnson on page 12 in our Chapter Report.

Our cover story in this summer issue celebrates AIA Chicago member Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, who was awarded the 2023 AIA Gold Medal. The AIA Gold Medal honors an individual whose significant body of work has had a lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture. It is the Institute's highest national honor, and Carol is only the second woman to individually receive the award. She is also the first Chicagoan in 52 years to receive the Gold Medal since Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in 1960. Our heartfelt congratulations to Carol on this honor and for the ongoing impact of her leadership within the Chicago architectural community.

Our Executive Director Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA, sat down with Carol for a lively interview reflecting on her career path and work. You can read this Q&A, as well as thoughtful reflections from Patricia Saldaña Natke, FAIA, on the impact Carol has had on our city, our country, and the profession — and as a mentor to so many architects in our community.

In celebration of Carol's recent honor, I hope you will join us on the evening of Thursday, August 17, for a lecture and panel discussion with her. As part of our Third Thursdays series, we're teaming up with the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Architecture Center for a program at the Art Institute's Rubloff Auditorium.

This issue also includes highlights from three A'23 Conference on Architecture programs presented by AIA Chicago members in June. For those who were unable to make the trip to San Francisco, we hope you'll enjoy the highlights of their presentations — just three programs from among more than 10 presented by AIA Chicago members at the national conference.

Finally in this issue, writer Alaina Griffin shares a preview of the Sankofa Wellness Center, a new \$50 million complex in West Garfield Park that will include a wellness center, credit union, art center, business hub, and fresh food pop-up markets. The West Side campus project will bring new resources into this historically disinvested Chicago neighborhood.

I look forward to seeing you at a future Third Thursdays program or at one of the dozens of Knowledge Community and Affinity Group programs we're providing this summer.

Mindy Viamontes, AIA
2023 AIA Chicago President
president@aiachicago.org



IMAGE BY ASHLYN HENRY

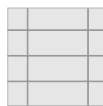
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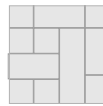
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AIA Chicago's women members of the College of Fellows gather at Carol Ross Barney's studio to celebrate her receipt of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

IMAGE BY ROSS BARNEY ARCHITECTS.

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Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, 2023 AIA Gold Medal Recipient. Image by John R. Boehm Photography.

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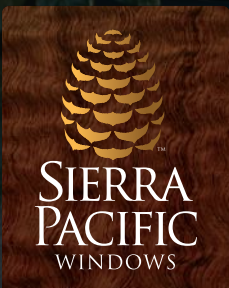
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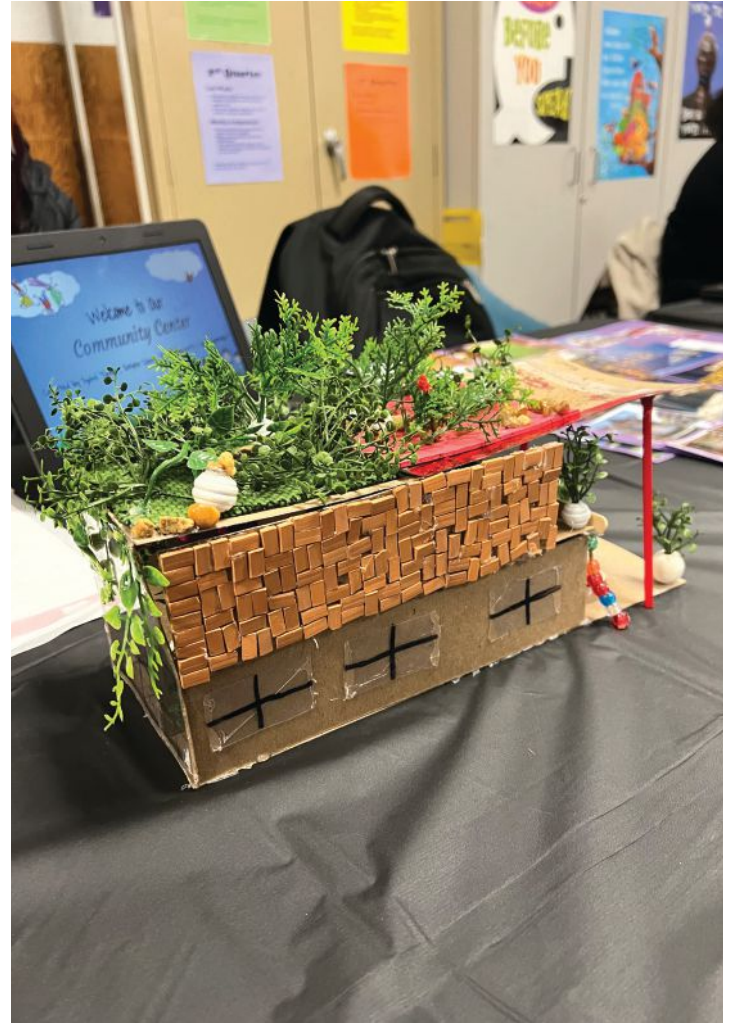
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Students on a tour of buildings along the river.




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Architects in Schools (AIS) Makes an Impact on Nearly 100 Middle School Students This Year

The AIA Chicago Foundation's Architects in Schools (AIS) program brings architecture professionals into middle school classrooms to introduce students to the profession. This spring, AIA Chicago members worked with students in grades six through eight at George A. Pullman Elementary School (Pullman) and students in grade six at Cesar Chavez Multicultural Academic Center (Back of the Yards).

The program introduces students in under-resourced neighborhoods to the profession through hands-on learning. This eight-week residency is a hands-on experience, allowing students to design creative spaces for their neighborhood through fun sketching and sculpture exercises. Students also have an opportunity to tour downtown Chicago and visit a local architecture firm.

Thanks to the committed group of mentors who are critical to this program's success, we will be enriching the lives of nearly 100 Chicago students this year, allowing them to learn more about future career pathways and gain new experiences from their classrooms. 

Architects in Schools is made possible through a generous grant from the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) and support from individual and corporate donations to the AIA Chicago Foundation.

 To learn more about Architects in Schools, or to support the program through volunteer or financial commitment, visit www.aiachicago.org/foundation.

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*AIA members are a powerful voice for the **values** they uphold in their practices every day. As natural facilitators and problem-solvers, architects stand ready to support new policies that create a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable society. Over the past few months, AIA Chicago members have advocated for the profession at the local, state, and federal levels.*



IMAGE BY THE CHICAGO MAYOR'S OFFICE

Local Advocacy

In early 2023, in preparation for the Chicago mayoral election, AIA Chicago convened a built environment coalition composed of 11 organizations focused on design and equity in Chicago. Each organization brought forth the interests of those who they represent and posed questions around how design, and designers, can help address a wide range of issues in our city.

AIA Chicago brought together leadership from **AIA Illinois; American Society of Landscape Architects, Illinois Chapter (ILASLA); Arquitectos Chicago; Chicago Architecture Center (CAC); Chicago Metro Section of the Illinois Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-CMS); Chicago Women in Architecture (CWA); Illinois Green Alliance; Landmarks Illinois; Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC); and National Organization of Minority Architects, Illinois Chapter (I-NOMA).**

Here are a few of the responses we received from **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. To view his full responses, including his favorite building in Chicago, head to www.aiachicago.org/2023mayoralcandidateresponses.

AIA Chicago: How familiar are you with the 2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan? Do you support its goals, and what initiatives would you support to further its goals?

Mayor Brandon Johnson: We need a Green New Deal for Chicago — a set of priorities to ensure that we are tackling the most pressing problems affecting our climate and our jobs. As mayor, I will make sure to build on the work that is already moving forward at the federal and state levels, but in regard to the 2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan, ensure that the City also requests the funds necessary to execute the Plan to create new jobs and career opportunities as part of a just transition away from fossil fuels. Specifically, I would also prioritize fully funding and restructuring a Chicago Department of the Environment, green schools in CPS, a Green New Deal for housing, and public transportation and transit upgrades.

AIA Chicago: As mayor, how will you correct the historic racial inequities of health, amenities, infrastructure, and economics manifested in the built environment?

Johnson: This is without question an equity issue. As a Cook County commissioner, my work on the

Budget for Black Lives led to the creation of the Cook County Equity Fund, which has driven hundreds of millions of dollars in public funding [toward] the needs of Black, Latino, immigrant, and working-class communities. As mayor, I will continue prioritizing the fight against these inequities, and bring this same approach to city government, whether through the Park District, Department of Public Health, our libraries, Chicago Housing Authority, or the CTA.

AIA Chicago: If you could build or initiate one major physical improvement in the city, what would it be? Recent examples: central area Riverwalk; public libraries with apartments; revitalizing railroad rights-of-way and river edges as public amenities; expanding transit lines.

Johnson: We need to invest in infrastructure that will make buses more accessible and efficient and create true bus rapid transit (BRT) lines that combine dedicated bus lanes and signal prioritization with new infrastructure. True BRT systems include bus stations that allow riders to pay before they board and enable multiple riders to board simultaneously, just like CTA stations. BRT should be expanded and fully implemented across key corridors in Chicago.

State Advocacy

AIA members from across Illinois journeyed to Springfield as a part of AIA Illinois' Prairie Grassroots lobby day to meet with legislators and their staff on three key issues: (1) To reauthorize and expand the Illinois Historic Preservation Tax Credit, which would increase the annual allocation for qualifying projects to \$75 million; (2) To set a minimum requirement for structural design in building codes to leverage Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding in times of disaster*; and (3) To advocate for more accountability, oversight, and verification in regard to energy savings contracts (ESCOs). The AIA Chicago members in attendance were: **Justin Banda, Assoc. AIA; David Cordaro, Assoc. AIA; Holly Gerberding, FAIA; Natalie Hicks, AIA; Jeff Jenó, AIA; Josh Mings, AIA; Cesar Santoy, AIA; Chey Taylor, AIA; Katie Taylor, Assoc. AIA; Grant Ullrich, Assoc. AIA; and Peter Wojtowicz, AIA.**

IMAGE BY ANNA MCFARLAND



Group of all AIA Illinois members in Springfield for Prairie Grassroots.

IMAGE BY ANNA MCFARLAND



Peter Wojtowicz, AIA, meeting with Rep. Hoan Huynh (IL-13).

**Legislative Victory: As of May 15, 2023, SB 2368, the bill to standardize building codes, has passed both chambers and moves forward to Gov. Pritzker for signature.*

National Advocacy

AIA leadership from across Chicago, Illinois and the country gathered in Washington, D.C., for **AIA Lobby Day** as part of the national **AIA Leadership Summit** to lobby in support of two pieces of bipartisan legislation: (1) **The Democracy in Design Act**, which would ensure that communities across the country maintain a voice in the design of federal buildings consistent with their preferences, topographies and design traditions; and (2) **The Resilient AMERICA Act**, which would make significant changes to the federal government’s ability to prepare communities for future natural disaster events through increasing funding for FEMA’s pre-disaster mitigation grant program.

The AIA Chicago leadership present included AIA National

President-Elect **Kimberly Dowdell, AIA**, host for the event; AIA Chicago President **Mindy Viamontes, AIA**; AIA Chicago President-Elect/ First Vice President **Lynda Dossey, AIA**; AIA At-Large Directors **Ryan Gann, AIA**, and **Korey White, AIA**; Practice Management Knowledge Community leader (national) **Cyrus Rivetna, AIA**; AIA Illinois President **Jeff Jenö, AIA**; and AIA Illinois Second Vice President and Secretary **Jeremy Gentile, Assoc. AIA**. The group was also joined by 2023 President of AIA Northeast Illinois **Laurie Hoffman, AIA**; and 2023 President of AIA Eastern Illinois **John Benware, AIA**. AIA Chicago Executive Director **Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA**, and AIA Chicago Communications Manager **David Cordaro, Assoc. AIA**, were local staff in attendance. **CA**

➔ To read more about the legislation, visit: www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5291 and www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5689.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA; John Benware, AIA; Jeff Jenö, AIA; Laurie Hoffman, AIA; Mindy Viamontes, AIA; and Cyrus Rivetna, AIA.



AIA Illinois members with U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth.

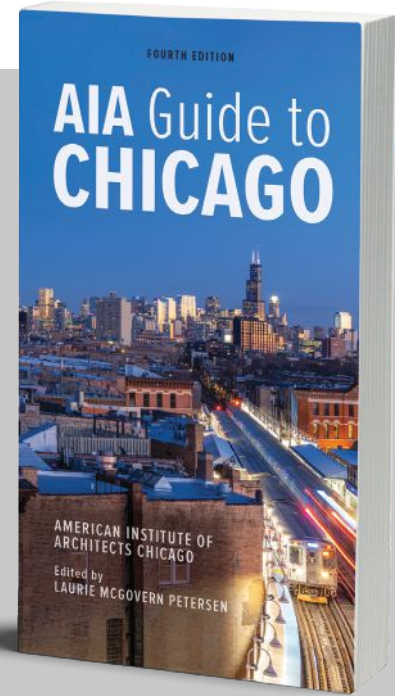
AIA Guide to Chicago, Fourth Edition

Chicago’s architecture attracts visitors from around the globe. The fourth edition of the *AIA Guide to Chicago* is the best portable resource for exploring this most breathtaking and dynamic of cityscapes. The editors offer entries on new destinations like the Riverwalk, the St. Regis Chicago, and The 606, as well as updated descriptions of Willis Tower and other refreshed landmarks.

Thirty-four maps and more than 500 photos make it easy to find each of the almost 2,000 featured sites. A special insert, new to this edition, showcases the variety of Chicago architecture with more than 80 full-color images. A comprehensive index organizes entries by name and architect.

This publication is available in print, as a PDF, and as an e-publication.

➔ It is 30 percent off through June 30, 2023, when purchased through the University of Illinois Press. Use **promo code S22UIP** during checkout.

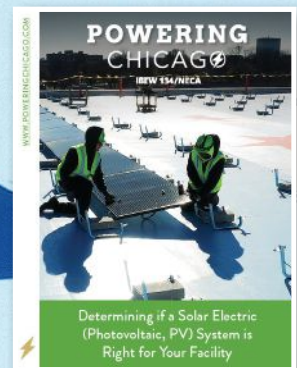


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Illinois and the NCARB Rolling Clock Update

by Eric Klinner, Managing Director, AIA Illinois

In February 2023, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) announced that it would be eliminating the “rolling clock” for the Architect Registration Examination (ARE), effective April 30, 2023. While this ruling applies to most candidates, it requires changes to the Illinois state law to be in effect, meaning the five-year clock is still ticking in Illinois, and applicants must still complete the ARE within five years.

The existing rolling clock policy only permits passing exam scores from within a five-year window.

This new change will base the validity of passed ARE divisions on the exam version rather than a set time frame. Further information about this policy change can be viewed on NCARB’s website: www.ncarb.org.

Eric Klinner, AIA Illinois’ managing director, has been in discussions with AIA National, AIA Illinois’ lobbying team, NCARB, and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) regarding the issues the state of Illinois faces for elimination of the rolling clock.

Illinois, alongside Washington, has the rolling clock written into


its statute and law; 12 other states have it written into their rules and regulations as well. The states with the rolling clock written into their statutes or laws are not able to make changes as quickly as NCARB and require legislative action.

AIA Illinois is in support of NCARB’s elimination of the rolling clock policy and is exploring multiple options and pathways forward with our partners to implement this change to the existing statute.

Empowered by our members, AIA Illinois will continue to protect

the practice of architecture, the highly respected value of your license, and how the architect’s license continues to support the health, safety, and welfare of our communities, while implementing this important policy change that endeavors to promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession and practice of architecture.

AIA Illinois, alongside AIA Chicago, will continue to update you as this issue progresses.

Please email membervoices@aiachicago.org with any questions you have regarding this issue. 

➔ Further information about this policy change can be viewed on NCARB’s website: www.ncarb.org.

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FGM Architects is pleased to announce that **Mike Elliott, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP**, has joined the firm as a principal in its municipal practice. Mike is currently the president-elect and treasurer of the AIA Illinois Foundation.



Perkins&Will is pleased to announce the new **Ralph E. Johnson Professorship in Design at the Illinois School of Architecture**. Established by Perkins&Will Global Design Director **Ralph Johnson, FAIA**, the new professorship will support his alma mater, specifically funding faculty with expertise and academic abilities in the field of architectural design, architectural design research, and architectural design technology and materials.



IMAGE BY TOM HARRIS ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Wheeler Kearns Architects completed the new headquarters for Chicago nonprofit **Nourishing Hope**. The facility greatly increases the scope and size of the organization's services, reflecting its evolution from a North Side food pantry to a social services organization serving people across the city.



HED has appointed **Tania Van Herle, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C**, and AIA Chicago member **Enrique Suarez, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**, to co-CEOs. Enrique also serves on the AIA Chicago Board of Directors.



LBBA is excited to announce **Kevin Taylor, AIA**, and **Andrew Arkell, AIA**, have been promoted to senior project architects. Both Kevin and Andrew joined LBBA in 2018. The firm is thankful to have these individuals on the team to support their passion for creating sustainable and affordable community-based developments.

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HPZS is proud to announce it is the first and only woman-owned architecture firm in Illinois to have a JUST 2.0 label. Administered by the International Living Future Institute (ILFI), the JUST™ program is a system of metrics intended to transparently measure an organization's performance on a range of issues relative to their policies and business practices, outlining 22 specific social and equity indicators related to diversity and inclusion, equity, employee health, employee benefits, stewardship, and purchasing and supply chain. The result of participation in this program is the JUST label, a publicly accessible scorecard transparently declaring the firm's current performance measured against these metrics.



LMN Architects, in collaboration with **Booth Hansen**, is pleased to unveil the design of the new Steven S. Wymer Hall at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.



Sanja Trinic, AIA, was promoted to associate director at **bKL Architecture**.



Legat Architects has appointed **Saon Das Mathew, AIA, LEED GA**, as director of wellness. For nearly 20 years, Mathew has helped healthcare providers expand services and improve efficiencies.



Wheeler Kearns Architects is excited to announce that **Calli Verkamp, AIA, LEED AP**, has joined the ownership at the firm. She is the youngest principal at the firm. Calli also serves on the AIA Chicago Board of Directors.



Please Send Your News To:
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Natalie Hicks, AIA, NCARB, has joined the team at **RATIO Design** as an associate. Natalie also serves as the vice president of advocacy on the AIA Chicago Board of Directors.



MEPIS is pleased to announce the recent hire of **Jeff Saad, AIA**, as principal.



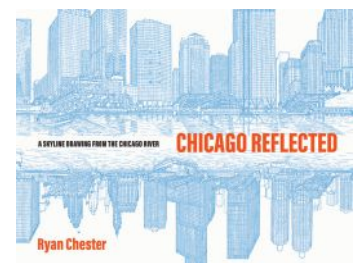
IMAGE BY AJ BROWN IMAGING

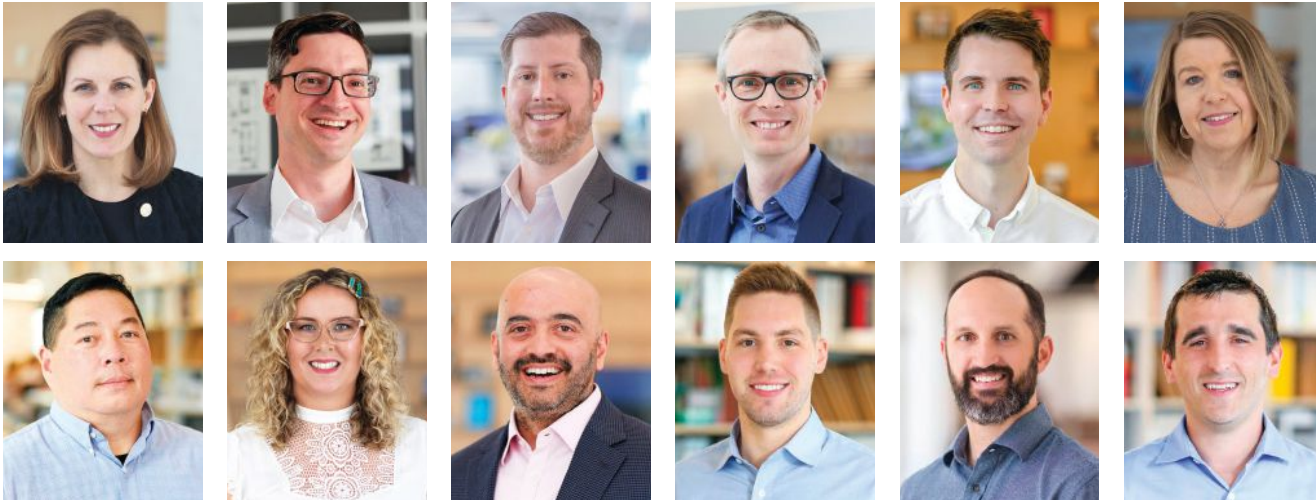
Construction has finished on the North Scott YMCA in Eldridge, Iowa. The 44,000-square-foot facility, designed by **Legat Architects**, serves as a home for the North Scott High School swim team and as a resource for community members.

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Ryan Chester, AIA, has recently completed a 55-foot drawing of the Chicago River on a single roll of paper. The drawing is being published by the University of Chicago Press and is expected to be available for purchase this fall.





Perkins&Will promoted several AIA Chicago members in their Chicago office. Promoted to principal: **Adana Johns, AIA**. Promoted to associate principal: **Max Adams, AIA; Matt Petermann, AIA; and Rick Young, AIA**. Promoted to senior associate: **Wyatt Beard, AIA; Susan Brain, AIA; Eric Evangelista, Intl. Assoc. AIA; Marnie Gedey, AIA; Aashit Shah, AIA; and Andrew Sommerville, AIA**. Promoted to associate: **Carl Giometti, AIA; and Justin Hegge, AIA**.

IMAGE BY STEVE HALL



Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB) received a 2023 AIA Education Facility Design Award of Merit for the University of Illinois at Chicago Academic and Residential Complex (UIC ARC).



Pappageorge Haymes Partners (PH) is pleased to announce the promotion of the following staff members in recognition of their hard work, dedication, and exceptional contributions to the firm: **Christopher D. Woodfin, AIA**, has been promoted to senior associate, and **Gregory L. Klosowski, AIA**, has been promoted to partner.

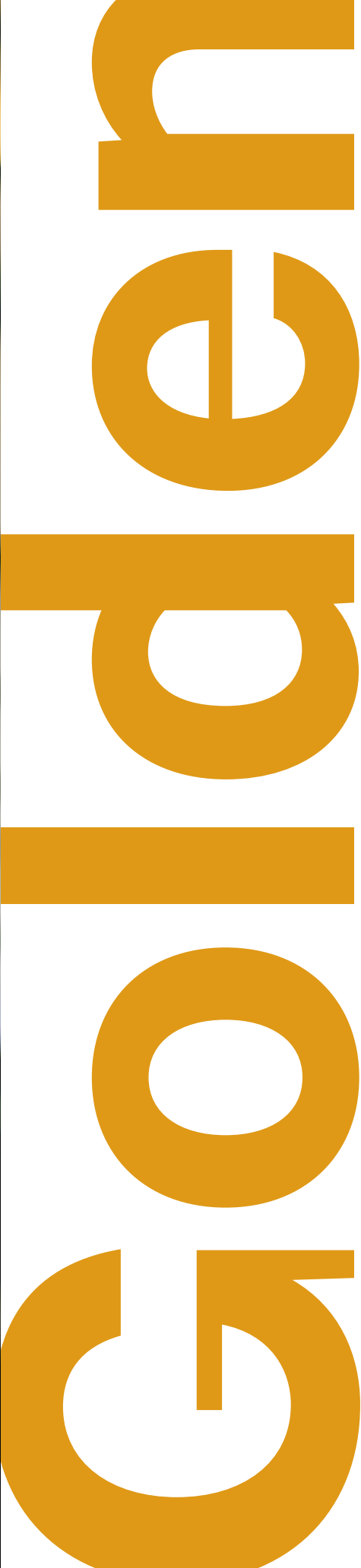


Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB) is pleased to announce the promotion of **Kristen O’Gorman, AIA**, to principal.



Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, 2023 AIA Gold Medal Recipient.

IMAGE BY JOHN R. BOEHM PHOTOGRAPHY



A Profile of Our Colleague, Carol Ross Barney, FAIA

by Patricia Saldaña Natke, FAIA, NCARB, ALA

It is only after many years have passed that an architect can look back and see with clarity who has shaped us and the profession. **Carol Ross Barney, FAIA**, has consciously raised the ideals of this profession, improved the physical vitality of the built environment, and motivated me and countless others toward an uphill trajectory of possibilities as young architects. I can think of no other architect more deserving of the 2023 AIA Gold Medal Award than her.

I proudly count myself as one of Carol's protégés. I worked in her office in the late 1980s during a transformational time in my career. During this time, I was able to view and experience Carol's profoundly deep dedication to the profession, her personal mentoring, and her impressive role as a creative design force.

My first visit to Carol's office, at the time Ross Barney Jankowski, was in 1985. It was at a pivotal point in my academic studies at the University of Illinois School of Architecture. I arrived with the school's Women in Architecture group for a tour of Carol's office, and I was struck by the positive energy and the palpable enthusiasm for the work. This feeling rippled throughout the office's staff, from the front desk receptionist to the principals.

There was an egalitarian spirit that was refreshingly different from what I had heard about the profession or seen in architectural books and periodicals.

When I finally struck up the nerve to call her office a few years out of school to inquire about a position, I nervously mentioned that I had been there with a University of Illinois Women in Architecture group. The front desk receptionist seemed delighted to hear I had visited their office as a student, and she quickly transferred my call directly to Carol. As I panicked, never thinking I would have ever reached Carol, she answered so kindly. It was an engaging, inspiring conversation. She asked what drove my interest in public work. She spoke about the importance of who we design for — and how design had to seamlessly incorporate the user's needs and desires while also being the best one can design. She was decades ahead of her time, professing and practicing equity, parity, and doing what is fundamentally right. She ended the call by scheduling an interview for me with one of the firm's principals, and I began working at the office three weeks later.

During my four years at her office, we designed library expansions, park district field house studies, interior office spaces, and public schools. Every aspect of the building was a design opportunity, from the custom furniture to the clocks. Countless physical models and mock-ups filled the office. I remember not only the numerous pinups and open dialogue and discourse with the staff about each design, but also the frequency of the meetings with clients, who were in the office often. Carol would

At right: Open space was a priority for the dense River North neighborhood that is home to the McDonald's Chicago Flagship restaurant. The LEED Platinum-certified building increased on site open space by 72 percent and biodiversity was bolstered with a 21 percent increase in landscaped area containing over 10,500 plants and over 35 species of plants, trees and vegetables.



IMAGE © BY KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY



IMAGE BY ROSS BARNEY ARCHITECTS



IMAGE BY TARA WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Above: Carol and members of Ross Barney Architects Studio in their River North space that was the office of Harry Weese Associates. **At right, middle:** As an active member of AIA Chicago since 1974, Carol received the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. AIA Chicago's women members of the College of Fellows gather at Carol Ross Barney's studio to celebrate the achievement. PICTURED: Carol Ross Barney, FAIA; Donna Robertson, FAIA; Anne Sullivan, FAIA; Dawn Schuette, FAIA; Martha Bell, FAIA; Roula Alakiotou, FAIA; Margaret McCurry, FAIA; Holly Gerberding, FAIA; Kristine Fallon, FAIA; Laura Fisher, FAIA; Renee Doktorczyk, FAIA; Linda Searl, FAIA; Julie Hacker, FAIA; Susan King, FAIA; and Cynthia Weese, FAIA.



IMAGE © BY KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY

The O'Hare International Airport Multi-Modal Terminal consolidates the airport's ground transportation options in one spot. Connected to the airline terminals by a 1.5-mile extension of the Airport Transit System (ATS), the LEED Silver-certified building is a welcoming, sun-filled gateway to Chicago for arriving visitors.

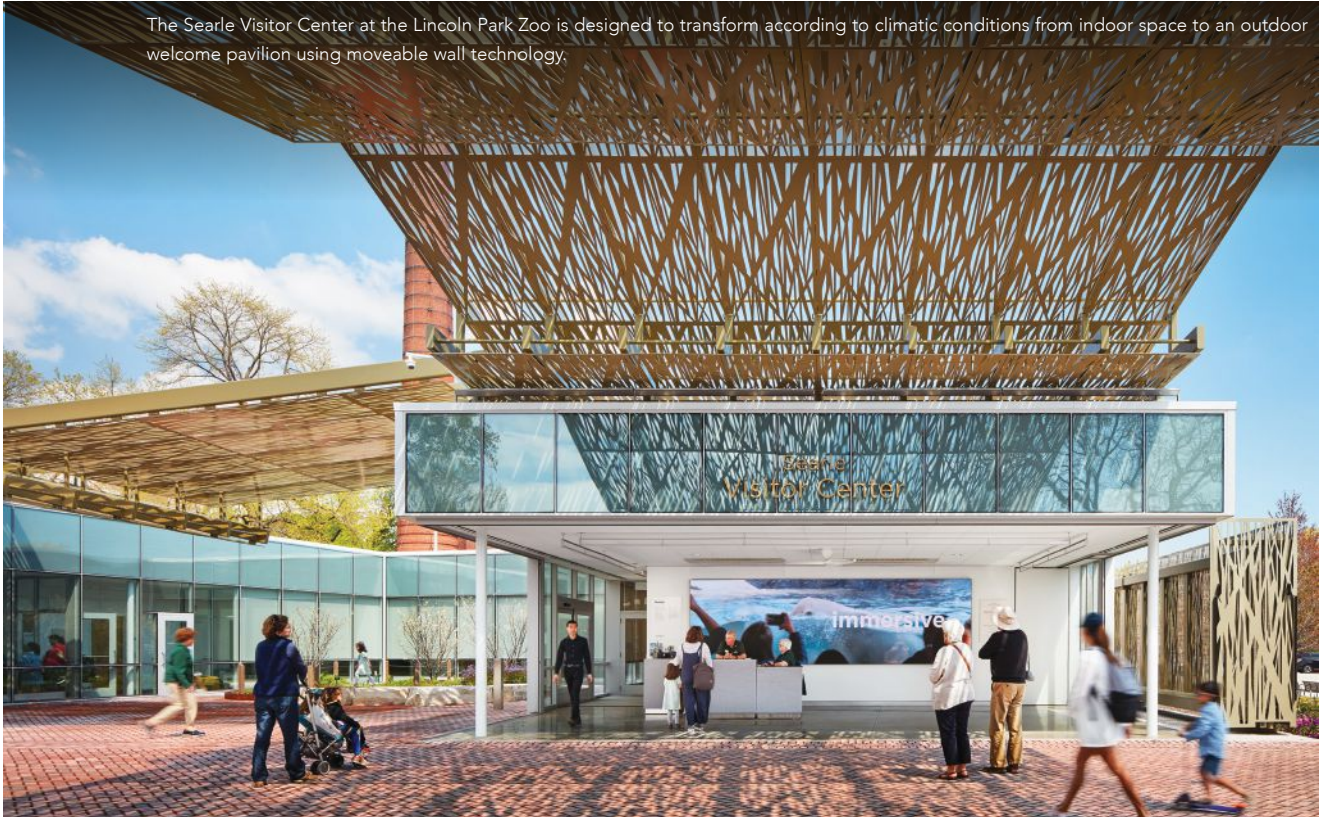


IMAGE © BY PHIL VELASQUEZ, CHICAGO TRIBUNE



IMAGE © BY STEVE HALL

At left: Carol Ross Barney was heralded as Chicago's new Daniel Burnham for her role in transforming the Chicago Riverwalk into an essential civic space for the city. **At right:** Little Village Academy received an AIA Honor Award for Architecture and Interior Architecture. It is a community icon situated on a dense urban site.



The Searle Visitor Center at the Lincoln Park Zoo is designed to transform according to climatic conditions from indoor space to an outdoor welcome pavilion using moveable wall technology.

IMAGE © BY KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY

IMAGE © BY KATE JOYCE STUDIOS



IMAGE BY ROSS BARNEY ARCHITECTS

Above: With sweeping views of the skyline, the new CTA Morgan Street Station creates both a literal and metaphorical gateway to the Chicago Loop, serving as a strong emblem of the modernity of Chicago's mass transit system. **At left:** Carol Ross Barney engages with members of the Regina Dominican High School (her alma mater) steering committee during the design of the school's transformation.

bring them to the staff desks to meet us and actively engage them as part of the visionary process.

Carol's work celebrates the connections between people and places. She is the driving creative force behind innovative humanitarian designs. She possesses a rare wisdom that she unselfishly shares with others. Her designs reflect the vitality and urbanity of this city and its diverse neighborhoods. I was especially moved by her work in the underserved areas of Chicago, including the neighborhoods of Little Village and my childhood home, the Back of the Yards. In these places that have been historically overlooked by architects, Carol's designs demonstrate her undaunted perseverance and keen ability to transform a pluralistic public into a strong voice for good design. Her lasting influence is cemented in public spaces we see and pass each day, including the iconic Chicago Riverwalk and the light-filled Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Morgan Street Station. Nationally, her work exemplifies our aspirations. Her Oklahoma City Federal Building represents freedom and openness.

Carol exudes a multiplicity of experiences through her work. But she has also reached hundreds of students through her years of teaching at the Illinois Institute of Technology and, most recently, as the 2022 César Pelli Distinguished Lecturer at the University of Illinois School of Architecture. She mentors students and continues to be a trailblazer for women architects and the profession at large. She is the exemplary role model, proving that an individual can positively shape our communities and prepare the next generation of architects to continue that legacy. She has shaped the careers of many students through her teaching, mentorship, and scholarly pursuits.

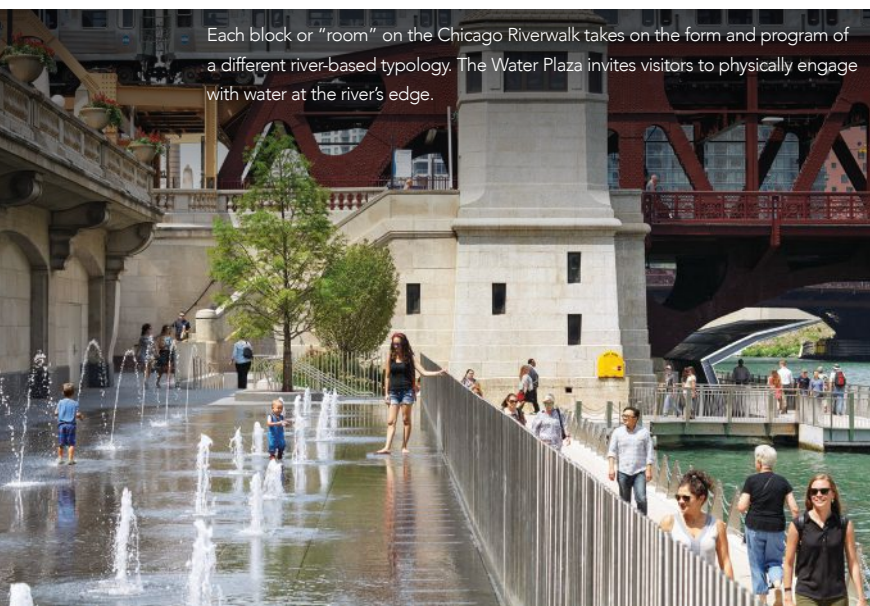
In the last decade or so of his life, I was fortunate to work with Stanley Tigerman and the Society of Architectural Historians on the continuation of their

IMAGE © BY KATE JOYCE STUDIOS



Carol Ross Barney working with neighborhood residents during the development of the framework plan for the Bloomingdale Trail, now 606. This 2.7-mile-long park and bicycle route reimaged an abandoned elevated railroad right-of-way into an active recreational trail.

IMAGE © BY KATE JOYCE STUDIOS



Each block or "room" on the Chicago Riverwalk takes on the form and program of a different river-based typology. The Water Plaza invites visitors to physically engage with water at the river's edge.

IMAGE © BY KATE JOYCE STUDIOS

IMAGE © BY STEVE HALL



IMAGE © BY KATE JOYCE STUDIOS



Above: The CTA Cermak-McCormick Place Station is a new gateway and an innovative design approach creatively working within the constraints of a narrow right of way. A tube covering the platform and tracks is built of durable and low-maintenance materials while train operations remained in place. **At Left:** The LEED Platinum and AIA COTE Top Ten winning JRC Synagogue is a study in holistic, integrated design. Gabion site walls are filled with demolition rubble; reclaimed cypress clads the exterior; native plantings provide xeriscaping for reduced water usage; glazing on the south is tinted to reduce solar gain; and site Maple trees were repurposed as cladding for the main ceremonial entry door.

IMAGE BY CAROL ROSS BARNEY



Above: Carol's sons Adam and Ross (left to right, standing) and infant John. **At left:** The new LEED Gold Fermilab Office Technical and Education Building is the anchor for the Illinois Accelerator Research Center (IARC). The lab and office building provides panoramic views of Fermilab's native prairie and maintains and celebrates an important pedestrian and bicycle path for the region.

project, Chicago Architects Project, formerly named the Chicago Architects Genealogy Project (CAGP). This initiative was started by Stanley in the 1980s, when I was still a young architect. Combing through the research reminded me just how few women have been considered integral to Chicago's architectural legacy. But thanks to Carol, there is an additional stable branch in the genealogical tree hopefully for me and many others.

Her previous accolades have included the 2015 AIA Illinois Gold Medal Award, the 2017 AIA Chicago Lifetime Achievement Award, and the 2021 Cooper Hewitt National Design Award. As one of the founders in 1974 of Chicago Women in Architecture — the longest-running organization for women in architecture in the nation — she has been blazing trails and imprinting long-lasting contributions not only through architecture, but also through advocacy.

The presentation of the 2023 AIA Gold Medal to Carol Ross Barney rightfully acknowledges that at the core of her work is a humble, humanitarian social responsibility that reflects the truest aspirations of our profession and society. As Chicago architects, we are all fortunate to have her inspiring, innovative, and impactful designs cemented as part of our architectural legacy. **CA**

Patricia Saldaña Natke, FAIA, NCARB, ALA, is the founding partner of UrbanWorks, an internationally recognized Chicago architectural firm, and longtime colleague of Carol Ross Barney, FAIA. She supported Barney's application for the AIA Gold Medal Award and moderated a panel discussion celebrating Barney's achievement at the AIA Conference on Architecture 2023.

Noble Work

In Conversation with Carol Ross Barney, FAIA



IMAGES BY JOHN R. BOEHM PHOTOGRAPHY

In April, **Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA**, executive director, sat down for a conversation with **Carol Ross Barney, FAIA**, winner of the 2023 AIA Gold Medal. Barney is the first living female architect to win the medal as an individual, and only the sixth Chicago architect to receive this honor, marking the first time in 60 years that a Chicago architect has won. It is the highest annual achievement awarded by AIA.

This interview was edited for length and clarity. An expanded version is available at www.aiachicago.org/noblework.



Jen Masengarb (JM): Can you explain what this award means for you and for the city?

Carol Ross Barney (CRB): I am so glad to shine the light back on Chicago. There has been a coast-centric bias, especially for recognition, for a few years.

Chicago does important architecture — really essential architectural thinking is done here that's changing the world. And so I'm really glad that people have to look at us through the lens of the Gold Medal again. When you look at the work being done by Chicago architects, it's amazing.

And the other thing I'm really happy about is that by awarding our work, the AIA focuses on the importance of public architecture. My studio does the projects that hold cities together and make them more livable. We design infrastructure, and some people don't even think infrastructure is architecture, or see the potential. Our work is at the very edges. And I think public space and utilities are projects that architects have to own.

JM: In your application you talked a lot about that. And RaMona [Westbrook] talked about that in your application video, too. The dignity of design — good design for those everyday moments of life, like transit, as well as good design for small children and everybody in between, right?

CRB: I think traditionally practice hasn't been very democratic or very equitable. Who has an architect? Museums. Private houses. Attention on public parks and public spaces is important, and I like to see them honored. It's easy to say, "A park? A train station? This doesn't need an architect. Architects don't do this type of work. They only worry about making things pretty." This completely misses the value of well-designed spaces. I think that, by awarding our portfolio, it says, "Take another look."

Design is not a noun, right? It's a verb. We *do* design. It's not a thing.

JM: Where does that desire or that drive come from in you, in your education and your influences?

CRB: I think my drive comes from both internal and external influences. I am a boomer. I became an adult in the 1970s, a time of idealism and activism. I believe I am responsible for making things better and that change was not only good but inevitable. Internally influenced, I enjoy fixing things and putting them together whether it is appliances or relationships. In fact, my mother used to joke that if anything was broken in the house, she'd give it to me and I would fix it.

I've always had this fascination with how things go together — and I don't know where it came from.

JM: You talked about the joy of assembling the story from the users. Where does that love of the story come from? Or that storytelling? Or the process of reflecting back to what you hear from future users. What is it about that that you enjoy?

CRB: I'm not sure how that happens. I mean, again, I didn't learn that in architecture school. It's something that I had before that. Architecture is tough. Architects need to be both empathetic and convincing. I find inspiration in people's stories. I talk to them by telling stories about designs.

I am the oldest of eight children. So, basically, for me, my life was always about being a leader. It was always about convincing seven other people that they had to go along with me. But I found that the rationale of telling this story and making the case was something that I had to do often in my life.

JM: When you look back at your body of work, can you point to buildings that were turning points in the firm? Or turning points in your own education, in terms of new ways of thinking?

CRB: Oh, yes. I think one of the first ones is not even in my own practice, but it was when I was working for Holabird & Root. I worked on the renovation of [Chicago's] Central Library into the Cultural Center, and we were so behind on documentation. It was one of those scheduling disasters that hit firms. So we were basically sent to live at the library. It was exhausting.

I complained to John Holabird. And I said, "John? This is so dumb. We're doing emergency duty." And he told me that I should be happy because I was working on noble architecture. It's the architecture of purpose. And for the rest of the time I worked for him, we used to joke about that. He said, "Carol, I give you all the noble jobs." He did and I came to love them.

It was a "eureka" moment. I understood that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to do work that really enhances people's lives.

And there are a couple of other moments. One other: I was working on a big corporate office center [the Gould Center in Rolling Meadows]. I was making a presentation that I worked really hard on. I presented it to the director of real estate, and he hated it. But at the same time, I suddenly realized I could incorporate all the things he wanted and still make a beautiful design. It wasn't either-or.

➔ To read the full interview, head to www.aiachicago.org/noblework.

So, ever since then, I never fall in love with a single design. That was a mistake — to go out with only one design was really a mistake. I realized that, for any problem, there are thousands of good designs. And I just needed to find two or three that I loved and present them, and then I would be able to find what they loved, too, and put it together. So that was a huge moment.

JM: How did your experiences in the Peace Corps shape how you see architecture, design, the world, people today?

CRB: Well, I joined the Peace Corps right out of architecture school. I'm an alumna of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and the year I graduated was one of those keep-on-recurring bad economic times. I was walking through the Illini Union and passed a Peace Corps recruiter and picked up an application. I had never considered the Peace Corps before that.

On the application, where it asked where you wanted to go, I wrote anywhere but Latin America. Of course, two weeks later, I got a phone call informing me that if I cared to accept, I was invited to serve in Costa Rica. And I remember thinking, "I think that sounds like Latin America!" I didn't know where it was.

“I realized that, for any problem, there are thousands of good designs. And I just needed to find two or three that I loved and present them, and then I would be able to find what they loved, too, and put it together.”

– CAROL ROSS BARNEY, FAIA

I was assigned to a group that provided assistance to the national parks service for Costa Rica. It has had a huge impact on my career. I was the only architect in the group tasked with creating a series of national parks to protect the native environments of Costa Rica. And so I spent my time in the Peace Corps basically learning about how to repair and support ecologies from cloud forests to coral reefs.

I learned the need to design for environmental balance. Working on those early parks was really a prelude to everything I believe about architecture and sustainability. What we need to do is balance our influence on the planet so that you don't do damage.

JM: Let's segue from there into this conversation around sustainability. If you think about the conversations in architecture that the profession was having when you





Carol Ross Barney, FAIA,
in conversation with
Jen Masengarb, Assoc.
AIA, executive director
of AIA Chicago.

started practicing architecture, coming back after the Peace Corps — the ideas about balancing our impact on the planet, balancing the built environment with the natural environment — how has that conversation changed in your career, especially when you think about conversations with clients?

CRB: I don't think that the clients, necessarily, are as informed as we are. I believe I am required to tell my clients, "It's not ethical for me to do anything less than the most sustainable project."

I think that's one of the hard decisions that architects have to make. For the first phases of the design, we are therapists, and the client is always right. And then after that, we need to give our best professional opinion taking in the needs of society. Sometimes this comes across to the client as, "Well, why aren't you listening to me anymore? When did our relationship change?" That can be a tricky time in a design relationship.

JM: Will that change come in terms of seeing the short view versus the long view [of sustainability]?

CRB: It's changing. When you're the CEO of a corporation, you're looking at your bottom line. That's why you've been hired. That's your purpose in life. But it'll change. I personally tell clients that there's nothing that they can't afford because if they don't do this, there won't be anything left to do.

JM: How would you characterize your firm today? What are you most proud of? What do you see here? Tell me about your colleagues. Tell me about the work today.

CRB: I'm most proud of the work that we've done, but I'm most hopeful about the work we're going to do. We don't have a traditional building type specialty. Most often we are hired to ask questions and find new potential. That's exciting.

I'm also really proud of our diversity. We're not very conventional. We are a third or half ethnic minorities, and half of our professional registered staff are women. But I don't give us a free pass. You have to keep doing good stuff.

JM: Anything else I've missed?

CRB: The Gold gives me the opportunity to talk about empowering women architects. Essentially, women architects lack opportunity. It's a vicious circle, because opportunity comes from portfolio and portfolio comes from opportunity. Commissioning women architects is still considered risky and novel. Until that changes, women will not have equal opportunity. I hope that my winning the Gold will make some change. Women lead successful practices in their own right. **CA**

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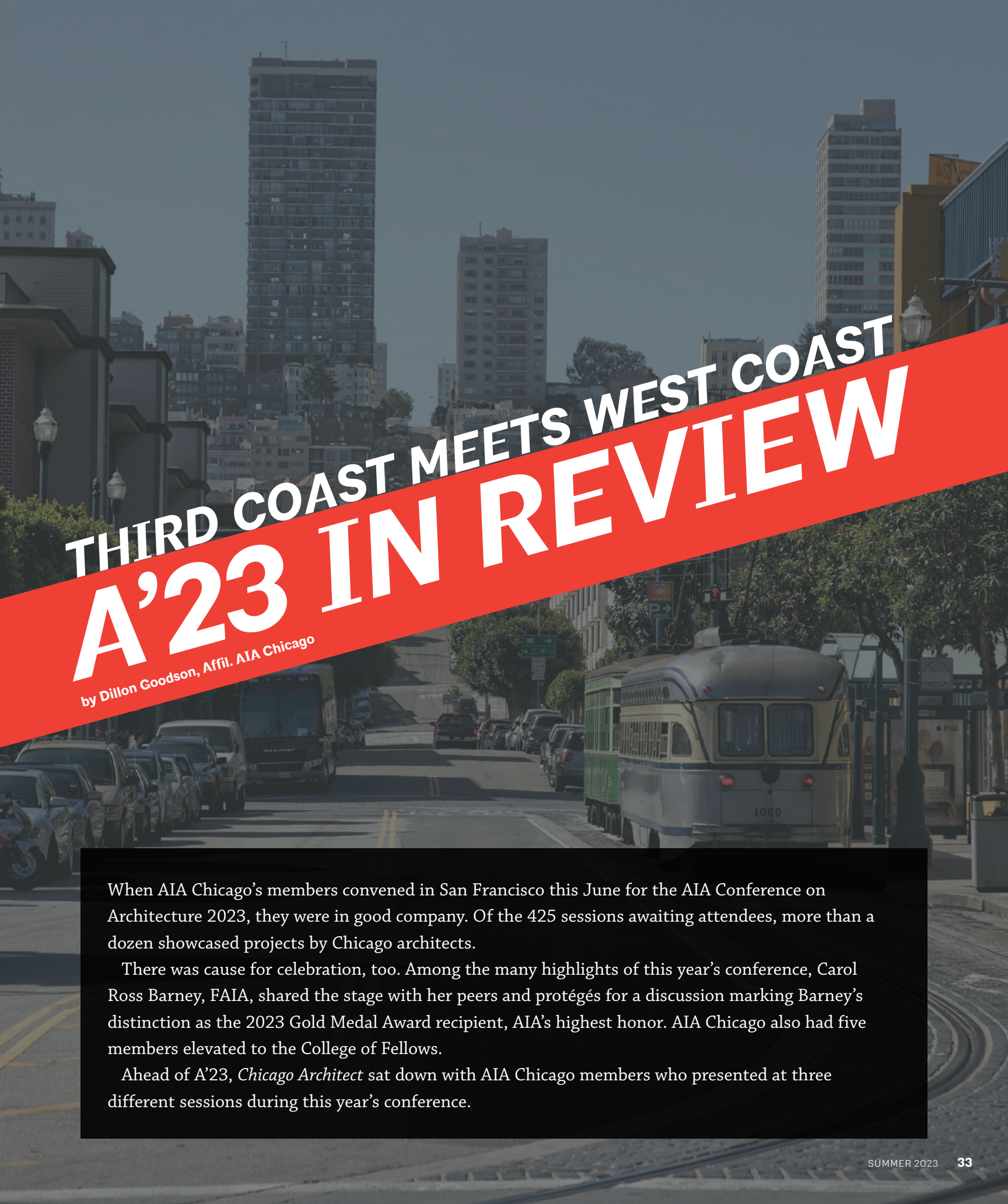
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THIRD COAST MEETS WEST COAST A'23 IN REVIEW

by Dillon Goodson, Affil. AIA Chicago

When AIA Chicago's members convened in San Francisco this June for the AIA Conference on Architecture 2023, they were in good company. Of the 425 sessions awaiting attendees, more than a dozen showcased projects by Chicago architects.

There was cause for celebration, too. Among the many highlights of this year's conference, Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, shared the stage with her peers and protégés for a discussion marking Barney's distinction as the 2023 Gold Medal Award recipient, AIA's highest honor. AIA Chicago also had five members elevated to the College of Fellows.

Ahead of A'23, *Chicago Architect* sat down with AIA Chicago members who presented at three different sessions during this year's conference.

Re-Inventing Collaboration to Achieve Complex Mega-Projects: Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB) and STLarchitects

“You can get a huge synergy off of creating a dynamic team that doesn’t necessarily have to fall all within one firm or umbrella.”

– ROBERT JILLSON, AIA
STLarchitects

Historically, competition among architects hasn’t always been friendly. But a paradigm shift is underway, led by a new generation of designers who are trading ego for outside expertise.

For the Chicago practices of Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB) and STLarchitects, this shift was also driven by the sheer size of the work. The two firms are currently collaborating on several projects, including the new O’Hare Global Terminal (OGT) that will replace Terminal 2 at O’Hare International Airport. A collaborative joint venture between Studio Gang, SCB, Corgan, Milhouse Engineering & Construction Inc., and STLarchitects, Studio ORD was formed specifically to realize the City of Chicago’s ambitions for this project. Studio Gang Founding Partner Jeanne Gang is the lead designer for the design.

Collaborating on large-scale work has clear benefits for architects as well as clients, enabling designers to divvy up responsibilities and maximize the amount of attention devoted to each project task. In the case of the O’Hare project, SCB is managing the project team and technical execution of the O’Hare Global Terminal and will eventually oversee



Sara Beardsley, FAIA, SCB



Robert Jillson, AIA, STLarchitects

its construction. Meanwhile, STLarchitects is developing elements of the design that pertain to user experience, universal design, and wayfinding.

There are other ways to structure a partnership that don’t require collaborating firms to create a new entity and collocate, as with O’Hare. Architects **Sara Beardsley, FAIA**, associate principal at SCB, and **Robert Jillson, AIA**, design technical director at STLarchitects, explained that meaningful partnerships can also unfold remotely, with architects leveraging technology to meet — and even design — together. It’s changing the way architects are brought up within the profession, paving the way for younger architects to interact with talent from other firms early on in their careers.

“I think collaboration has a lot of benefits for upcoming architects,” said Beardsley. “In Studio



ORD, we do have a formal mentorship program so that people could actually mentor each other across firms, which is really an interesting experience for them.”

Setting clear expectations for communication is critical to the success of a partnership, as is maintaining respect for each firm’s own unique work culture. However, both architects agreed that the benefits of collaboration far outweigh the risk of conflict that comes with any team project.

“You can get a huge synergy off of creating a dynamic team that doesn’t necessarily have to fall all within one firm or umbrella,” said Jillson.



Re-Imagining the Future: The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts: *Studio Gang*

When residents of Little Rock, Arkansas, voted overwhelmingly in favor of a hotel-tax bond to fund the renovation of the city's art museum, leaders of the project committed themselves to smarter growth. In the 80 years since the museum was first built, a series of successive expansions effectively wrapped the original 1937 building — the product of a Works Progress Administration effort — in seven fortress-like structures that lacked a holistic identity. This time, they wanted to do things differently.



Juliane Wolf, AIA, Studio Gang

The challenge of unifying the individual elements of the museum, along with its three unique programs — galleries, an art school, and a theater — attracted Studio Gang to the project.

“The building was really holding back the Arkansas Museum of Fine

Arts from fulfilling its potential as a community connector,” explained **Juliane Wolf, AIA**, design principal and partner at Studio Gang. Not only did this affect how people circulated through the complex, but it also cut off the museum from its setting in MacArthur Park and turned its back on visitors.

The interior of the Cultural Living Room at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, designed by Studio Gang.

IMAGE BY IWAN BAAN



IMAGE BY IWAN BAAN



IMAGE BY IWAN BAAN



IMAGE BY IWAN BAAN

To better understand these issues and their impact on the visitor experience, the architects began design with a research and programming phase. This process of forensic analysis, which lasted about six months, revealed the intricacies of structure and systems found throughout the museum's existing network of buildings. It also deepened the design team's understanding of the museum's program and began to suggest ways it could be reorganized to improve

circulation and daily functionality. These findings led to a design for a new central axis that runs through the existing buildings like a stem, lying on its side, which blossoms to the north and south. The roof of this new space, which is constructed out of thin folded-plate concrete, projects outward at both ends into cantilevers that shade the museum's interior spaces and create protected outdoor terraces that welcome visitors from the park.

In addition to unifying the building's many different uses, architects created new space for community members to gather in what the museum is calling a "cultural living room." Users of the space, like the rest of the museum's visitors, won't be charged admission and will have access to food and beverages, further solidifying the museum's role as a hub for culture and people.

Plenty of museums and cultural institutions experience growing pains, leaving them trapped in



Above: The exterior of the Cultural Living Room at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. **Left:** *Drawn to Paper* (top) and *Together* (bottom), exhibitions at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts.

facilities that were designed for a bygone era. Wolf hopes that lessons learned from Studio Gang's re-imagining of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts will encourage others to search for inspiration within their own communities.

"Museums are often perceived as exclusive places, where not everyone feels welcome," said Wolf, "but it is so important that they reflect and invite in the entire community — that art can provide common grounds to bring people together."

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– JULIANE WOLF, AIA, STUDIO GANG



An aerial view of the CTA 95th/Dan Ryan Intermodal Terminal Station, designed by EXP.

Transforming Existing Transit Infrastructure for the Next Generation: EXP

When it comes to the design of Chicago transit infrastructure, EXP has positioned itself as an industry leader.

In 2019, the firm celebrated the opening of the Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA) largest infrastructure improvement project to date, the 95th/Dan Ryan Red Line station modernization and expansion. Now, they have turned their attention to the North Side as part of the team behind the agency's Red and Purple Modernization — or RPM — project, which will reconstruct nearly 10 miles of track structure that was built close to a century ago, during the same era as the Wrigley Building.

EXP's scope for phase one of the RPM project is focused on the design of four new stations that will be constructed along the Red Line once the track work is completed. The CTA estimates that the 45,000 people who live within a half mile of the stations — which are positioned at Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn, and Bryn Mawr — will benefit

from the station improvements. In addition to boosting ridership, the project has broader economic development goals, the agency noted, with the potential to encourage redevelopment within Uptown and Edgewater.

Although the four stations were envisioned together, each station's design responds to the context of the community in which it will be located. For example, the Argyle station mixes both traditional and contemporary Asian architecture with contemporary American architecture, while the Lawrence station incorporates the influence of music and entertainment from the surrounding area. EXP's design of a temporary station at Bryn Mawr, which will serve customers until the completion of a permanent station as part of the \$2.1 billion RPM phase one project in 2025, was awarded AIA Chicago's Lerch Bates People's Choice Award last fall.

Thomas Hoepf, FAIA, senior vice president and global design director at EXP, spoke about the firm's transit work not just in terms of moving people around, but as creating a type of "cultural



Thomas Hoepf, FAIA
EXP

infrastructure" that binds whole communities together. In recognition of the impact of their designs on Chicagoans, architects at EXP see each project as a two-way street and rely heavily on community input to inform the final design.

In their approach to the 95th/Dan Ryan station, these conversations led to the allocation of space for community gatherings within the station, including a DJ booth envisioned by artist Theaster Gates that is housed within the North Terminal. It also reminded architects about the broader importance of preservation and adaptive reuse, an element that defines EXP's work.

"It's not just a sustainable strategy," said Hoepf. "These buildings are part of those communities. Somebody's dad laid those bricks, or somebody taught a kid how to read in that building. These buildings shouldn't just be looked at only through the lens of their physical value, but also their cultural value." **CA**



IMAGE BY STEINKAMP PHOTOGRAPHY



IMAGE BY STEINKAMP PHOTOGRAPHY

“These buildings shouldn’t just be looked at only through the lens of their physical value, but also their cultural value.”

– THOMAS HOEPF, FAIA, EXP



A rendering shows the future site of the Sankofa Wellness Center in West Garfield Park.

No Wrong Door: Centering Community and Wellness in West Garfield Park

by Alaina Griffin

The Sankofa Wellness Center, the cornerstone building of a larger corridor development in West Garfield Park, was recently named the recipient of the 2022 Pritzker Traubert Foundation Chicago Prize. Designed as a collaborative effort

between The Community Builders, Moody Nolan, Third Entity (a collaboration between Bureau Gemmill and New Office), and the residents of West Garfield Park, this 60,000-square-foot building is an all-encompassing health and

community space that will host a variety of programs facilitated by organizations that have long been staples in the neighborhood.

The project is not only an endeavor to address the immediate needs of the 17,000 residents who call

West Garfield Park home, but it is also slated to be a community regenerator for the historically neglected and underserved neighborhood.

Kemena Brooks, director of development at The Community Builders and an integral part of the design

team, stated, “There has to be planning done within the community. We don’t want the clinic to be a stand-alone; we want it to be a catalytic investment in the neighborhood.”

The award-winning design was realized by the deep commitment of several participating groups — from architects to grassroots organizations — who were struck by the life span disparity between disinvested neighborhoods like West Garfield Park and the wealthier neighborhoods of Chicago. This collaborative effort that put the residents first is what **Roderic Walton, AIA**, principal architect at Moody Nolan and lead healthcare designer, believes made their proposal so convincing.

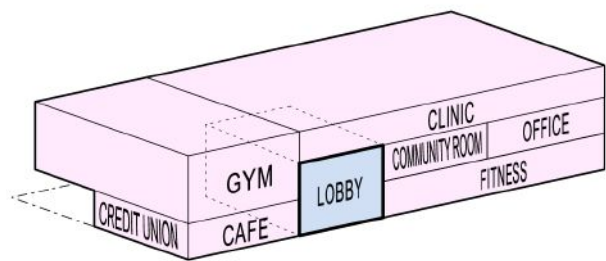
“The main thing is making sure that neighborhood stakeholders can walk into this building and immediately feel that it was designed for them,” said Walton.

A mission-forward inclination, where architecture is a catalyst for community invigoration, is the perfect fit for the Pritzker Traubert Chicago Prize, which awards \$10 million to projects that are bold proposals for positive change in the south and west sides of Chicago. These communities have faced decades of intentional and consequential disinvestment, and lifelong residents are hopeful for the long-term implications that a flood of energy and capital can have on their neighborhoods.

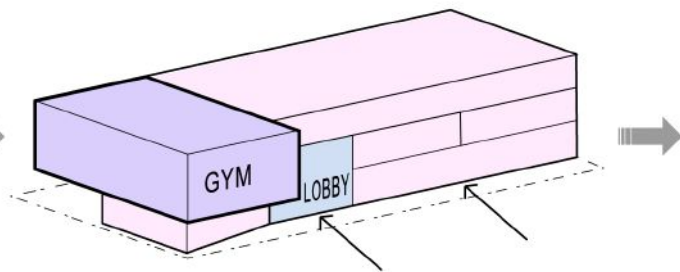
The mission of the project was to join forces with organizations already active in West Garfield Park and provide them with state-of-the-art facilities to serve as the backdrop for their work. The campus is a hopeful



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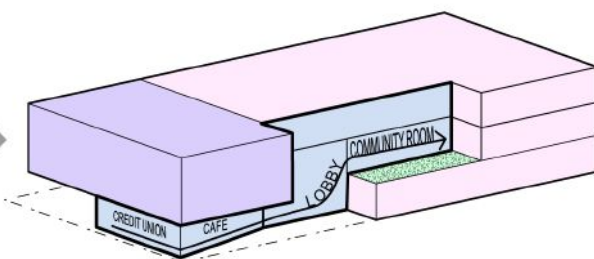
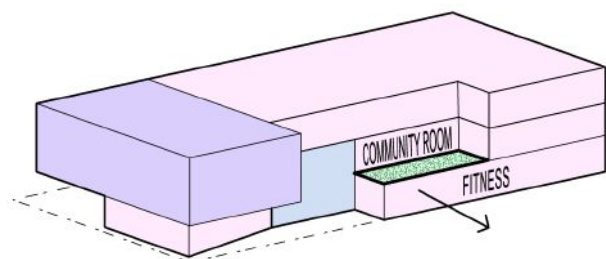


IMAGE BY MOODY NOLAN, ARCHITECT OF RECORD, AND THIRD ENTITY, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT

marriage between architecture and community wellness, and as such, the design process was guided by resident input and feedback as much as it was by formal architectural principles. These practices, conducted by Moody Nolan, The Community Builders, and Third Entity, were implemented early in the design process and included a series of “visual listening” exercises. Residents, when presented with case studies, precedents, and motifs that fell into the healthcare category, leaned toward buildings that were less clinical and institutional and more toward examples that embraced warmer, more welcoming designs with organic shapes and familiar materials.

This approach fit the bill for **Lynsey Sorrell, AIA**, founder of Bureau Gemmell and one-half of the Third Entity collaboration. She has been working in West Garfield Park for a decade and conceives of the project as a village with “no wrong door,” meaning anyone who walks in can find a place of help, reprieve, and encouragement. Sorrell explained that this concept goes

“We recessed the front entrance and made it a gesture of procession into the building by peeling the façade back and creating that common front porch to the building.”

— LYNSEY SORRELL, AIA, BUREAU GEMMELL

beyond just the ethos of the design and is clearly visible in the front entrance to the building, derived from the plethora of front porches in West Garfield Park that are used for social cohesion and enjoyment.

“We recessed the front entrance and made it a gesture of procession into the building by peeling the façade back and creating that common front porch to the building,” said Sorrell.

The programmatic elements that make the “no wrong door” strategy possible are an aggregate of organizations that address all types of health, from financial to mental and physical to social. The wellness center will include, among other programming, a credit union

slated to give microloans to locals deprived of bank resources, a mental health services facility complete with offices from Rush’s Center for Community Well-Being, a full YMCA gym with a basketball court and drop-in child care services, an Erie Family Health Center, and a café to activate the streetscape and provide the neighborhood with casual meeting spaces.

Arranging all the different activities within the envelope of the building took careful planning. At the prominent intersection of Madison Avenue and Kildare Avenue, the more public spaces are pushed to the edges, ensuring that residents have immediate visual and physical access to the

gym, café, and community meeting rooms, while the more private programs, like the clinics and offices, are on the upper floors. Wayfinding and organization are key to a building of this size and variety, so the central hub houses greeters and signage and is positioned to always be in the line of sight from any entrance to the building, reinforcing the idea that anyone who walks in can find their place.

This kind of positioning has dual impacts: Not only does the development serve the immediate needs of the neighborhood, but it also creates an attractive environment for future projects that can create a sustainable increase in the quality of life for the residents.

Pastor Dr. Marshall E. Hatch, who has led the New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in West Garfield Park for 30 years, commented on the hope that the project brings for the neighborhood. “There’s an incredible synergy with the partnerships,” said Hatch. “But it all revolves around the residents themselves being empowered and adding to the power they have already amassed.” **CA**

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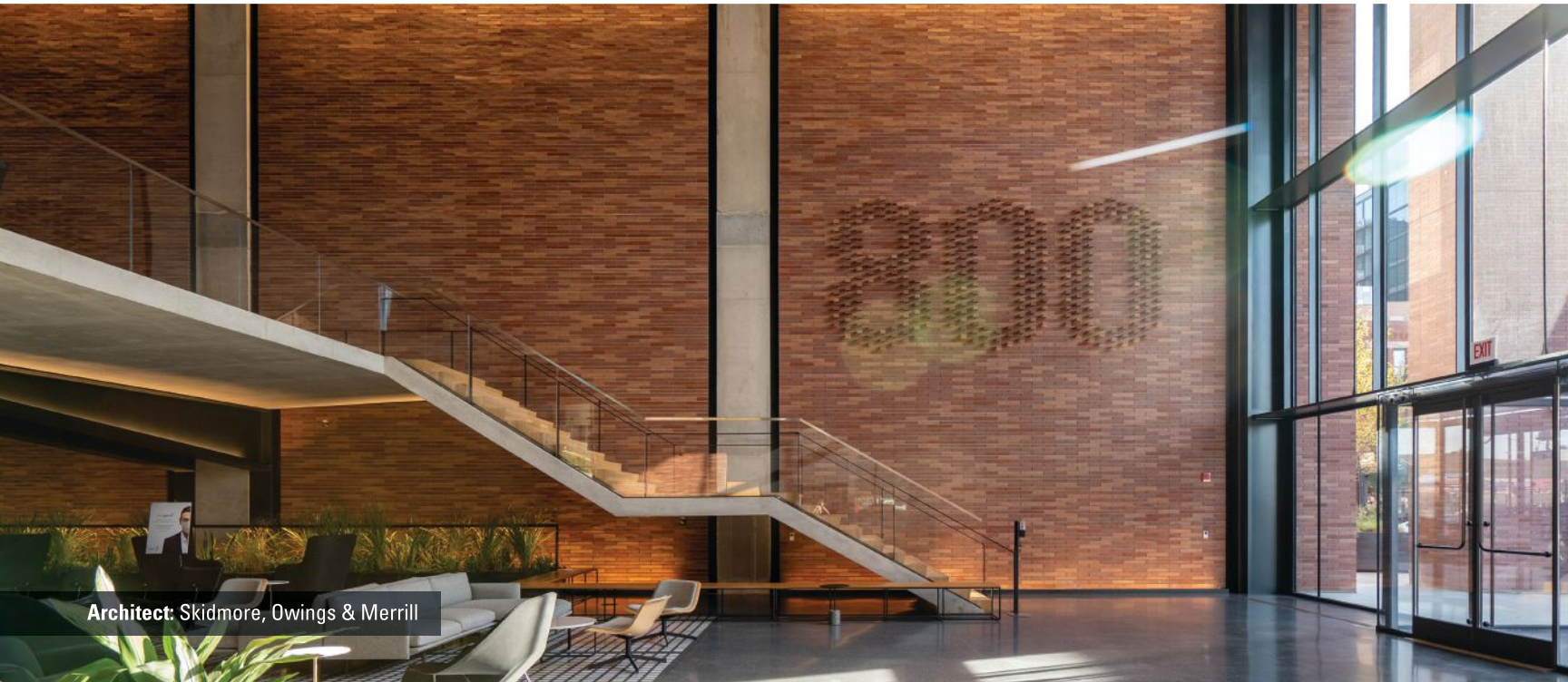


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