

Chicago Architect

+ Meet Chicago's 2024 AIA Young Architect Award Winners // 46

Recognizing Design Excellence in 2024: Part 2

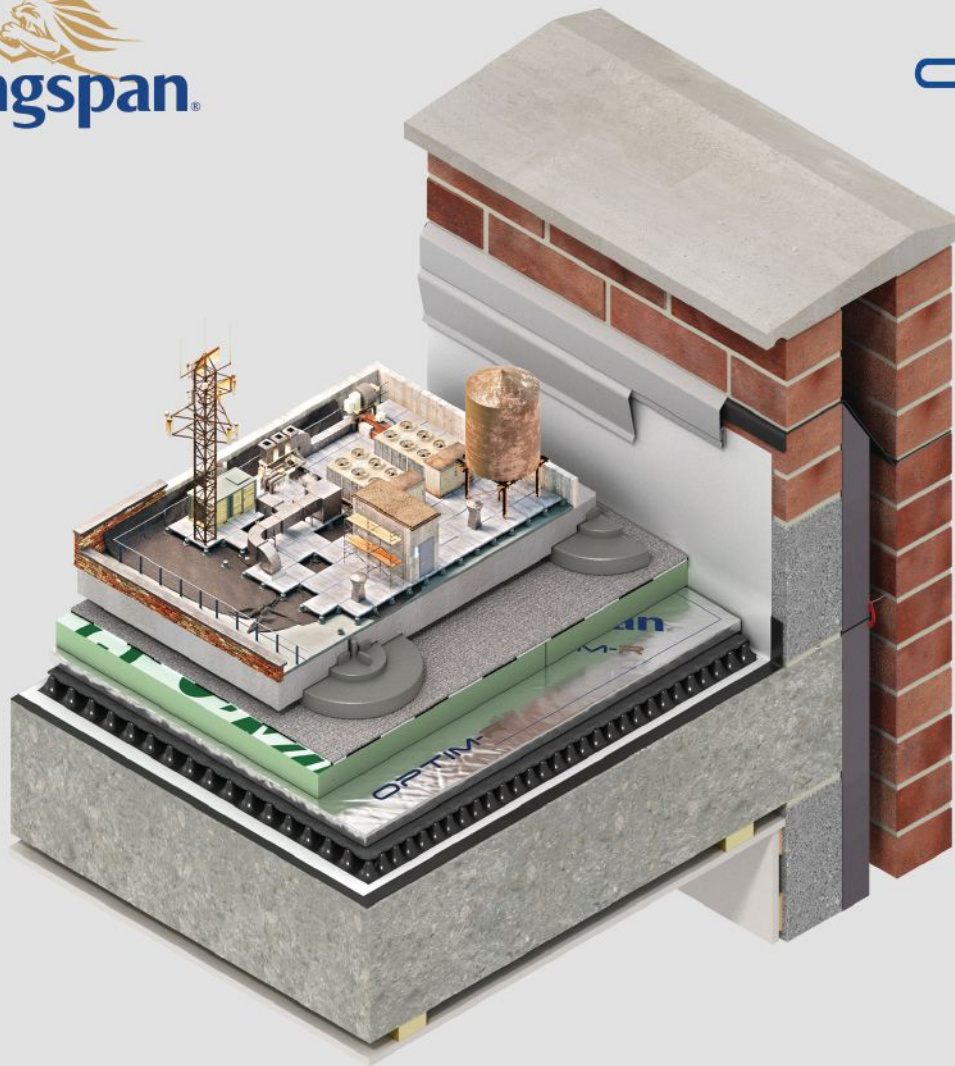
Decarbonization Award // 25

Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Award // 29

Lerch Bates People's Choice Awards // 35



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editor@aiachicago.org

Managing Editor

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

Editor

David Chase, 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, an 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 AIA Chicago Members and Friends,

When I first joined the AIA Chicago Board of Directors, I had little thought I would become the organization's president. However, working with such an engaged group of board members over the years — coupled with approachable past presidents making time for questions, advice, and anecdotes — has made assuming this role less daunting and more meaningful.

In addition to the necessary governance requirements of our chapter, my favorite part of this role has been serving as “chief diplomat” for AIA Chicago and all my fellow members. This has resulted in the advocacy for — and celebration of — so many of you in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, sitting with members of Congress in Washington, D.C.; showcasing Lerch Bates People's Choice Award winners on the local morning news; cheering on and photographing our newest Fellows and National Young Architect Award winners; helping Chicago Women in Architecture celebrate 50 years; introducing a new Lifetime Achievement Award winner; welcoming the reciprocity agreement with the Royal Institute of British Architects and the UK Architects Registration Board; witnessing the end of the Architect Registration Examination rolling clock in Illinois; helping train delegates for AIA's Annual Meeting at the national conference; connecting with the leadership of other components to learn, improve, and align our common missions; and, engaging in regular correspondence to represent AIA Chicago members, firms, and unified chapter goals.

Serving as president over the past year has been a gift. But the true delight has been reconnecting or making new connections with colleagues through various learning and networking events. We are a large and diverse chapter. We create and influence our industry on a scale that ranges from small to epic, locally to across the planet. Hearing your stories, challenges, visions, and ideas this year has expanded my perceptions of the profession past my own experiences. I have tried to reflect this into my actions as president, during our board discussions, and through my leadership of our strategic planning process, soon to be unveiled. AIA Chicago service can never be a one-size-fits-all endeavor; after all, we are all sizes, and in this city, we never make small plans.

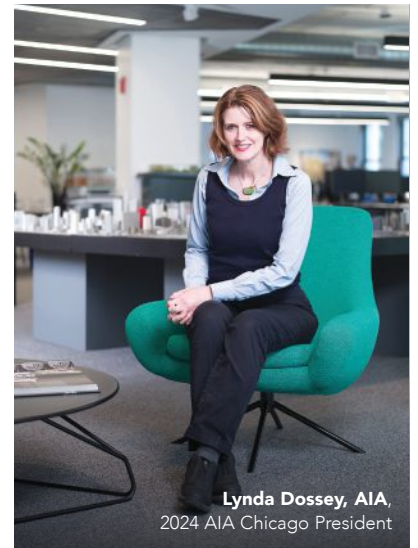
Passing the baton is an important milestone in professional leadership and growth. I do so with the knowledge that I extend meaningful moments and experiences to my predecessor and that my service as a past president will allow me to contribute in other ways.

I would be remiss in not recognizing our exceptional staff; our committed AIA Chicago and AIA Chicago Foundation boards; the Knowledge Community leaders at the local and national levels; our two local chairs, Brea Page and Janeen Harrel, for this year's AIA Women's Leadership Summit here in Chicago; and the AIA Chicago members who have volunteered in numerous ways across the year to help achieve so much.

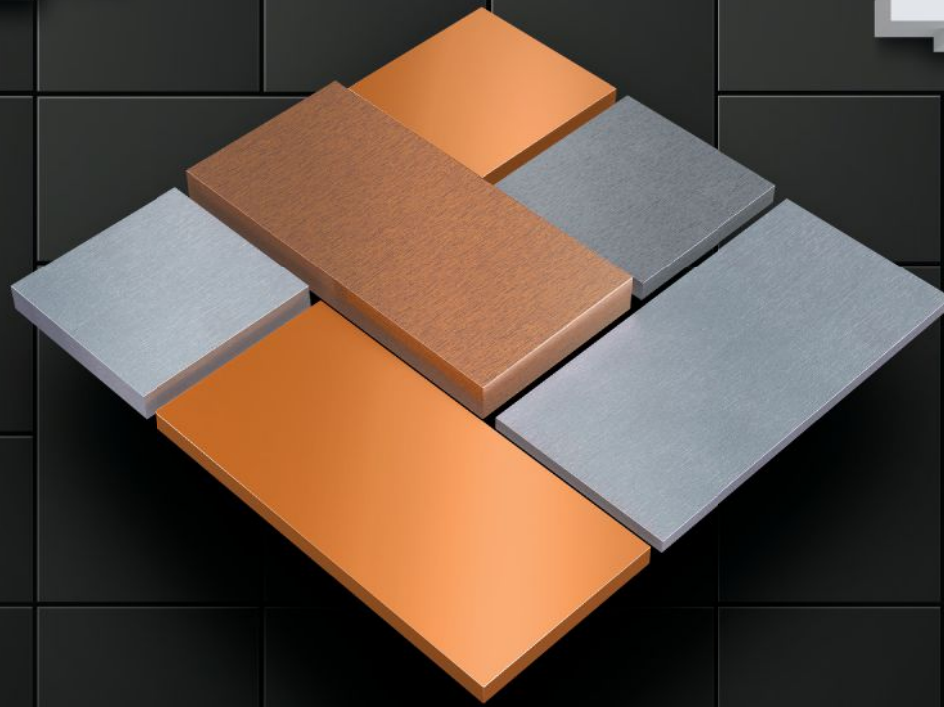
I hope you will continue to engage with AIA Chicago and stay involved in our vibrant community. Whether it's joining one of our Knowledge Communities or Affinity Groups, sharing your passion, or becoming a mentor to help guide the next generation of architects, your contributions make all the difference. To learn more, visit AIACHicago.org/Volunteer.

Thank you for entrusting me with the opportunity to serve. It has been an honor to be part of this incredible community, and I look forward to seeing the amazing things we will continue to achieve together.

Lynda Dossey, AIA
2024 AIA Chicago President
president@aiachicago.org



Lynda Dossey, AIA,
2024 AIA Chicago President



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ELEVATED DESIGN

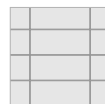


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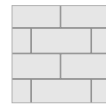


Dynamic Metal Wall System

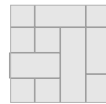
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Decarbonization Award, Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Award, and Lerch Bates People’s Choice Awards // 25

Bungalow Decarbonization by TBDA, Ltd. is the winner of the 2024 Decarbonization Award, serving as a replicable model for transforming older homes into efficient, environmentally friendly residences. ERIC HAUSMAN

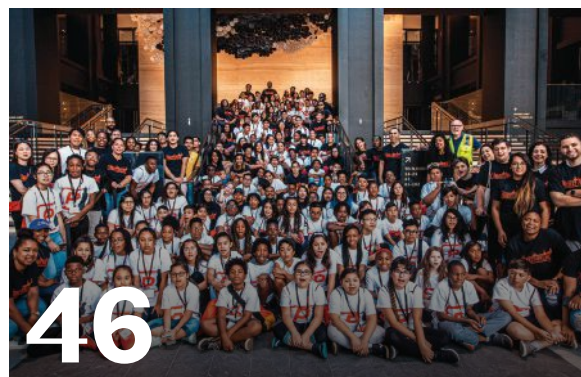
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Ron Mescall, Affil.
AIA Chicago



Forging Their Own Paths: In Conversation with Chicago’s 2024 AIA Young Architect Award Winners



▲ ON THE COVER

It’s a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood Toolshed is a sukkah for displaying, retrieving, and animating a collection of loanable equipment from the Chicago Tool Library. It was presented as part of the Chicago Sukkah Design Festival, winner of the 2024 Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Honor Award. BRIAN GRIFFIN

► OUR PREVIOUS ISSUE

is available to view digitally at AIAChicago.org/ChicagoArchitect

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ANGELA GARBOT PHOTOGRAPHY

Dillon Goodson, Affil. AIA Chicago, is the managing editor of Chicago Architect and advises AIA Chicago's signature award programs. He has spent more than 15 years working to advance places that are more just and joyous, better resourced, and loved.

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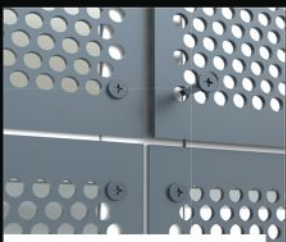


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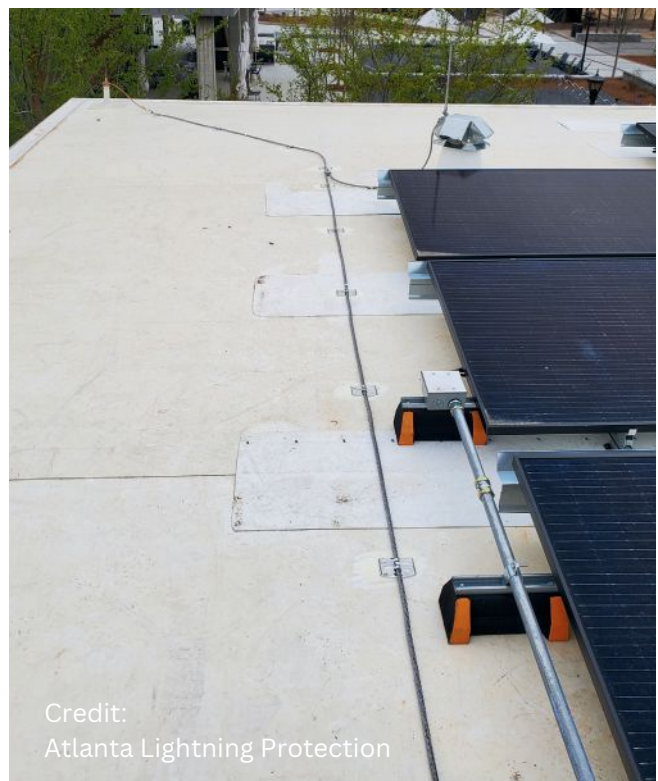
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AIA College of Fellows

Chicago Welcomes Seven New Fellows in 2024

The AIA College of Fellows is composed of three percent of the Institute’s members who have demonstrated a high level of success in the industry as judged by a national jury of their peers. Each Fellow has exhibited their achievements under one of six “Objects,” or categories of the profession that include design, practice management, leading the institute, public service, alternative career, or education. Fellowship recognizes an individual’s professional achievements in innovative design, technical achievement, sociocultural advancement, volunteer work, or educating the next generation of architects/leaders. Individual Fellows serve our members through volunteering, mentoring and supporting local component initiatives. The College of Fellows supports broader national initiatives, including a Component Grant, which assists local components to develop programs that enhance the development of emerging professionals, and the Latrobe Prize, a biennial \$100,000 two-year program for research that leads to significant advances in the architecture profession.

AIA Chicago is very proactive in seeking highly qualified candidates for Fellowship, and we consistently see a significant number of our own elevated annually. AIA Chicago’s Fellowship Committee recruits and guides potential candidates on the path toward Fellowship. We conduct reviews of potential submissions, offer suggestions for improvement, and provide direct one-on-one mentoring to candidates. We also conduct seminars during the year on demystifying fellowship and a storytelling/writing workshop. This year, we are also implementing a new quarterly initiative called “Office Hours.” Any member, at any stage in their career path, can attend these small, informal virtual gatherings to learn more about the Fellowship process and share insights with Fellows and each other.

This year’s class of seven from Illinois are recognized in five of the six possible Objects, and we represent more than seven percent of all Fellows elevated in the nation this year. I wish to thank the committee for their support and to bestow well-deserved congratulations to the seven newest members of the College of Fellows! Congratulations to **Tom Bassett-Dilley, FAIA; Nicholas Cameron, FAIA; Drew Deering, FAIA; Maria A. Pellot Peraza, FAIA; Jonathan Solomon, FAIA; Ann Thompson, FAIA;** and **Roderic K. Walton, FAIA.** Well done!

Catherine Baker, FAIA

AIA Chicago Fellowship Committee Chair



Objects of Fellowship Nomination

Object One:

Design, Urban Design, or Preservation
To promote the aesthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession.

Object Two:

Practice Management or Practice Technical Advancement
To advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of practice.

Object Three:

Led the Institute or a Related Organization
To coordinate the building industry and the profession of architecture.

Object Four:

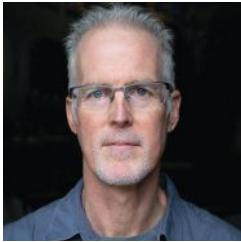
Public Service, Government, Industry, or Organization
To ensure the advancement of the living standards of people through their improved environment.

Object Five:

Alternative Career, Volunteer Work with Organizations Not Directly Connected with the Built Environment or Service to Society
To make the profession of ever-increasing service to society.

Object Six:

Education, Research, Literature
To advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education and training.



Tom Bassett-Dilley, FAIA

TBDA, Ltd.

Object 2, Practice, Technical Advancement
Through pioneering design, public engagement, and advocacy, Tom Bassett-Dilley has advanced sustainability in architecture. His proof-of-concept decarbonization projects are examples for architects, owners, and policymakers working toward a clean energy built environment.



Nicholas Cameron, FAIA

Perkins&Will

Object 2, Practice, Technical Advancement
Nick Cameron, a trailblazer in the practice of architecture, develops impactful digital strategies and software. His innovative processes yield healthy and meaningful design solutions, benefiting communities worldwide. A global collaborator, he drives the digital transformation of the profession.



Drew Deering, FAIA

Moody Nolan

Object 3, Led the Institute
Drew Deering is a catalytic AIA leader. His prolific career in leadership has paved the way for national, regional, and local milestones, and his passion for advocacy and diversity shines on the community he serves.



Jonathan Solomon, FAIA

Preservation Chicago; School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Object 6, Education
Committed to the past, present, and future of the built environment, Jonathan Solomon advances the profession of architecture as educator, curator, and preservationist to support future generations to thrive.



Maria A. Pelot Peraza, FAIA

UrbanWorks, Ltd.

Object 1, Design
Maria Pelot designs for change. As an architect and planner committed to equity through thoughtful civic interventions across scale and typology, she crafts design solutions within context and culture to elevate shared community experiences.



Ann Thompson, FAIA

Related Midwest

Object 5, Alternative Career
A unique advocate architect and real estate leader, Ann Thompson paves new pathways for design excellence by pioneering an integrated building model and trailblazing for diversity and equity, resulting in more inclusive, connected urban communities.



Roderic K. Walton, FAIA

Moody Nolan

Object 5, Service to Society
Relentlessly advocating for the marginalized, Roderic Walton evolves the practice of architecture by leading stakeholders to truthfully reckon with history, advance health care equity, and catalyze next-generation architects.

KAI BROWN AND BEN LIPOWITZ



Lynda Dossey, AIA, AIA Chicago president; Lakisha Woods, CAE, AIA executive vice president and CEO; Kimberly Dowdell, AIA, NOMAC, AIA president; and Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA, AIA Chicago executive director.



Lakisha Woods, CAE.



Lynda Dossey, AIA, with AIA Chicago Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Linda Searl, FAIA.



AIA Chicago President-Elect Jason Golub, AIA (left), with the team at Studio Gang, including Jeanne Gang, FAIA (second from right).



Guests attend Designight 2024.



Laura Saviano with Carol Ross Barney, FAIA, 2023 AIA Gold Medal recipient.



AIA Chicago Foundation Dubin Family Young Architect Award Recipient Emily Ray, AIA, with AIA Chicago Foundation past President Chris Anmarie Spencer, AIA, NOMA.



The team from Moody Nolan, AIA Chicago's 2024 Firm Award recipient.

Designight 2024 Celebrates Architectural Achievements

Chicago's premier architectural celebration, Designight 2024, honored outstanding design achievements, from groundbreaking decarbonization efforts to socially conscious architecture by Chicago's architects.

The evening celebrated the award recipients of the Architecture Award, Interior Architecture Award, Decarbonization Award, Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Award, and — reintroduced in 2024 — the Divine Detail Award. These awards recognized the work of talented AIA Chicago members and highlighted the industry's commitment to sustainability and equity.


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ABOVE: Student-led panel and discussion. TOP LEFT: Students interact with colleges and universities. TOP RIGHT: AIA Chicago student volunteers.

AIA Chicago Hosts Chicago Architecture + Design College and Career Day

This past September, more than 300 high school and college students joined their parents, teachers, caregivers, and counselors for the annual Chicago Architecture + Design College and Career Day. This free event enables students to learn more about careers in architecture, construction management, interior design, landscape architecture, urban planning, and trades.

Hosted at Harold Washington Community College, the event featured a student-led panel and introduced a new program showcasing various degree paths, accredited schools, and licensure opportunities. Attendees had the chance to explore more than 40 booths from colleges and universities across the United States, where representatives provided information and answered questions about their degree programs. 


► To learn more about the Chicago Architecture + Design College and Career Day, visit ChicagoCareerDay.org.



2025 Call to Action

As we gear up for the 104th (2025-2026) General Assembly here in Illinois, I want to ask for your input and member voice. During the 103rd General Assembly last year, we saw more than 8,000 bills and resolutions introduced. We actively tracked 100 of them related to your work as architects. Some of these 100 required testifying in front of committees, some required meeting with legislators, and others just required keeping tabs on their progress.

My ask of you as AIA Illinois members for our upcoming session is twofold. First, if you have a topic that you would like us to watch out for, or feel is important for us to consider, please let us know. Second, if at any time during the year you hear of a bill or legislative measure that you think would help or hurt the practice of architecture or architects in Illinois, please reach out and let us know so we can discuss adding it to our watch list.

To voice your concerns or submit items for consideration, please email me at advocacy@aiaill.org. We will then add the topic to our list to discuss with our contract lobbying team, our staff, and the legislative committee. 



Eric Klinner, CAE
Executive Vice President, AIA Illinois

AIA Chicago Foundation Announces the Chicago Award in Architecture Student Award Honorees

The AIA Chicago Foundation, which invests in Chicago’s next generation of architectural change-makers by awarding scholarships, grants, and recognition, is pleased to announce the winners of the Chicago Award in Architecture Student Awards. This prestigious competition recognizes exceptional student projects from local architecture schools.

This year’s jury of distinguished professionals in their fields carefully evaluated submissions to determine the winners. The jury was composed of **Roberta Feldman, Ph.D., Assoc. AIA**, AIA Chicago Foundation Trustee; **Gracia Maria Shiffrin, JD, FAIA**, AIA Chicago Foundation Secretary; **Mary Woolever**, Chicago Foundation Public Trustee; **Laura Cochran, Assoc. AIA**, Wheeler Kearns Architects; and **Cordaroe Oscar, Assoc. AIA**, Lamar Johnson Collaborative. [CA](#)



First Place award, the Benn-Johnck Award

The Space(s) In Between
 Cheok Chun Chong
 Prof. Christopher Groesbeck, AIA, and
 Vedran Mimica
 Illinois Institute of Technology
 Prize: \$500



Second Place

Museum of Gospel Music
 Kabir Manoj Dole and Harshini Rama Shankari
 Jaya Varanasi
 Prof. Thomas Leslie, FAIA
 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
 Prize: \$300



Third Place

Walking Towards Amazon
 Shan Jiang
 Prof. Monika Thadhani and Andres Luis Hernandez
 School of the Art Institute of Chicago
 Prize: \$200

Honorable Mention



Birds, Baths, and Beaches
 Lauren Rademaker
 Prof. Barbara Materia
 University of Illinois Chicago



Washington Park Community Field House
 Rachel Norgren
 Prof. Mark Frost, AIA
 Judson University



Webster Memory Grove/Alzheimer Clinic &
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 By submitting content to *Chicago Architect*, you consent to publication and affirm you have permission to distribute any photos. Deadline to submit for the next issue is Friday, April 11, 2025.

CHRISTOPHER BARRETT PHOTOGRAPHY



KTGY announces the hire of **Sam Luckino**, **AIA**, **LEED AP**, **NCARB**, as principal of the Chicago office.



STLarchitects presented "Five Projects" in South Korea at the Instituto Cervantes of Chicago, which showcased models and sketches of several high-profile projects the Chicago firm has been working on since 2019.



Lamar Johnson Collaborative completed Chapter Madison, a 10-story, 550-bed student housing development adjacent to the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

ALL IMAGES ARE COURTESY OF THE FIRM, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. LEED AP STATUS IS INDICATED ONLY IF REPORTED BY THE FIRM.

MARK BALLOGG, BALLOGG PHOTOGRAPHY



Gresham Smith recently celebrated the completion of an expansion to Northwestern Medicine's Delnor Cancer Center in Geneva, Illinois, which added 15,500 square feet to the facility, including 20 new exam rooms, 13 new treatment rooms, and doubled patient intake bays.

PERKINS EASTMAN



Perkins Eastman celebrated the groundbreaking of Forrestal Elementary School. The school is the first elementary school located on a U.S. military base to pursue net-zero energy.



Nate Kipnis, FAIA, has been busy sharing his expertise on sustainability and resilient design. He co-presented with Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) at the GO Clean Energy Conference and spoke on sustainability and art at the Intersect Aspen Art + Design Fair. Additionally, he spoke about the AIA Framework for Design Excellence at the AIA Wyoming Annual Fall Conference and discussed the influence of skateboarding on his architectural practice in Chicago. His firm, **Kipnis Architecture + Planning (KAP)**, was recently recognized by AIA Illinois for their work on the first Passive House in Evanston, Illinois.

PERKINS EASTMAN



Perkins Eastman is pleased to announce the promotion of **JinHwa Paradowicz, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**, to principal, and **Liale Nijem, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**, and **Ghalia Ajouz, Assoc. AIA**, to associates.

ERIELLE BAKKUM PHOTOGRAPHY



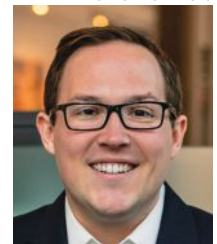
For the first time, 49 Chicago-based architects and designers formed an Architects' Guild and created individual headpieces, each reinterpreting a beloved spatial moment in the city. These designers then marched in the City of Chicago's **Arts in the Dark Parade**, an annual celebration of Chicago's cultural landscape that recognizes Halloween as an artists' holiday. This effort was led by **Chana Haouzi, AIA**. From left to right: **Akima Brackeen; Katherine Darnstadt, AIA; Josh Mings, AIA; Alina Nazmeev; John Wagner, AIA; Nootan Bharani, AIA; Vero Rose Smith; Philana Quan; Jessie LaFree, AIA; Krista Weir; Eve Fineman, Assoc. AIA; Adam Fogel; Michal Ojrzanowski; Myles Emmons; Samantha Rich, AIA; Hamza Sadiq; Juan Suarez; Ella Edelstein; Antonio Torres; Emmett Mach; James Silvestro, AIA; Zack Morrison; Kirsten Landmark Masih; Monica Chadha, AIA; Elizabeth Blasius; Jason Meyering, AIA; Joseph Altshuler, Assoc. AIA; Jan Concepcion; Lindsey Krug; Dillon Pranger, AIA; Vincent Calabro; Wei Yu, AIA; Annabelle Ren; Trent Fredrickson; Sharon Xu, AIA; Robert Becker; Uthman Olowa; Rogelio Cadena.**

PERKINS EASTMAN



Merintha Pinson, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, was honored as an Aging Media Network/Senior Housing News Future Leader in *Senior Living*.

GREC ARCHITECTS



Michael Comiskey, AIA, NCARB, has been elevated to associate with **GREC Architects**. With more than a decade of experience, Michael has been with GREC since 2022.



Goettsch Partners principal, **Patrick Loughran, FAIA, PE, LEED AP**, recently presented "The Design of Tropical Forests" at Brookfield Zoo Chicago. The presentation highlighted the zoo's newest habitat addition, which will provide the zoo's western lowland gorillas, orangutans, and South American monkeys with access outside for the first time in more than 40 years.



Tiara Hughes, Assoc. AIA, has accepted a new role as deputy commissioner in the **Department of Planning and Development** for the City of Chicago.



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Canopy / architecture + design is thrilled to celebrate the promotions of **Andreea Micu, AIA, NCARB**, to principal; **Irma Ayala, Assoc. AIA**, to senior associate; **Jackie Davis, AIA, NCARB, WELL AP**, and **Mark Kaminski, AIA, NCARB, LEED GA**, to senior project architects; **Sabina Choragwicki, Assoc. AIA**, to project associate; and **Ismael Vela, Assoc. AIA**, to project designer.



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY

Gensler announces the completion of 360 North Green, Chicago's newest Class A office building and the first built specifically for professional services firms. Anchoring the northern boundary of Green Street, the building sits at the terminus of the most sought-after real estate corridor in the city, surrounded by the West Loop's vibrant district of hotels, restaurants, and retail.



SPACE Architects + Planners has promoted **Tess Sekalias, AIA, NCARB**; **Jessie LaFree, AIA, NCARB**; and **Braedy Bulman, AIA, NCARB**, to directors, and **Alex Brosh, AIA, NCARB**, and **Krishan Baniqued, AIA, NCARB**, to managers.

AJ BROWN IMAGING



Construction has finished on the new Ottawa YMCA designed by **Legat Architects**. The 67,000-square-foot facility, located at the confluence of the Illinois and Fox rivers, spotlights wellness and pays tribute to downtown Ottawa and the historic Ottawa Rail Bridge.



Gannett Flemin TranSystems has acquired **Muller & Muller Ltd. (M2)**, an architecture firm renowned for its award-winning designs in transit and aviation.

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Aggregate Studio is thrilled to announce that **Katia Astudillo, Assoc. AIA**, has joined the studio as a designer. The firm has also opened its new office space, Suite 1629, in the Monadnock Building.



Ryan Hergott, AIA (Goettsch Partners), and his partner **Kelly Pyle, AIA (Olson Kundig)**, recently returned from a cross-country bike trip, starting at Lewis and Clark National Historic Park in Oregon and, after 83 days and 4,000 miles later, they ended back home in Chicago, Illinois.



DMAC Architecture & Interiors is proud to announce the promotion of **Kavitha Marudadu, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP**, to principal. Known for her vision, leadership and exceptional talent, Kavitha has earned widespread recognition for notable projects, including the American Airlines Admirals Club at DCA and the flagship Midtown Athletic Club & Hotel. In her new role, Kavitha joins founder **Dwayne MacEwen, AIA, NCARB**, in heading the studio.

GREC ARCHITECTS



GREC Architects has received approval from the Charleston Board of Architectural Review for the architectural design of its latest project, a boutique hotel on the Charleston Peninsula. The eight-story, 150,000-square-foot development will include 174 guest rooms and two full-service restaurants, promising to elevate the city's future hospitality scene.



HOK announced the completion of the new GE HealthCare office space in Waukesha, Wisconsin. The concept of the design allows for rotating business units to test a variety of work styles before expanding the renovation throughout the entire campus.



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 By submitting content to *Chicago Architect*, you consent to publication and affirm you have permission to distribute any photos. Deadline to submit for the next issue is Friday, April 11, 2025.



Urban Works, Ltd. is pleased to announce the promotions of **Kari Berg, AIA**, and **Ingedia Sanchez, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**, to associate principals; **Erick Roldan, AIA, ALA**; **Jeremy Olsen, AIA, CSI, CCA, LEED AP**, **Steven Burgos, AIA, WELL AP, LEED Green Associate**, and **Jamin Nollsch, AIA, LEED Green Associate**, to senior associates; and **Sofia Linares, Assoc. AIA**, to an expanded public relations associate role.

TOM HARRIS ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY



HOK is pleased to announce that **Daniela Dan, AIA, LEED Green Associate**; **Gabrielle Utomo, AIA, LEED Green Associate**; and **David Wilson, AIA, LEED Green Associate**, have recently become licensed architects.



Partners by Design (PBD) has completed a new office space for Pinterest, a 19,000-square-foot space that pays homage to Chicago's iconic attractions and culinary delights. From a Chicago pizza parlor-inspired kitchen to a riverwalk-themed lounge, the space is driven by a commitment to discovery and inspiration.

LEOPARDO CONSTRUCTION



Atul Karkhanis Architects, Ltd. recently completed a new facility for the Fertility Centers of Illinois, which includes an approximately 3,600-square-foot clinic and a 20,000-square-foot ambulatory surgery center.

PERKINS EASTMAN



Perkins Eastman celebrated the summer openings of three veterans' homes in Minnesota. Left to right: Perkins Eastman Associate **Robert Chorazy, AIA**; **JinHwa Paradowicz, AIA**; and Senior Associate **Ryan Stahlman, AIA**.

ALL IMAGES ARE COURTESY OF THE FIRM, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. LEED AP STATUS IS INDICATED ONLY IF REPORTED BY THE FIRM.

RENDERING BY LEGAT ARCHITECTS



The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) started construction of two visitor centers designed by **Legat Architects**: one in Mohican State Park (Loudonville) and one in Portage Lakes State Park (Akron).



Laurie Petersen, editor of the third and fourth edition of the *AIA Guide to Chicago*, was honored by the Society of Architectural Historians for her work on the guide and its role in educating the public on the work of architects.



BASE congratulates Lamar Johnson Collaborative and the Fulton East team on receiving the Lerch Bates People's Choice Award for Tall Building in this year's AIA Chicago Design Excellence Awards.

BASE was proud to serve as Fulton East's structural engineer of record.



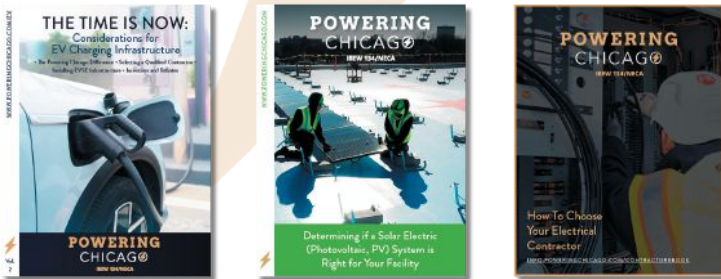
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Decarbonization Award



The Decarbonization Award recognizes projects that surpass basic energy reduction goals, highlighting their leadership in sustainable design. The purpose is to showcase innovative projects that demonstrate a commitment to the goals of the 2030 Commitment while maintaining functional and aesthetic excellence.

THE JURORS



Peter MacKeith, Assoc. AIA
Dean and Professor, Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, University of Arkansas Fayetteville, Arkansas



Ganesh Nayak, AIA, NOMA, LEED AP*
Metier Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia



Leigh Stringer, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP
Perkins&Will
Washington, D.C.

**We remember Ganesh Nayak, AIA, a tireless advocate for climate action and climate justice, who passed away in late July 2024.*



ERIC HAUSMAN

TBDA, Ltd.

Bungalow Decarbonization

Oak Park, Illinois

CLIENT: Mariannell and Tom Bassett-Dilley

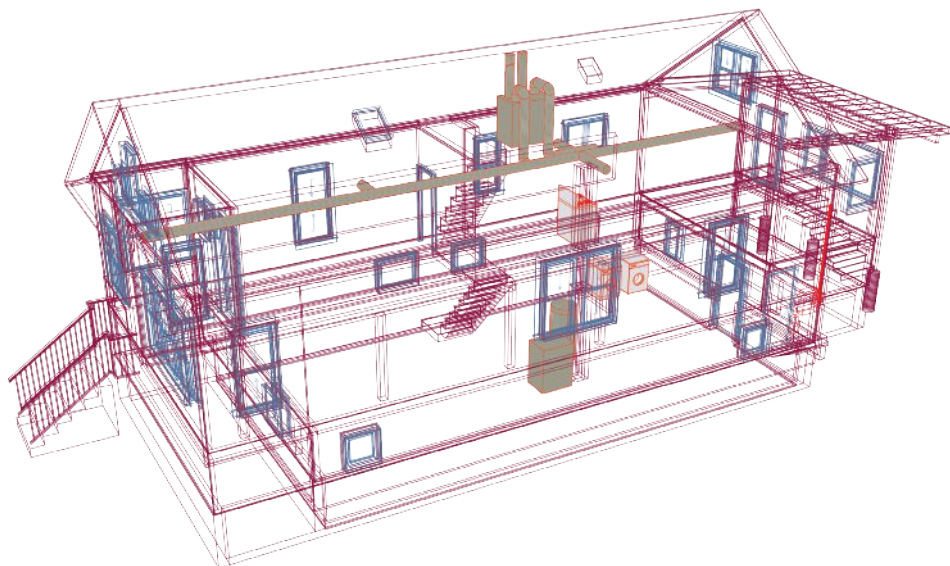
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Biltmore Homes

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Twig Landscape Design

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Tom Bassett-Dilley, FAIA, CPHC, and Garrett Kilbride

Driven by ambitious decarbonization goals, this project upgraded aging HVAC and water heating systems while enhancing indoor environmental quality and connectivity. At the same time, rebuilding an old, poorly enclosed back porch provided the opportunity to enhance indoor-outdoor connection and interior flow. Overcoming technical challenges, architects implemented continuous insulation and air sealing, using energy modeling and embodied carbon accounting to balance performance and aesthetics. Together with the addition of solar panels, the result is a fully decarbonized, ILFI Zero Energy-certified, all-electric house with improved insulation, air quality, and sustainability. This innovative retrofit, completed on a tight budget, serves as a replicable model for transforming older homes into efficient, environmentally friendly residences.





ERIC HAUSMAN



ERIC HAUSMAN



ERIC HAUSMAN

TBDA, Ltd.

Lake Bluff Passive House

Lake Bluff, Illinois

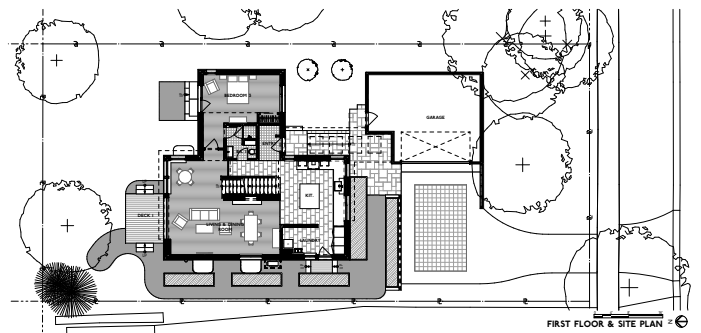
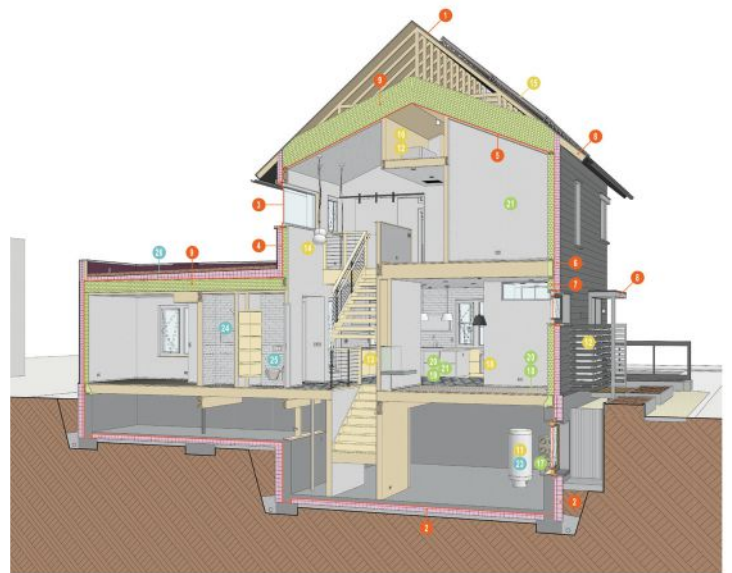
CLIENT: Connie and John VanDercreek

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Biltmore Homes

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* Goodfriend Magruder Structure; *Civil Engineer:* Greengard Inc.

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Tom Bassett-Dilley, FAIA, CPHC; Denny Burke, AIA, CPHC; Timothy Eberline; and Garrett Kilbride

This house, designed for aging in place, exemplifies high-quality, low-carbon living. As a Phius-certified home, it features a robust thermal envelope and efficient mechanical systems, ensuring excellent indoor air quality and low energy use. The home's layout and siting on a narrow, south-facing lot led to intentional design decisions; for example, preserving mature trees led to a front garage design with a side-facing door. The house includes a first-floor bedroom suite with a private courtyard and green roof. Biophilic design principles enhance well-being, while triple-glazed windows offer a connection to nature. This early Phius-certified project sets a standard for cold-climate, heat pump-conditioned homes, harmonizing with Lake Bluff's traditional housing stock while maximizing comfort and resilience.



Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Award

The Roberta Feldman Architecture for Social Justice Award, administered by the **AIA Chicago Foundation**, was established in 2020 to honor excellence in built projects and design programs guided by the conviction that access to high-quality architecture is not a privilege but a human right. Architecture for Social Justice is defined by the following objectives:

1. To engage a broader cross-section of society, especially those not typically able to access architectural services
2. To create innovative design solutions that address complex social and economic inequities that impact these communities

This yearly award celebrates the commitment of designers who work on behalf of the public good while receiving no or below market rate compensation.*

**Market rate compensation is based on conventional fee structures.*

About Roberta Feldman, Ph.D.

Roberta Feldman, Ph.D., is professor emerita at the University of Illinois at Chicago, School of Architecture. As an architectural activist, researcher, and educator, she is committed to democratic design. Feldman's work is grounded in the conviction that high-quality design is a meaningful and necessary component of an equitable and sustainable society. Her expertise in such work has been recognized nationally and internationally.

THE JURORS



Kerl LaJeune,
Assoc. AIA, NOMA*
Jury Chair
Public Building
Commission of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois



**Anne-Marie
Lubenau, FAIA**
Harvard Graduate
School of Design
Cambridge,
Massachusetts



Walter D. Street III,
AIA, NOMA*
Walter Street Architecture
Oak Park, Illinois



Lynette Stuhlmacher,
Assoc. AIA, LEED AP*
Red Leaf Studio Inc.
Evanston, Illinois



Dan Wheeler, FAIA
Wheeler Kearns
Architects
Chicago, Illinois

*AIA Chicago Foundation Trustees



Could Be Design

Chicago Sukkah Design Festival

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Stone Temple Baptist Church (Festival Lot Steward and Community Partner)

CONTRIBUTING ARCHITECTS: Human Scale; New Office; Chicago Design Office & Made in Englewood; Studio Becker Xu; Odile Compagnon and Erik Newman; Akima Brackeen and Office of Things; Antwane Lee; Architecture for Public Benefit and Trent Fredrickson; and Could Be Design

COLLABORATORS: *Graphic/Environmental Design:* Could Be Design and Joyjects; *Other Collaborators:* Lawndale Pop-Up Spot (Venue Director); Open Architecture Chicago (Partnership and Public Program Director); and Stone Temple Baptist Church, Men Making a Difference, Open Books | North Lawndale Reads campaign, One Lawndale Children's Discovery Center, Young Men's Educational Network, North Lawndale Greening Committee, I Am Able Center For Family Development, BBF | Building Brighter Futures Center for the Arts, Mishkan Chicago, Lawndale Christian Legal Center, and Chicago Tool Library (Community Collaborators)

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Joseph Altshuler, Assoc. AIA, and Zack Morrison

Held in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood, the Chicago Sukkah Design Festival brings together community organizations and architectural designers to create sukkahs — structures inspired by a Jewish architectural custom. These sukkahs foster unity and collaboration between the historical Jewish community and the predominantly Black community currently residing there. The festival features dynamic public programming that engages and welcomes all residents. After the festival, the sukkahs are relocated to permanent sites within the community, where they serve as vibrant centers for education, cultural events, and social services, transforming each sukkah into a valuable and lasting community asset.

BRIAN GRIFFIN



BRIAN GRIFFIN



BRIAN GRIFFIN



BRIAN GRIFFIN



KRUECK SEXTON PARTNERS



KRUECK SEXTON PARTNERS



KRUECK SEXTON PARTNERS

Krueck Sexton Partners

Mahalia Jackson Public Outdoor Plaza

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Greater Chatham Initiative and the City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development

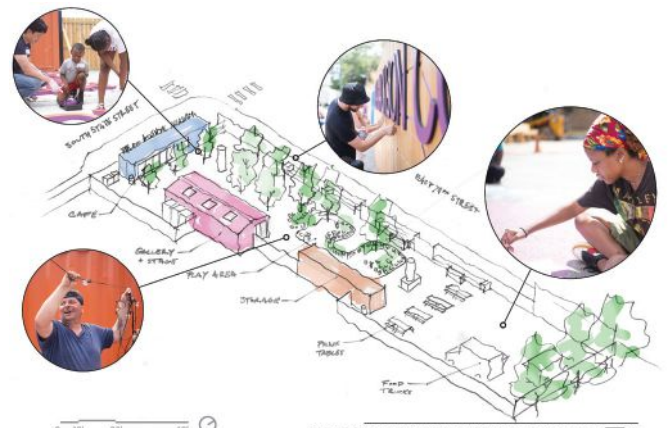
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Wight Construction and Griffin Fine Art & Interior Design

ARCHITECT OF RECORD: Krueck Sexton Partners

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Human Scale

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* Thornton Tomasetti; *MEP Engineer:* Buro Happold; *Civil Engineer:* Langan; *Other Collaborators:* Dorian Sylvain (Artist Coordination); Fantasia Ariel, Kari Blackburn, Norman Teague, Bernard Williams, Celia Benito, Izze Ortiz, Joe "Cujodah" Nelson, Gerald Griffin, Andrea Yarbrough, Julian Haywood, Joshua Pollard, Kiah Grace, and David "EWRKS" Ellis (Artists); and Rev. Dr. Joseph B. Gordon and Carter Temple CME Church (Site Owners)

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Mark P. Sexton, FAIA; Taylor Franz; Gabriel Vidal-Hallett; Edgar Alvarado; Deniz Demir Goldsobel, Assoc. AIA; Michael Johnson, AIA; Maryjane Ma; Nicole Ashurian; and Boram Oh, Assoc. AIA



"On behalf of the Greater Chatham Initiative, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to [redacted] for their leadership in bringing Mahalia Jackson Public Plaza to life. Foot traffic in the area has nearly doubled compared to one-year earlier, and crime has decreased 30%. The plaza has been a catalyst for change, and [redacted] played an essential role in making it a reality."

Conceived by the Greater Chatham Initiative, the Mahalia Jackson Public Outdoor Plaza celebrates the rich history of Chatham and promotes community pride. The project began in January 2022, following the City of Chicago's Public Outdoor Plaza (POP!) grant program RFP. Designed to revitalize underutilized land, the public space features a welcoming mural, a stage, a children's garden, and a food truck court. Community engagement was integral, with local artists contributing to the design and storytelling. Funded by the POP! Grant, the project progressed rapidly despite budget and scheduling challenges. Since its opening, the Mahalia Jackson Public Outdoor Plaza has helped increase foot traffic by 208 percent and reduce local crime by 30 percent, becoming a vibrant cultural and social hub that honors Chatham's legacy.

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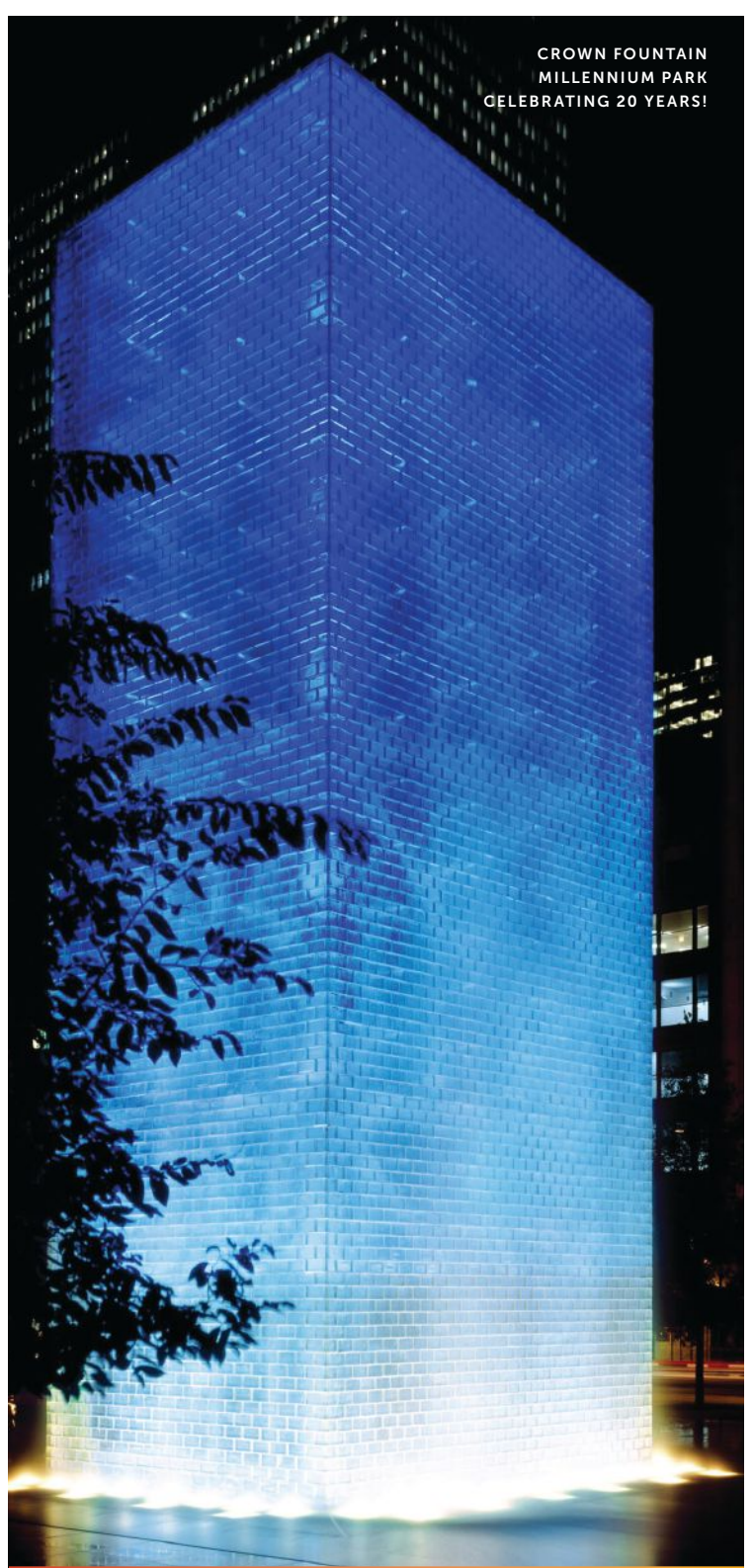
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Lerch Bates People's Choice Awards

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These awards are sponsored by Lerch Bates and presented in partnership with the Chicago Architecture Center.

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER





TOM HARRIS



TOM HARRIS

LBBA Architects

BUILD Chicago

Chicago, Illinois

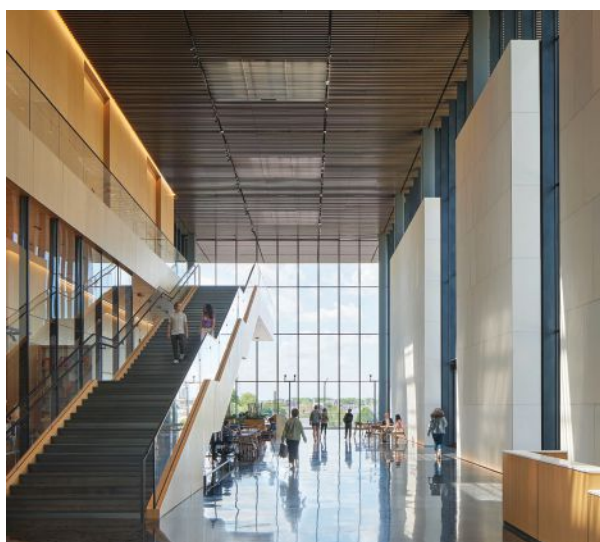
CLIENT: BUILD Chicago

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: UJAMAA Construction Inc.

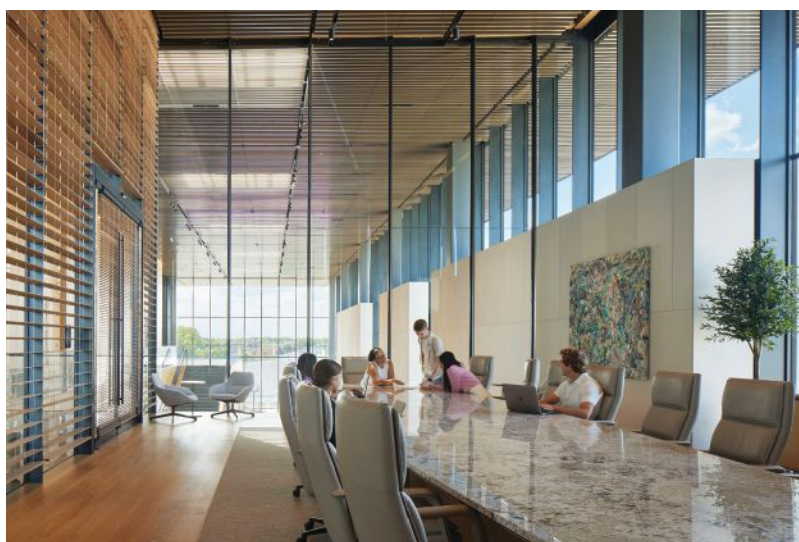
COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* Nayyar & Nayyar International; *MEP Engineer:* Element Energy Consulting; *Civil Engineer:* EVA Design & Engineering

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Jeff Bone, FAIA; Tyler Brown, AIA; Kevin Taylor, AIA; and Ronel Constantin, Assoc. AIA

Located in the Austin neighborhood and conceived of as a campus, BUILD Chicago was completed in two phases. Phase I included the rehabilitation of BUILD's existing 10,000-square-foot building and the construction of a new 41,000-square-foot facility with an array of enrichment programs, wellness center, café open to the public, teaching garden, and additional spaces that promote healthy futures for youth. In addition to offices, conference rooms, lounges, exterior roof decks, and a kitchen for the staff, Phase II included 7,780 square feet of reservable professional office and workspace for community partners on the west half of the new building's third floor.



DAVE BURK



DAVE BURK

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

Mulva Cultural Center

De Pere, Wisconsin

CLIENT: De Pere Cultural Foundation Inc.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Mortenson

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer, MEP Engineer, and Interior Designer:* Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; *A/V, Acoustics, Security, and Lighting Design:* Arup

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Scott Duncan, AIA; Adam Semel, AIA; Jason Fisher, AIA; Jorge Rovira, AIA; Alejandro Fernandez-Linares Garcia; Chris Whelan, AIA; Julie Michiels, AIA; Benton Johnson; Luke Leung; Martin Rauber, AIA; Somini Lee; Min Keun Park; Sarah Rozman; and Keon Lee, Assoc. AIA

With its bright, soaring volumes and seamless integration of architecture, structure, and interiors, the Mulva Cultural Center offers a world-class design and cultural experience on the banks of the Fox River in De Pere, Wisconsin. This addition to the Greater Green Bay Area features a high-efficiency glass and limestone façade and continuous terrazzo flooring, showcasing global craftsmanship with locally sourced materials. As a hub for the creative arts, the Mulva Cultural Center hosts traveling exhibitions from leading institutions, diverse programming, and educational opportunities for all ages.

TOM ROSSITER



TOM ROSSITER



TOM ROSSITER

SMNG A Ltd. and Farr Associates Architecture & Urban Design

The Academy for Global Citizenship at the Cultivate Collective Campus

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: The Academy of Global Citizenship at the Cultivate Collective Campus

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Power Construction

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: site design group, ltd.

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* Stearn-Joglekar; *MEP Engineer:* dbHMS; *Civil Engineer:* V3 Companies; *Other Collaborators:* Studio 180 (Designer); Urban ReSolve (Owner's Representative)

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Todd Niemiec, AIA; Chey Taylor, AIA; Angel Valtierra, AIA; Doug Farr, FAIA; and Len Sciarra, AIA

Built on the former site of the Chicago Housing Authority's LeClaire Homes, the Academy for Global Citizenship, a pre-K to eighth grade charter school, anchors Cultivate Collective's six-acre campus. This innovative facility includes a Head Start center, outpatient health center, three-acre urban farm, on-site market, community hall, and teaching kitchens for nutrition education. The 71,000-square-foot learning laboratory is pioneering as the Chicagoland area's inaugural Living Building Challenge and PHIUS-certified school, promoting net-positive energy use and sustainability. Beyond the Academy's mission, the school hub extends amenities to the community and planned mixed-income housing and retail development.



AJ BROWN IMAGING



AJ BROWN IMAGING

UrbanWorks, Ltd.

Esperanza Health Center

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Esperanza Health Centers

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Mortenson

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Tgda Landscape Architecture

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* C.E. Anderson & Associates; *MEP Engineer:* dbHMS; *Civil Engineer:* Terra Engineering; *Interior Designers:* UrbanWorks Ltd.; *Other Collaborators:* Edge Associates (Food Service Design); McNitt Consulting (Owner's Representative)

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Maria Pellot, FAIA; Jose Esquinca, Assoc. AIA; Patricia Saldaña Natke, FAIA; Kari Berg, AIA; Steven Burgos, AIA; Maria Hidalgo, Assoc. AIA; Indra Urbaz; Laura Racelis-Paradiso; Nicholas Prystawik; and Alana Sutor

The new Esperanza Health Center in Brighton Park is a memorable two-story, 43,450-square-foot facility that houses expanded medical health services, comprehensive senior programming, and a family medicine residency program. The new building expands Esperanza's presence in Chicago's South Side to encompass an entire city block, forming a new civic plaza in concert with an earlier facility at the north end of the site. Planned as a "health campus," multiple indoor and outdoor spaces create opportunities to promote health, learning, and recreation for the community, building on the services provided within the complex.

CODY ULRICH PHOTOGRAPHY



CODY ULRICH PHOTOGRAPHY



CODY ULRICH PHOTOGRAPHY

Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture

Hotel 1928

Waco, Texas

CLIENT: AJ Capital Partners; Magnolia with Chip and Joanna Gaines

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* Armstrong-Douglass; *MEP Engineer:* Hendrix Consulting Engineers; *Civil Engineer:* CP&Y; *Interior Designer:* Hartshorne Plunkard Architecture

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Sophie Bidek, AIA; Andrew Shimanski; Krista Weir, AIA; and Janice Jones

The Karem Shrine Temple in downtown Waco, Texas, has been transformed into Hotel 1928, reviving the landmark building after a two-decade-long dormancy and restoring its legacy as a gathering place for Wacoans. The renovation achieves a contemporary hospitality experience that reflects the client's lifestyle brand, thoughtfully integrated within its unique circa-1928 Moorish Revival-style architecture. The program comprises 33 guest rooms, three restaurants, a ballroom venue, and a rooftop terrace within the existing 59,143-square-foot structure. To preserve character-defining features, the design team employed creative approaches to meet program requirements while respecting original layouts and finishes.



Lamar Johnson Collaborative
Triangle Square Apartments
 Chicago, Illinois

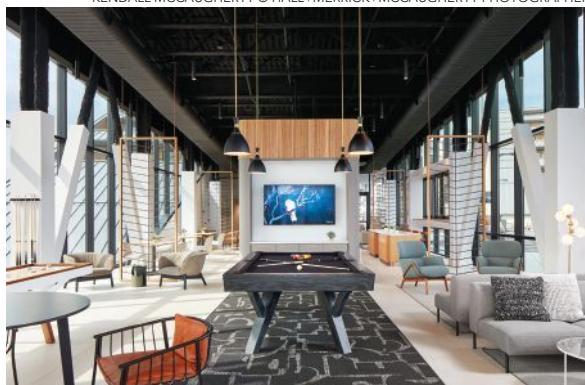
CLIENT: Quatterra (formerly LMC), a Lennar Company
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Power Construction
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: site design group, ltd.
COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* WSP USA; *MEP Engineer:* Salas O’Brien; *Interior Designer:* Lamar Johnson Collaborative
ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Michael Hanley, AIA; Lance Yeary; Paul Bryant, AIA; Tod Desmarais, FAIA; and Mariusz Klemens, AIA

The uniquely shaped property demanded a unique design solution. Triangle Square consists of a 300-unit apartment building and parking podium with small retail on the ground floor. The building’s massing, including a sloped south-facing roofline with private terraces, provides 75 percent of the residential units with downtown Chicago views. The design is centered around a 23,000-square-foot courtyard space on the second level, providing an abundance of natural daylight, amenities, and stunning views toward downtown Chicago.

JAMES STEINKAMP



KENDALL MCCAUGHERTY © HALL+MERRICK+MCCAUGHERTY PHOTOGRAPHERS





Lamar Johnson Collaborative

4300 East Camelback

Phoenix, Arizona

CLIENT: Clayco

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Stevens Leinweber Construction

COLLABORATORS: *MEP Engineer:* Energy Systems Design; *Interior Designer:* Lamar Johnson Collaborative; *A/V Consultant:* Coltrane Systems; *Other Collaborators:* Goodmans Interior Structures; Atmosphere Commercial Interiors; Forward Tilt; and Artlink

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Mackenzie McCulloch; Cristiana Rueda; Kate Daly; Meghann Duran; Jen Nevil; Rachel Wolf; Sophie Mendelsohn; Shayna Moore; Lance Yearly; Al Fiesel; Brian Dolan; Imani Dixon, AIA; and Erica Arrington

4300 East Camelback caters to diverse office needs, housing a construction firm, design firm, and developer. It features private and open offices alongside various collaboration spaces, aiming to transform engagement with clients and employees. The single-floor office is tailored for growth, boasting a striking entrance with a sculptural wall of construction materials. Employees enjoy panoramic views of Camelback Mountain, fostering inspiration, while high-end materials evoke Southwest personality, blending aesthetics with functionality. A café area doubles as an event space, while maker space and mock-up areas drive innovation. Amenities like a training room, resource library, 3D printer, and virtual reality room enhance capabilities.

SAM FENTRESS



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Via Chicago

The Snug

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Beth Malloy

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Enclosure LLC

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER: Outside Design Studio

COLLABORATORS: *Structural Engineer:* The Structural Shop; *MEP Engineer:* STREAM Engineering; *Interior Designer:* Anne Rezac

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Cristina Gallo; Marty Sandberg, AIA; Caro Arecheta; and Jake Gillespie

The Snug was one of the very first new coach houses to be constructed under Chicago's recently passed ADU ordinance. Set behind an Italianate row home in the Wicker Park Historic District, it discreetly stacks a petite, 520-square-foot apartment over a two-car garage. In 2020, the property was jointly purchased by a single mother and her adult son-in-law, who was preparing to "move to the burbs" with his wife and soon-to-arrive first child. Instead, they've crafted an enviable family setting in the heart of the city — a prime example of modern multigenerational living.





Rosen Architecture

Atrium House Renovation

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Anna Levin and Tal Rosen

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Firehouse Contracting

ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS: Patrick Rosen, AIA; Jae Hong Ahn, AIA; and Robert Murphy

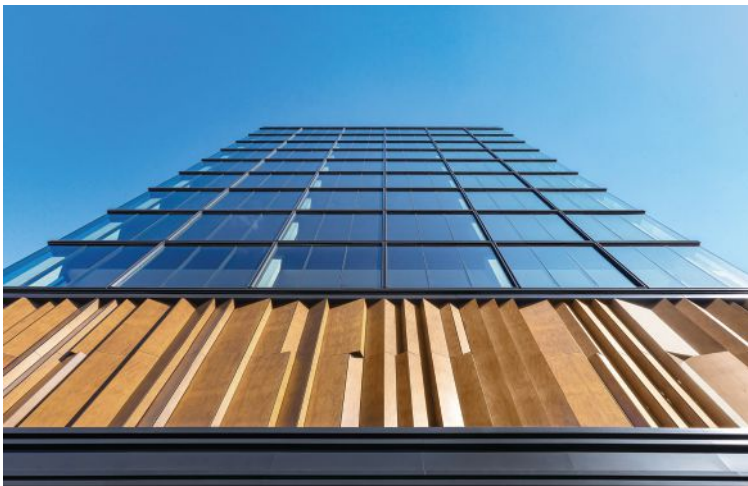
In 1962, architect Y.C. Wong won an honor award from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for his design of a townhouse development known as the Atrium Houses in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Driven by the client's needs, architects at Rosen Architecture set out to complete an interior renovation to combine two units into one to suit a family of six. Renovating this architecturally distinctive building involved a balance of honoring the original character while making the house suitable for contemporary living. Addressing circulation was crucial, with an open plan allowing movement and maintaining views of the central courtyard — the sole source of natural light and ventilation.

KATRINA WITTKAMP



KATRINA WITTKAMP

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TALL BUILDING | LERCH BATES PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

Lamar Johnson Collaborative

Fulton East

Chicago, Illinois

CLIENT: Parkside Realty**GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** Clayco**COLLABORATORS:** *Structural Engineer:* BASE; *MEP Engineer:* Huen Electric**ARCHITECTURE TEAM MEMBERS:** Jonny Noble; Tyler Meyr, AIA; Chris Kupcho, Assoc. AIA; Austin Hickey; and Drew Ranieri, AIA

A newly constructed 12-story office and retail building located at the heart of Chicago's Fulton Market District is the nation's first next-generation office building designed to address employee health, safety, and wellness in today's post-pandemic business environment. The building features state-of-the-art wellness technology and efficient 10,605-square-foot floor plates to enable customizable planning options designed to accommodate safe social distancing. It offers tenants floor-to-ceiling glass, public balconies, and private rooftops, providing direct views of the Chicago skyline while maximizing natural daylight in each suite. These features are all intentionally incorporated as attractive elements for corporate tenants seeking space in the burgeoning Fulton Market neighborhood.



Carl Sergio, AIA



Richie Hands, AIA



Ryan Gann, AIA

Forging Their Own Paths

Chicago's 2024 Young Architects Award Winners on Expanding Access to the Profession, Design Excellence, and Leadership

by **Dillon Goodson, Affil. AIA Chicago**

Ryan Gann, AIA, grew up sketching floor plans, inspired by the celebrity homes he saw on *MTV Cribs*. At a similar age, **Richie Hands, AIA**, took to the arts, developing an interest in the intersection of creativity and science that lasts to this day. Meanwhile, **Carl Sergio, AIA**, was searching for a way to put his psychology and art degrees to work. Despite their different pathways, each of these AIA Chicago members found their way to architecture. Last spring, they were recognized — along with more than two dozen of their peers from elsewhere in the U.S. and around the world — with AIA's 2024 Young Architects Award.

The award program is built on a simple idea: Emerging talent deserves recognition. Since the 1990s, AIA has honored young architects with the Young Architects Award, celebrating their exceptional work. Eligible candidates are AIA members who have shown outstanding leadership and made significant contributions to the architecture profession within 10 years of their initial licensure. This award is distinct from the AIA Chicago Foundation's Dubin Family Young Architect Award, which specifically recognizes young architects from the Chicago area.

Consideration for the Young Architects Award begins with a rigorous application process. Candidates must show their dedication to the value of design, practice, or education, as well as their contributions to the profession through mentoring, industry involvement, and their commitment to community service. They must also demonstrate the "ripple effect" they have had on the profession — impact that goes beyond the daily work of their practice or their immediate community.

For the three Chicago-based awardees from the 2024 class, demonstrating such a ripple effect involved emphasizing a mix of program development, speaking engagements, publications, and giving back through mentorship and professional service.

"I often tell people that my career is sort of a partnership between design and service," said Gann, who recently sat down for a conversation with **Jen Masengarb, Assoc. AIA**, and his fellow awardees. He described his recognition through the Young Architects Award as a "great forum" for an architect to look back at an early point in their career and reflect on the impact they have made.

For Gann, who started his own architecture and design practice in 2021 after spending his formative years at Ross Barney Architects, this impact has included working on a range of projects — from business plans to master plans and vision statements to visionary buildings. It has also involved his service as the youngest member to be elected to AIA's Board of Directors as an at-large director.

Accustomed to navigating an age gap from early in his career, Gann began searching for entry points for his fellow young architects, who he noticed were underrepresented at the table. "I started to take on this philosophy of bringing my own chair into the room: bringing others, opening the door and leaving the door open. And that's matured into my current leadership philosophy, which is, if I can shatter the glass ceiling or open a door for someone else, that's the work," he said.

Despite efforts to elevate more young professionals into leadership roles, many aspiring architects never make it into the profession in the first place. According to data from NCARB, women represent only about one in four architects, even though they make up roughly half of the working-age population in the U.S. For people of color, the figure is just one in five.

Hands, a senior associate at Lamar Johnson Collaborative, is focused on expanding access to the profession, leading a

national movement to engage underrepresented youth in architecture. This work began early in his career, gaining steam after he got involved with the leadership of I-NOMA, the Illinois chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). Through his involvement, he has helped grow Project Pipeline, the organization's signature program focused on increasing the number of Black and brown architects.

In his first year with I-NOMA, Hands expanded Project Pipeline from a one-day workshop with fewer than 10 students to a four-day camp with more than 80 participants. Over the next two years, the camp grew, adding a half-day kick-off and securing a generous donation from Equity Office, which funded a private tour of Willis Tower. As national chair of NOMA's Project Pipeline, he aligned the curriculum nationally and led the first online and hybrid camps. In 2023, NOMA held a record 29 camps across 31 cities.

"I've always been fairly bullish with [making sure] the quietest voice or the lowest on the proverbial org chart had a voice," said Hands. Thanks to his efforts and those of his peers, NOMA membership has surged from around 800 members in 2018 to nearly 4,000 today. In another encouraging sign, colleges and universities are graduating a larger share of minority architects. As a result, "doubling the number of Black architects in the next five to six years is actually achievable," he said.

Embarking on a career in architecture is just the first step in a long and challenging professional journey. For many architects, regardless of their background, landing that crucial first job often proves to be the toughest hurdle. Sergio knows this struggle firsthand.

"Part of my origin story ... is that graduating was just a real challenge in the [Great Recession]. And I thought it just doesn't have to be this hard," said Sergio, a senior project architect at Wright Heerema Architects. "Once I had kind of figured out how to navigate myself into the field and into AIA Chicago, I just felt like I should do my best to help other people — to make it easier for the next generation."

Sergio got involved early on with AIA Chicago's Bridge mentorship program, which connects AIA Fellows with rising professionals in their first three to 10 years of practice. A graduate of the program himself, Sergio has led the Bridge program since 2016, elevating it to a national model for other AIA chapters. During this time, he has facilitated group discussions on career advancement for nearly 200 emerging leaders and their FAIA mentors. The diverse backgrounds of each mentee are one of the most rewarding aspects of the work, according to Sergio, and help reinforce that there are many pathways to the profession.

"There's no one way to be an architect," he said. "Different people come at it from different perspectives." CA

AIA's 2024 Young Architects Award winners were selected by a six-member jury and announced in April. Applications for the 2025 cycle have already closed. For more information and to apply in a future year, visit [AIA.org/Design-Excellence/Awards](https://www.aia.org/Design-Excellence/Awards).



► Watch Jen Masengarb's full interview with Chicago's 2024 Young Architects Award winners at AIACHicago.org/YoungArchitectAward2024.



EVENING CUE

BEHIND THE SCREENS

“Behind the Screens” is a new series developed by AIA Chicago’s Editorial Advisory Committee to highlight the members of the chapter. Throughout the year, this series will showcase Fellows, Architects, Associates, and Affiliate members. If you’d like to nominate someone, please write to editor@aiachicago.org.

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What advice would you give to a younger version of yourself?

Be a consultant to architects, not a “sales rep.” I have been with Pella for 22 years. I only began working closely with architects in the last 12 years. As a younger rep in my 20s and 30s, I had called on architects, but I really did not have much success. I didn't understand what architects needed. After a self-evaluation of my process and some meaningful discussions with some prominent leaders in the architecture community, I decided to take a different approach. I quit giving sales pitches and elevator speeches and started to listen to what they needed, not what I wanted them to hear. Through this process, I transitioned from a “sales rep” to a “consultant.” Once I became a consultant, I learned what architects wanted from their material reps: someone to work with them to solve problems, be technically proficient not only with your products but building science in general, let them know what can affect a budget, timely responses to inquiries, market information, and in some cases just be there for them as a resource. Through this new approach in the latter part of my career, I feel I have made more of an impact.

What gets you out of bed in the morning?

Getting three teenage boys (Xander, Hayden, and Mason) up for school is no easy task. Doing this jumpstarts my day. I feel ready to take on whatever the day brings. One must approach each day differently. In my role as senior architectural consultant in the Chicagoland area, I get pulled in many different directions with all kinds of challenges and obstacles. Over the years, I have learned how to juggle many tasks at once and wear many different hats. I need to be my clients' expert on windows and doors. When a challenge presents itself, I do my best to offer the best solution available.

Finding balance is hard. As a father, I need to be a role model for my children. I am a hard worker, but I always have time for my family. Family is my top priority. It's not always about bringing home a check. One must be there for your family as well. I do my very best to make every [extracurricular] activity I can for my family. It is important to me to show support in what my children do. I do occasionally miss a concert or baseball game, but I always have a discussion with my boys as to why; so they know if I am not there, there is a good reason. Then there is my lovely wife, Kristin. She is my partner in everything — we are a team! She is a successful art teacher in the Homewood School District and is also in her 22nd year in that position. I could not be as successful as I am in my job without her loving support. She is there sharing the role of parenting with me every step of the way. I love you, honey!

What has been the most valuable resource to you in your career? (This can be a mentor, scholarship, organization, initiative, program, tool, etc.)

In my opinion, over the span of 22 years, I have had the pleasure of working with some of the most outstanding people at Pella. Without the dedication and hard work of so many before me, I would not be where I am today. In every aspect of our organization, we have some of the most professional individuals

from warehouse and delivery to order fulfillment, service, sales, installation teams, and management. Coming up through the system, I had many mentors [who] trained me and taught me the unwritten parts of the job. I learned to always evaluate my own performance from an outside perspective. This type of thought process allows me to change aspects of my job and improve myself with a constant belief that there is always room for improvement.

Also, I have to say my best resource is my clients. Many of them have been instrumental in my development. I am not an architect, and I do not pretend to be. However, I feel I am a student of architecture when having discussions with my clients. I have engaging discussions that have nothing to do with windows or doors. Often, these conversations come from questions I have regarding elements of a project — “What inspired this type of detail?” or “Why a clock on the cupola?” During these discussions, I feel like a student and the client is my instructor. I learn something new every day, and I'm fortunate to have so many wonderful teachers I work with!

What is the most effective step you've taken in your work toward a more sustainable built environment?

At Pella, we are committed to a better future and believe our journey is never complete. For a better future, we need better homes and a better world.


Our products, processes, and people are key to improving sustainability. Our founder Pete Kuyper once said, “We recognize our responsibilities as stewards of our natural resources and the environment and will avoid wasteful or harmful disregard of the environmental effects of our operations.” Pella aspires to hold true to this belief.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions as a SmartWay Affiliate — with 100 percent of our private fleet and 75 percent of our fleet partners aligned with this program — we've achieved 839 metric tons of carbon diversion, which equates to 13,983 urban trees allowed to grow for 10 years.

What is your favorite quote about architecture?

“We usually get it right after all this time. That's why it's called practicing architecture.” — Stuart Cohen, FAIA, and Julie Hacker, FAIA

Stuart and Julie are contextualists. They carefully consider the physical surroundings of a proposed building site, as well as the historical significance of the location. Their goal is to create architectural designs that seamlessly integrate with their environment. They jokingly claim to “always seem to get it right,” a testament to the extensive research and creative effort they invest in each project.

Architecture is not simply a matter of throwing together a design and hoping for the best. It involves a meticulous process of careful planning and consideration of multiple factors. The ultimate measure of a successful project is when all these elements come together to create a beloved space for the clients and their families. 



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