

March 2025

# ARCHITYPE

THE DIGITAL MAGAZINE OF AIA CONNECTICUT

## WOMEN'S HISTORY *Month*

Moving Forward  
Together: Women in  
Architecture and Their  
Lasting Legacy

Mastering the Journey  
of Modern Professional  
Womanhood

AIA CT Leaders  
Advocate for the  
Profession at 2025  
Leadership Summit  
and Hill Day

Jay Brotman Elevated  
to AIA Fellow

Tai Soo Kim, FAIA to  
Receive the 2025 CAF  
Leadership Award



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## FEATURES

- 5 FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
- 7 PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**
- 8** Moving Forward Together: Women in Architecture and Their Lasting Legacy
- 11** Letters to Our Daughters: Mastering the Journey of Modern Professional Womanhood
- 12** Navigating the Architectural Business Path
- 14** AIA Connecticut Leaders Advocate for the Profession at 2025 Leadership Summit and Hill Day
- 16** Jay Brotman Elevated to AIA Fellow
- 18** The 2025 CAF Leadership Award to Tai Soo Kim, FAIA
- 19** Innovative Construction Methods using Cross-Laminated Timber
- 20** Perfect Drawings: Client Expectations Often Don't Reflect Reality
- 22** NCARB by the Numbers - Connecticut
- 24** 2024 AIA Medal for Academic Excellence
- 25** Celebrating Tom Quarticelli: A Legacy of Excellence in Architecture
- 26** Hoffmann Architects + Engineers Promotes Guilherme C. Pinho, Senada Dushaj and Nicholas Moroniti
- 28** Kristin Hawkins AIA Joins Pickard Chilton as Associate Principal
- 30** Redding Selects Pirie Associates to lead the Georgetown Revitalization Master Plan
- 31** TSKP STUDIO Announces Opening Date for Astronomy Center
- 32** Russell and Dawson Inc. Earns Excellence in Construction Award 2024 From CT ABC
- 33** Desai Chia in Forbes Top 200 Residential Architects in America
- 34 NATIONAL NEWS**  
Leading By Example
- 36** Architects are Excited About the Potential of AI, but Concerns Abound
- 38 OUT & ABOUT**  
QTL Headquarters Tour & Program
- 39** Calendar

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Members,

**W**ith March being Women's History Month, we take this moment to celebrate the trailblazing women who have shaped architecture and continue to drive progress in our profession. Their resilience, creativity, and leadership have left an indelible mark on our built environment, inspiring future generations to break barriers and reimagine the spaces we inhabit.

The last week of February brought a powerful reminder of the strength and influence of both men and women in our field during the AIA Leadership Summit 2024 and AIA Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C. Once again it was

a platform for architects across the nation to advocate for policies that enhance our profession and communities.

During the Summit, inspiring keynote speakers and panelists highlighted the significance of inclusive leadership to continue to drive innovation, from championing climate-responsive design to leading firms and organizations that prioritize diversity, equity, and accessibility. These voices are shaping the future of the profession, ensuring that the next generation has greater opportunities to thrive.

AIA's Day on the Hill reinforced the importance of advocacy, with diverse leaders engaging policymakers on issues such as design freedom for federal architecture, arbitrary fee limitations for federal contracts, affordable housing programs, community resiliency, and tax incentives for architects. Their presence in these critical conversations underscores the need for unique perspectives in shaping policies that impact our communities. Representation matters—not just in design but in leadership and decision-making at every level.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us not only recognize the achievements of women in architecture but also commit to supporting and uplifting their work. We encourage firms, institutions, and individuals to continue fostering mentorship, sponsorship, and leadership opportunities for women in the profession.

By continuing to advocate for equity and inclusion, we ensure that architecture reflects the full breadth of talent and vision that defines our society. Together, let's honor the past, elevate the present, and build a more inclusive future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina Calabro". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray background.

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# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



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To Our Valued Members,

As many of you know, the AIA held its annual Leadership Summit and Hill Day from February 23 to February 26 in Washington, D.C. This year, nearly 400 architects and component leaders attended. The opening keynote addressed the "State of the Architectural Profession," offering valuable insights into where we currently stand.



On the first day, AIA leadership shared that the organization is on strong footing, now with over 100,000 members. We also heard from candidates for the 2026 AIA leadership board, who outlined their vision for an AIA that is accountable to its members. Our keynote speaker, Baratunde Thurston, electrified the room with his presentation on How to Citizen. He encouraged architects to engage at all levels of government, sharing personal stories that illustrated how tragedy can inspire positive change. He urged us to find hope, even in the most challenging moments.

Throughout the summit, we participated in various sessions. I took part in one focused on climate change, discussing how architects can play a key role in reducing carbon footprints. Another session focused on local leadership, exploring how we can foster transformative leadership within our components to create inclusive and equitable communities. We also learned about new licensure competency requirements from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). The main change is that NCARB will no longer set educational requirements for licensure; instead, individual licensing boards will take on that responsibility. NCARB's focus will now be on 16 core competencies that candidates must meet.

I also had the opportunity to meet architects working in a variety of fields, including mayors, real estate developers, and environmental advocates.

We weren't the only ones advocating in Washington. Associations from various industries were also present. For example, the Connecticut Hospital Association was advocating for continued funding, which indirectly supports architectural work by expanding design opportunities and enhancing healthcare access for our employees.

Architects are more than designers; we shape lives beyond the drawing board. As Baratunde Thurston emphasized, How to Citizen means advocating for policies that extend beyond our profession. This includes supporting environmental protection, improving building regulations, and safeguarding the artistic freedom of architects to create without governmental restrictions. Just as we defend the right to write, sculpt, or film freely, we must also defend our right to design freely, without the constraints of political ideologies or unnecessary regulations.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we are building a stronger future for architecture.

Marc Guerrier Andre, AIA, NCARB  
2025 President - AIA Connecticut

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# Moving Forward Together: Women in A

**A**s we celebrate Women's History Month under the theme Moving Forward Together, we recognize the extraordinary contributions of women who have shaped the architectural profession. Architecture, a field historically dominated by men, has seen the rise of trailblazing women who have redefined the built environment and inspired generations to come. This month, let us acknowledge their perseverance, honor their achievements, and commit to fostering a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

*By Gina Calabro, Hon. AIACT*

## **The Strength of Women in Architecture**

Women have played an instrumental role in shaping the spaces we inhabit, often without the widespread recognition they deserve. From Zaha Hadid's revolutionary designs that defied conventional forms to Julia Morgan's pioneering work in Beaux-Arts architecture, their contributions have left an indelible mark. Today, women architects continue to challenge norms, lead sustainable initiatives, and prioritize inclusive design that serves diverse communities.

Connecticut has been home to several influential women architects whose work continues to inspire. Alice Washburn, known for her beautifully crafted Colonial Revival homes, left a legacy of residential designs that seamlessly blend form and function.

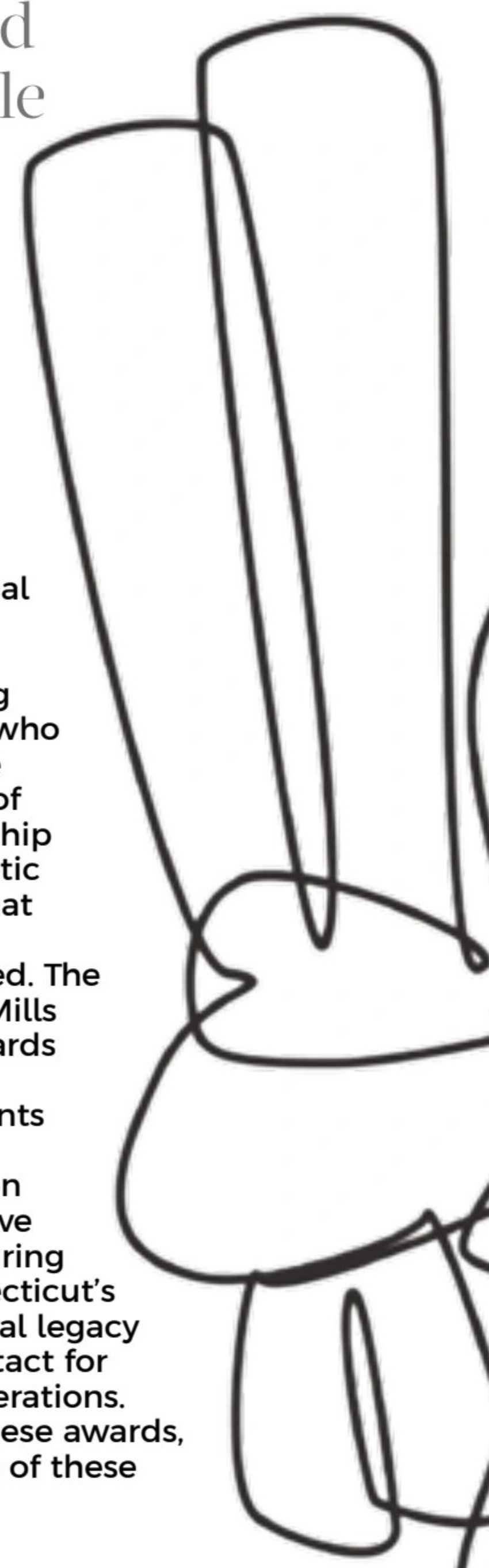
Elizabeth Mills Brown, a historian and architect, played a crucial role in preserving Connecticut's architectural heritage, ensuring that historic structures remain integral to the cultural fabric of the state.

Additionally, Theodate Pope Riddle was one of the first licensed female architects in the U.S., known for designing the historic Hill-Stead Museum and founding Avon Old Farms School. Margaret Van Pelt Vilas made significant contributions to residential and commercial architecture in New Haven while fostering Pan-American architectural collaboration. Larch Campbell Renshaw played a vital role in Connecticut's architectural literature and residential design, advancing the field through her work and writing.

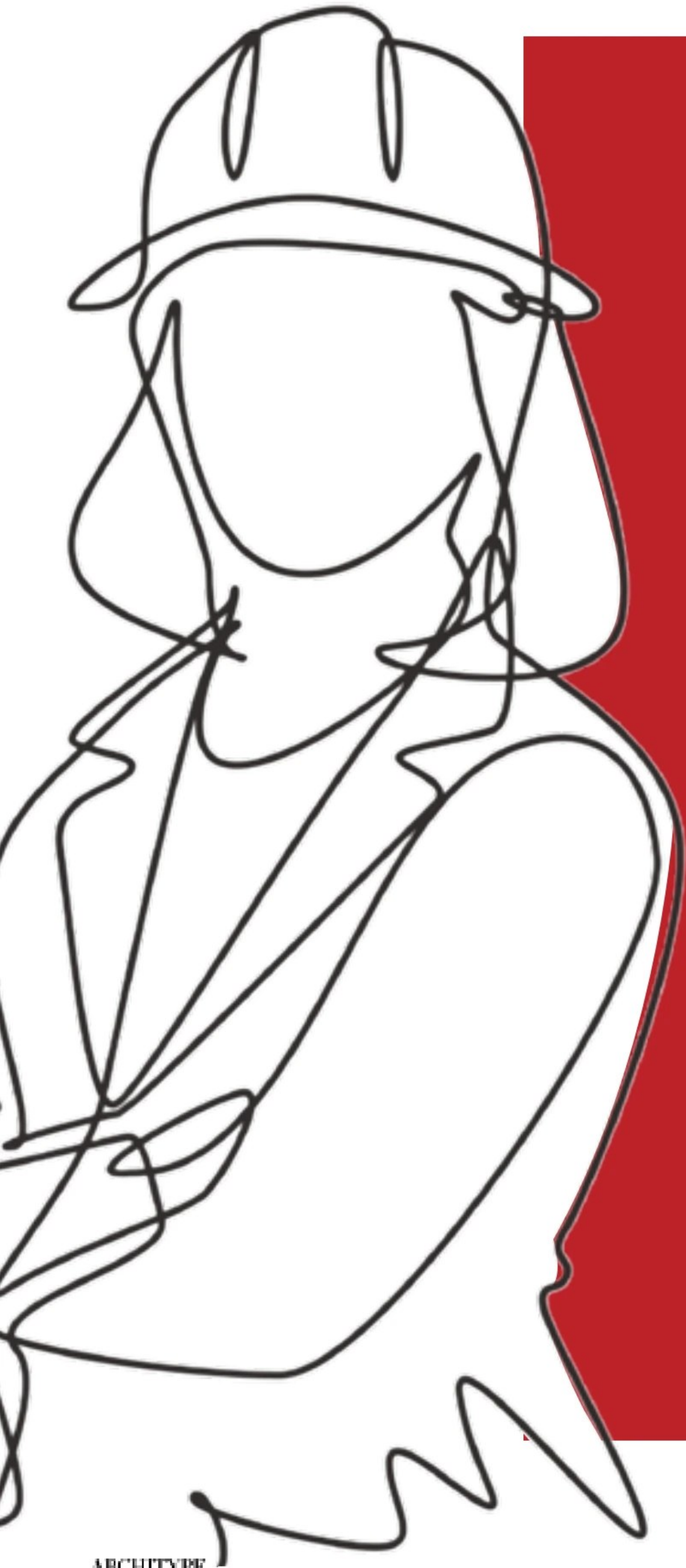
More recent influential architects include Alberta Raffl Pfeiffer, who established her own practice in 1933 and completed over 170 residential designs in Connecticut, focusing on English country-style homes. Elizabeth Roberts, a contemporary architect, has made an impact through thoughtful renovations that blend historical preservation with modern design, including a notable farmhouse restoration in Litchfield County.

AIA Connecticut honors two of these female innovators for their contributions through the annual Alice Washburn Awards and the

Elizabeth Mills Brown Awards. The Alice Washburn Awards celebrate excellence in traditional residential design, recognizing architects who uphold the principles of craftsmanship and aesthetic integrity that Washburn championed. The Elizabeth Mills Brown Awards highlight achievements in historic preservation and adaptive reuse, ensuring that Connecticut's architectural legacy remains intact for future generations. Through these awards, the impact of these



# Architecture and Their Lasting Legacy



“

**Women have played an instrumental role in shaping the spaces we inhabit, often without the widespread recognition they deserve. Today, women architects continue to challenge norms, lead sustainable initiatives, and prioritize inclusive design that serves diverse communities.**

”

pioneering women continues to inspire and shape the profession.

In addition to these honors, AIA Connecticut also recognizes exemplary female architects through the Women in Architecture Awards. This award celebrates licensed women architects who demonstrate exceptional design skills, advocacy for equitable and sustainable practices, and leadership within the profession.

Recent recipients include:



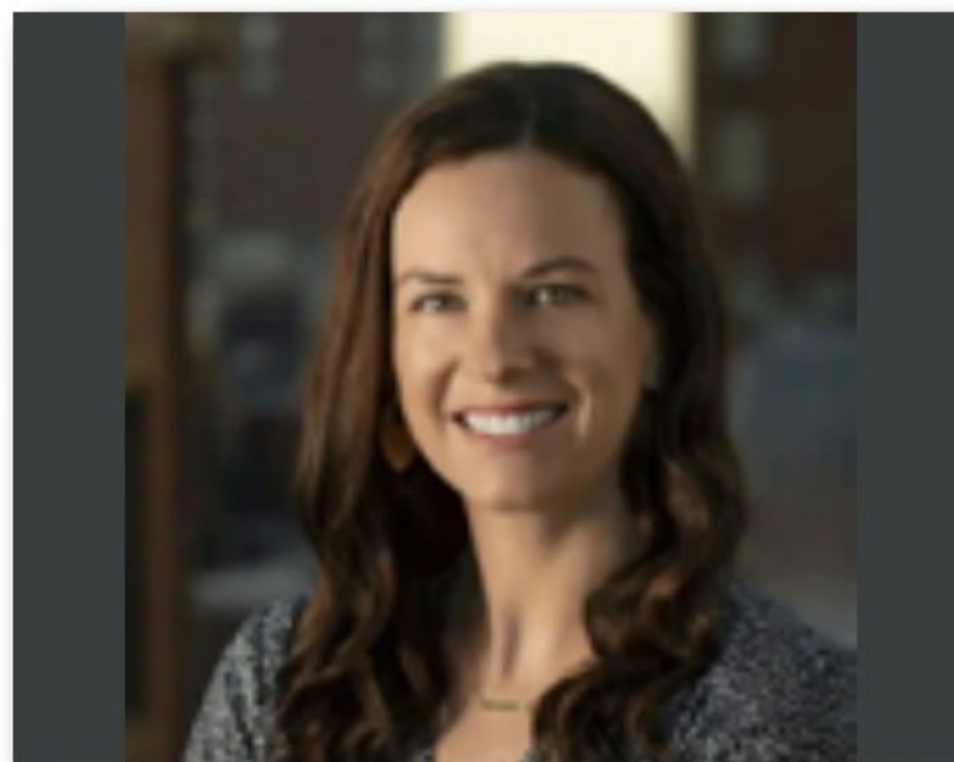
- **2024: Elizabeth Hedde, AIA**, Principal at Centerbrook Architects, acknowledged for her architectural innovation and dedication to fostering inclusivity, particularly for young women underrepresented in architecture.



- **2023: Amanda Martocchio, AIA**, founder and principal of Amanda Martocchio Architecture, recognized for her clarity of intention, rigorous detailing, and focus on sustainable materials and building practices.  
**Ming Thompson, AIA, IIDA, NOMA**, co-founder of Atelier Cho Thompson, honored for her commitment to inclusive design and mentorship within the profession.



- **2022: Marissa Dionne Mead, AIA, NOMA, LEED AP**, Associate Principal and Director of Art Integration at Svigals + Partners, recognized for her leadership in integrating art and architecture to strengthen communities.  
**Nancy Clayton, AIA**, honored for her lasting contributions to Connecticut's architectural landscape, her mentorship of emerging architects, and her commitment to excellence in design and community engagement.



- **2021: Katelyn Chapin, AIA**, recognized for her commitment to advancing the profession through community-focused leadership, meaningful client collaboration, and fostering the next generation of architects.



- **2020: Karin Patriquin, AIA**, honored for her innovative design approach that integrates sustainability, wellness, and inclusivity. As a leader in environmentally responsible design, her work focuses on creating spaces that promote well-being while addressing the needs of diverse communities.

These awards not only celebrate individual achievements but also inspire future generations of women in architecture to pursue excellence and drive positive change within the profession.

Women's History Month is more than a celebration – it is a call to action. Women in architecture have demonstrated resilience in the face of systemic challenges, yet representation remains an ongoing battle. It is imperative that we create pathways for young women to enter the field, advocate for policies that support work-life balance, and ensure equal opportunities for leadership positions.

As we honor the resilience, courage, and achievements of the women who came before us, let us also recognize the architects of today who are shaping history in real-time. Through mentorship, advocacy, and breaking barriers, we can ensure that the future of architecture is one where women thrive.

May this month inspire all women in architecture—and beyond—to keep building, dreaming, and moving forward together.



## Letters to Our Daughters: Mastering the Journey of Modern Professional Womanhood

By Julia Su Jack, AIA, NOMA

In architecture, we design with the future in mind—shaping skylines, reimagining spaces, and ensuring our work stands the test of time—all for the common good. But what about the legacies we leave behind, beyond our buildings? What if the most enduring structure we could build isn't made of wood, brick, steel, or concrete, but is forged from the wisdom and resilience of elder women—their lived experiences—shaping and strengthening the next generation?

This is the heart of “Letters to Our Daughters,” a newsletter born from love, legacy, and a deep understanding that success must be built on more than accolades and awards that eventually die in dusty corners of rooms.

Inspired by my own daughter and the reality that I may not always be there to guide her, “Letters to Our Daughters” is a call to action for women to recognize that true success for us is not measured in promotions, projects, or prestige—but in the wisdom to navigate

life's challenges with clarity, character, confidence, and care because we as women are the heart of our communities, “we are the glue,” and when the glue becomes less sticky everything falls apart.

Many young women today chase the same mountains we once did, only to realize—decades later—that they lead to nowhere. We older women, have been there, done that, have the t-shirt, the heartbreak, and lost time to prove it. And that's why “Letters to Our Daughters” exists—to equip the next generation with insights we wish we had sooner. To ensure they aren't wasting years climbing the wrong summits. To help them balance ambition with peace, achievement with fulfillment, and confidence with humility.

This isn't just another newsletter filled with platitudes. It's real talk about real struggles. We address the anxieties that keep women up at night:

- The fear of falling behind: Why the race you're running may not be the one that matters.

- The myth of “having it all”: Understanding what “balance” really looks like.
- Navigating career & purpose: Because climbing the ladder is meaningless if it's against the wrong wall.
- Self-worth beyond titles: How to build a legacy that outlasts any job, title, or paycheck.
- And, perhaps, most importantly: that success is not just about where we go, it's about who we become.

Our foremothers, realizing that their duty to guide extended beyond just their biological daughters, stood on each other's shoulders so we all could see further. Now, it's our turn to do the same for those coming after us. Letters to Our Daughters is more than a newsletter; it's a collective of women committed to making sure the next generation rises—stronger, wiser, and bolder.

*Julia Jack, AIA, NOMA, is an architect with the City of Hartford and Secretary of the AIA CT Board.*

# NAVIGATING THE ARCHITECTURAL BUSINESS PATH

## An AIA Connecticut Three-Part Series on the Lifecycle of Firm Ownership

The Small Firms Exchange (SFX) and the Professional Practice Knowledge Community (PPKC) are coming together to present a compelling three-part series aimed at guiding architects and design professionals through the lifecycle of firm ownership.

Whether you are considering launching your own firm, looking to expand and strengthen your practice, or preparing for succession and transition, this series will provide valuable insights from industry leaders and experienced practitioners.

### **Part One: From Vision to Reality – A Panel Discussion on Starting Your Own Firm (March 26)**

For many architects and design professionals, the dream of establishing an independent practice is a thrilling but daunting prospect. The first session of the series, “From Vision to Reality,” will bring together a panel of seasoned professionals who have successfully navigated the challenges of starting their own firms in the last 3-5 years.

This discussion will explore key considerations such as business planning, financial management, legal structures, and brand positioning. Panelists will share personal experiences, shedding light on the early hurdles of entrepreneurship, including securing initial clients, defining a market niche, and building a professional network to transition from an employee to an owner and how to cultivate resilience and adaptability in the competitive design industry.

### **Part Two: Elevating Your Firm – Insights into Growth, Structure, and Differentiation (April 23)**

Once a firm has been established, the next challenge is growth and sustainability. The second session, “Elevating Your Firm,” will delve into the strategic steps required to scale a small practice while maintaining quality and design integrity.

This session will focus on best practices for structuring teams, operational efficiency, financial management, and expanding service offerings. Industry experts will discuss how to position a firm within a competitive marketplace, differentiate services, and attract high-value clients. Additionally, the panel will address common growing pains, including talent acquisition, leadership development, and workflow optimization.

For firm owners looking to refine their business strategies and foster long-term stability, this session will offer practical takeaways to enhance operations and establish a strong market presence.

### **Part Three: Succession/Merger Planning or Ownership Transition (May 21)**

The final session in the series, “Succession/Merger Planning or Ownership Transition,” will address the critical, yet often overlooked, aspect of firm longevity—what happens when it’s time to step away or transition leadership.

Firm founders and leaders must plan for the future to ensure the continuity and legacy of their practice. This discussion will cover different transition models, including internal succession, mergers, acquisitions, and external buyouts. Panelists will offer insights into preparing a firm for leadership transition, structuring deals, and maintaining cultural and design ethos throughout the process.

Hear firsthand experiences from firms that have successfully navigated the financial, legal, and operational elements of ownership transition. Whether you are years away from retirement or actively considering your exit strategy, this session will provide guidance on how to plan for a smooth and sustainable transition.

Firm ownership is a journey that evolves over time, requiring different skill sets and strategies at each stage. This three-part series is designed to provide actionable knowledge, peer learning, and expert guidance to those at various points in their professional trajectories.



Whether you are an emerging professional considering your first steps, a firm owner seeking growth strategies, or a leader preparing for transition, this series offers essential guidance to help you navigate the challenges and opportunities of firm ownership.

Don't miss this opportunity to engage with experts, connect with peers, and gain critical insights into the evolving landscape of firm ownership. Check the AIA CT Events calendar for registration and updates.





# AIA Connecticut Leaders Advocate for the Profession at 2025 Leadership Summit and Hill Day

**A**t the end of February, AIA Connecticut 2025 President Marc Andre, AIA; President-elect Mike Ayles, FAIA; National Associate Council Representative Ersal Llakmani, Assoc. AIA; and Executive Director/CEO Gina Calabro, Hon. AIACT joined architecture leaders from across the country in Washington, D.C., for the 2025 AIA Leadership Summit and Hill Day. This annual event serves as a premier gathering for AIA component leaders, offering a platform for leadership development, advocacy, and networking within the architecture profession.

The AIA Leadership Summit provides invaluable opportunities for leadership training, policy discussions, and industry collaboration, equipping attendees with the tools to enhance their impact at local, state, and national levels. Participants engage in sessions that address pressing architectural and built environment challenges, including resilience, housing policy, building codes, DEI, and the future of the profession.

A key highlight of the event was Hill Day, during which AIA Connecticut representatives, alongside 500 peers from across the country, visited Capitol Hill to advocate for the interests of architects and the communities they serve.

## AIA focused on five key issues for this Congress:

1. **Protecting Design Freedom** AIA continues to fight against efforts to impose a mandated federal architectural style. We strongly support the Democracy in Design Act, which safeguards communities' ability to determine the architectural style of federal buildings. Design excellence should reflect innovation and local character, not be dictated by Washington.
2. **Housing Affordability and Supply** Architects are key players in addressing the housing crisis. We urged Congress to expand funding for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Community Development Block Grants, and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to increase the supply of affordable and workforce housing.
3. **Resilience and Disaster Mitigation** With natural disasters causing over \$350 billion in damage last year alone, AIA members called for increased funding for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program and Flood Mitigation Assistance. Investing in resilient design today saves taxpayer dollars tomorrow.
4. **Fixing Federal Design Fee Limits** The outdated six percent cap on architectural and

engineering fees for federal projects stifles competition and disproportionately hurts small firms. We are pushing Congress to update the Federal Acquisition Regulation to ensure fair compensation for design professionals.

5. **Tax Policy That Supports Innovation** AIA supports extending key tax provisions such as the Research and Development Tax Credit and the 199A Pass-Through Deduction, which help architecture firms stay competitive, invest in new technologies, and grow their businesses.

Through these efforts, AIA Connecticut continues to ensure that the voice of the architecture profession is heard at the highest levels of government while empowering its leaders to drive positive change within their communities.

If you were not able to attend AIA Hill Day, you can still take action by sending your Member of Congress a letter on these legislative issues and keeping your eyes open for upcoming requests. Your voice matters, and continued engagement is key to ensuring that the policies shaping our profession and communities remain a priority.

Members also heard from the candidates for office who will be elected at the Annual Business Meeting on June 4. Learn more about the candidates for the AIA National board [HERE](#).





**AIA**  
**Leadership Summit 2025**



# Jay Brotman Elevated to AIA Fellow



**J**ay Brotman, a distinguished architect and Principal at Svigals + Partners, an FCA Company, has been elevated to the prestigious College of Fellows by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). This honor, the highest membership recognition within the AIA, is awarded to architects who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in the field and made significant contributions to architecture and society on a national level.

Brotman's career has been defined by a collaborative design approach and an exceptional ability to orchestrate complex projects. His leadership has shaped numerous award-winning endeavors, ranging from cutting-edge research facilities to high-performance buildings that inspire both clients and colleagues. Through a user-centric design philosophy, he has successfully guided teams through intricate design challenges, resulting in spaces that are not only highly functional but also deeply responsive to their context.

A notable example of his work is the design of the new Sandy Hook Elementary School in

Newtown, Connecticut. Following the tragic events of 2012, Brotman led the architectural efforts to create a school that balances security with a nurturing learning environment. The design incorporates subtle security measures integrated seamlessly into the building's aesthetics, providing a safe yet welcoming atmosphere for students and staff.

Beyond his architectural practice, Brotman has demonstrated a strong commitment to the profession through his involvement with the Connecticut Architecture Foundation (CAF). He has served as both a board member and President, contributing to the foundation's mission of advancing education and professional growth in architecture within Connecticut. The CAF achieves this by funding educational programs, providing grants for research, and awarding scholarships to promising students pursuing architectural education.

Brotman's elevation to the AIA College of Fellows underscores his dedication to excellence in architecture and his lasting impact on the profession. He will be honored alongside other new fellows at the Investiture and AIA Awards Gala on June 5, 2025, in Boston, as part of the AIA25 conference. This event celebrates architectural leadership and innovation, recognizing individuals who have made meaningful contributions to the built environment.

*For more information on the AIA fellowship program and its impact on the profession, visit the AIA's website.*





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# The 2025 CAF Leadership Award to Tai Soo Kim, FAIA

By Michael Crosbie, FAIA

**T**he Connecticut Architecture Foundation announces that architect Tai Soo Kim, FAIA, of the Hartford-based firm TSKP STUDIO has been selected by the Foundation's Board of Directors as the 2025 Distinguished Leadership Award winner. The award recognizes individuals who contribute to the betterment of the built environment not only in Connecticut, but on a national or international scale. The award was instituted in 2003 and among past winners are Cesar Pelli, FAIA; Andres Duany, FAIA, and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, FAIA; Elizabeth Gray, FAIA, and Alan Organschi; and Patricia and John Patkau.

Born and raised in Korea, Tai Soo came to the United States in 1961 with his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Architecture from Seoul National University to study at Yale University under Paul Rudolph. After graduation from Yale Tai Soo worked with Philip Johnson, opening his own practice, the Hartford Design Group, with two colleagues in 1970.

Tai Soo's work has been recognized by more than 58 local and national awards and has been published in national and international architecture journals. His firm's portfolio includes master plans and a wide range of building types--from nationally acclaimed educational facilities to internationally acclaimed corporate and cultural facilities--such as the University of Hartford's Harry Jack Gray Center, and the Research and Development Park for LG Pharmaceutical/Polymers Division. In 1986, Tai Soo completed the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul. In 1999, he won the commission to design the new

U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia. Recent projects include the new Bloomfield Prosser Library, Farmington High School, and PACES Dormitories for the American School for the Deaf in West Hartford. An exhibition of Tai Soo Kim's architecture was mounted on the 30th anniversary of the opening of the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Korea.

"Tai Soo Kim Retrospective: Working In Two Worlds" celebrated his career, founded on the design principles of empiricism and rationalism adapted to the varied locations of his works.

In 1986, Tai Soo was elected to the AIA's prestigious College of Fellows.

Tai Soo has served on the University of Hartford's Board of Regents and the Advisory Board for Hartford's Department of Architecture for two decades, and has funded several scholarships. Dedicated to developing the next generation of architects, Kim provides two competitive traveling fellowships for selected graduate students from the University of Hartford Department of Architecture and a Korean institution.



As part of receiving the Distinguished Leadership Award, Tai Soo will present a public lecture at the University of Hartford's Wilde Auditorium on Tuesday, April 29, at 6:00 PM, followed by a reception and awards dinner on campus, the proceeds of which support scholarships offered by the Connecticut Architecture Foundation and the University of Hartford Department of Architecture. More details on the lecture and awards dinner can be found on the CAF website.

*Michael Crosbie, FAIA is a professor at UHART and a Board Member at CAF*

# Innovative Construction Methods using Cross-Laminated Timber

By Susie Mehring

**P**etra Construction was selected to provide preconstruction and construction management services for the renovation and addition of 37 Hillhouse Avenue, located within New Haven's Hillhouse Avenue Historic District. The building, known as the Graves-Gilman House, was built in the 1860s as a three-story Italianate structure. Once completed, it will serve as an academic facility for Yale University.

The 11,250 s.f. building is being renovated into an updated, accessible space for social sciences, while upgrading all building systems to meet LEED Gold certification standards and zero-carbon-ready infrastructure. New HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems will be incorporated. This project preserves the historic context by stewarding the Victorian-era building and adding a 6,500 s.f. rear addition that respects the existing architectural heritage.

Petra Construction collaborated with Yale's Office of Facilities and architectural firm Christopher Williams Architects to achieve this renovation in alignment with the university's climate action goals.

Petra Construction was asked to modernize the existing building to meet 2025 standards while also constructing a new addition featuring cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels. CLT is an innovative, sustainable building material made by layering and compressing sheets of wood at perpendicular angles, creating strong, lightweight panels with exceptional structural integrity. These panels bridge the original structure with the new addition.

This approach blends modern construction technology with traditional building methods, creating a seamless integration



of old and new. In Europe, it's common to pre-manufacture CLT panels off-site and then assemble them on location—a technique widely used in countries like Norway and Denmark. After evaluating various options, Petra Construction found a manufacturer that best met the project's timeline, ensuring efficient delivery and installation.

Every panel had to be precisely engineered to fit the existing building conditions because there was no opportunity for on-site adjustments before installation. Unlike traditional construction, where materials can be measured and modified as you go, these CLT panels arrived pre-assembled and ready for immediate installation—meaning they had to be perfect from the start.

The use of CLT garnered significant interest from the architectural industry. Architectural firm Pickard Chilton visited the site to observe the installation process, gaining insights into CLT's unique challenges and benefits. Anthony Markese, Principal at Pickard Chilton, said "The Petra team was gracious enough to give our studio members a detailed tour of the Graves-Gilman House CLT project. It was a terrific opportunity to see the structure in progress and to gain first-hand

insights from the team."

Despite careful planning, some panels required modifications in the field to accommodate slight mechanical equipment modifications, which Petra Construction adjusted on-site.

Another significant challenge was protecting the exposed wood throughout construction. Since the CLT panels will remain visible in the finished space, extensive measures had to be taken to shield them from the elements during installation, ensuring they remained in pristine condition.

This project is a testament to the balance between innovation and tradition, seamlessly integrating modern sustainable materials with a historic structure. By using CLT panels, Petra Construction connected old and new while enhancing efficiency, durability and sustainability. With a focus on LEED sustainability, the use of CLT supports reduced carbon emissions, improved energy efficiency, and responsible material sourcing. Set for completion in Summer 2025, this renovated academic facility will showcase how advanced building techniques can create sustainable spaces for future renovations.

*Susie Mehring is the Marketing & Business Development Manager at Petra Construction*

# Perfect Drawings: Client Expectations Often Don't Reflect Reality

By Scott Smith



**S**ome clients, we know, often expect perfection as to projects coming in on time, within budget, and code-compliant. Many believe the design firm's plans and specifications should be perfect, with no errors, omissions, or deviation from code. That's what the client is paying for, is it not? Of course, the goal of all designers is to meet these expectations. And most of the time, designers are quite successful in doing so. Those firms that do not meet such expectations disappear over time. Success is a wonderful thing. But we know what happens when the project doesn't come in on time, comes in over budget, or it is discovered the plans are allegedly not in strict compliance with code. Owners become unhappy and look to the design firm to 'make it right'.

We look at code compliance issues with a broad stroke since so many variables are involved. Without a contractual promise to provide plans in strict compliance with code, courts will usually determine responsibility based on the standard of care. In preparing its drawings, did the design firm act within the applicable standard of care? There are important legal distinctions between a claim of negligence (breach of the standard of care) and a breach of contract claim. It is often much easier for a client to prove negligence than a breach of contract. Remember, most breach of contract claims are simply not insurable under any firm's professional liability policy. Such policies are designed to cover negligence claims and usually exclude coverage for breach of contract claims. So, this is an important issue for design firms.

Firms should be wary of signing off on a contract that provides both a standard of care clause and a strict code compliance statement. Unless that contract clearly states the performance of professional services by the design firm will be judged solely by the standard of care, a design firm still risks negligence claims and an uninsurable breach of contract claim. Consider the following:

"Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the services of Design Professional shall be performed in accordance with and judged solely by the standard of care exercised by similar professionals providing similar services on projects similar in type, magnitude, and complexity to the Project that is the subject of this Agreement."

**Let's examine some of the reasons an agreement to provide drawings that fully comply with code is so dangerous:**

1. Legislatures, executive branches, court decisions, and governmental agencies at all levels, including but not limited to local city/village, county, state, regional, and federal levels, constantly create and modify untold numbers of rules and regulations involving zoning, handicap accessibility, historic preservation, health, environment, sustainable design, energy savings, safety, etc. The code 'environment' is not unlike our tax codes and other governmental bureaucracies.
2. People interpret these codes. We human beings are all imperfect. The people interpreting our codes are human and make mistakes, just like the rest of us. If one looks at our court system as an analogy, countless cases that learned judges have decided are overturned. Sometimes, those decisions are again overturned by an even higher court. It's not uncommon to have different code officials disagree with each other. It's very common to have expert witnesses held in high esteem disagree on interpretations of code. With this in mind, we can see how a design firm realistically can't be expected to warrant a perfect set of plans.
3. It's not that uncommon that codes themselves sometimes conflict with each other. That situation may require discussion with authorities to arrive at an appropriate solution. But it still illustrates that sometimes it is impossible to comply with code.

Many firms are reticent to address the issue, fearing their proposals will be summarily tossed. Experience has shown that firms can address the issue without being summarily dismissed from consideration if 'handled' correctly. Additionally, other negotiation strategies may include providing a warranty that services will be provided in accordance with the standard of care. Talk to your insurance agent before doing so. If worded correctly, such a warranty might be a rare exception to the general rule that breach of contract claims are uninsurable. You might agree to the strict compliance requirement if your client agrees to a risk allocation clause, and the project is one where you feel code compliance presents much of a risk.

The material is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Before taking any action that could have legal or other significant consequences, consult with a qualified professional who can provide guidance tailored to your unique circumstances.

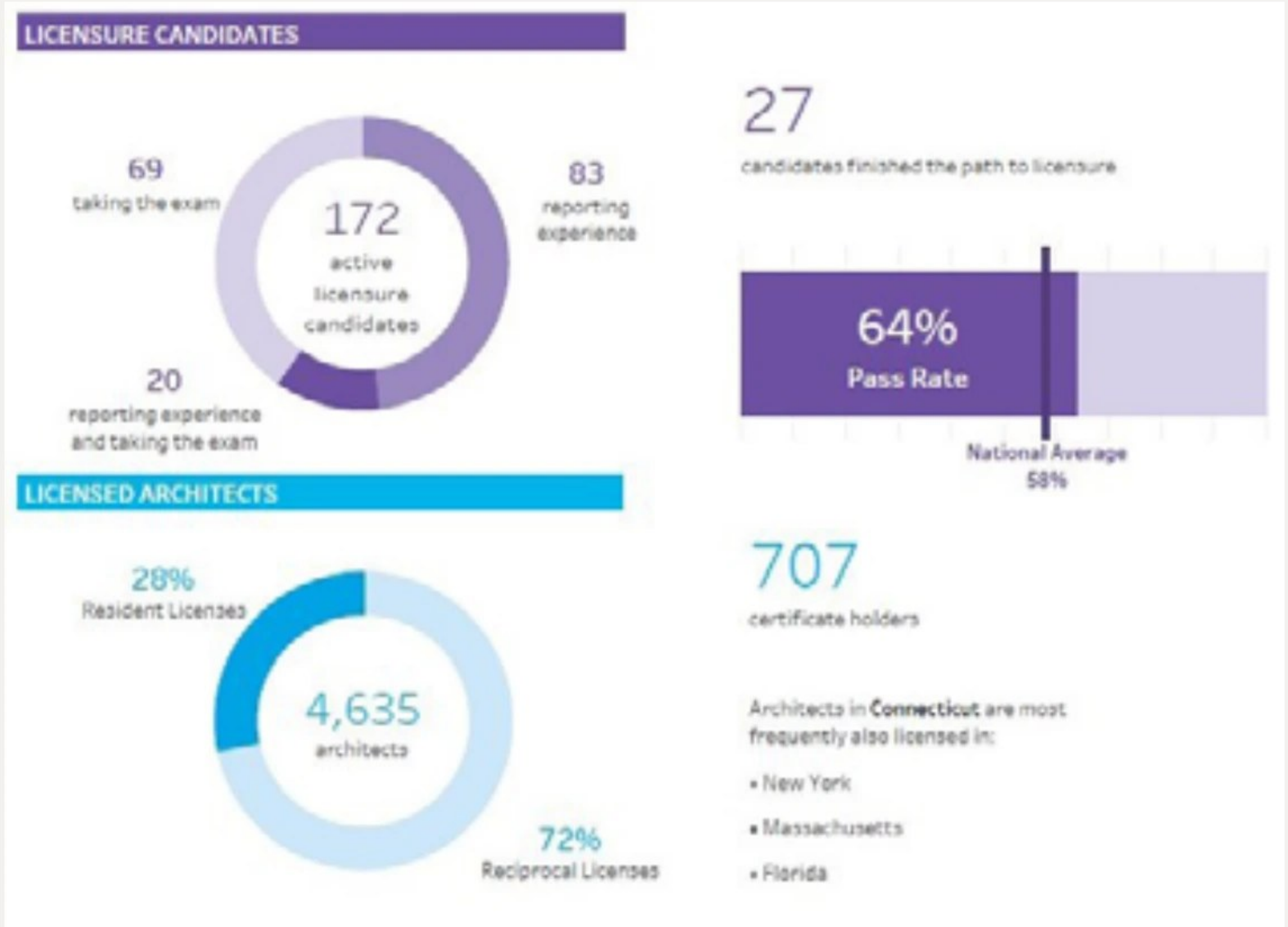
*Scott Smith is the Principal/  
Director of Design Professionals'  
Practice at Smith Brother Insurance*

**Without a contractual promise to provide plans in strict compliance with code, courts will usually determine responsibility based on the standard of care.**

# NCARB by the Numbers - Connecticut

## Licensure Candidates

NCARB regularly analyzes and shares data highlighting current trends along the path to licensure, including program completion time, pass rates, and demographics. This information, which is gathered from customers' NCARB Records, enables NCARB and key stakeholders to make strategic decisions, educate policymakers and the public, and guide changes to our programs and services.



## Racial Ethnic and Gender Diversity

The table shows the approximate racial, ethnic and gender diversity of individuals at each career stage for individuals who were seeking licensure or were licensed in this jurisdiction during the calendar year 2023. Individuals can be represented in multiple career stages.

Connecticut		All Certificate Holders	New Architects	Taking the ARE	New NCARB Record Holders	Submitting Experience
Gender	Men	463	12	37	53	45
	Women	138	8	41	48	49
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian Or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0
	Asian	19	2	12	27	16
	Black Or African American	9	0	3	4	9
	Native Hawaiian Or Other Pacific Islander	1	0	0	0	0
	White	515	18	59	56	57
	Another Group	14	0	1	6	6
	Hispanic, Latino, Or Spanish	19	1	3	7	7
Total	Total	707	27	89	113	103

Each chart includes a basic explanation of what data is being shared, as well as an overview of the trends NCARB has seen at the national level for comparison

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GENERAL CONTRACTORS | CONSTRUCTION MANAGERS | DESIGN-BUILDERS

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# 2024 AIA Medal for Academic Excellence

**F**ormerly known as the Henry Adams Medal, the was The AIA Medal for Academic Excellence, formerly known as the Henry Adams Medal, has been awarded to outstanding graduating architecture students for over a century. Established by a resolution in 1914, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has recognized top graduates from National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) and Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB) accredited programs since 1915.

Each year, institutions across the United States and Canada nominate one graduating student from their Bachelor of Architecture (BArch), Master of Architecture (MArch), or Doctor of Architecture (DArch) programs

who has demonstrated “general excellence” throughout their academic career. In 2024, AIA received 139 submissions from 114 institutions, a testament to the program’s ongoing significance in architectural education.

Among this year’s awardees was Elmira Moskvina, a Master of Architecture graduate from Yale University, who is currently a Project Designer at Overhead Studio.

As the submission process continues to evolve, the AIA has now opened the application form for the 2025 award cycle, inviting designated school officials to put forward their most exceptional graduates for this prestigious honor.



# Celebrating Tom Quarticelli: A Legacy of Excellence in Architecture

Amenta Emma Architects announces the retirement of Thomas Quarticelli, AIA, marking the conclusion of an extraordinary 38-year journey with our firm.



**A Career Defined by Innovation and Client Success**



As Principal-in-Charge, Tom has consistently delivered thoughtful, innovative, and budget-conscious design solutions while building lasting client relationships. His forward-thinking approach and deep understanding of client needs have earned both repeat business and industry recognition.

***“When we can provide a solution that not only meets the client’s goals but provides a design that is forward-thinking and helps them achieve their business needs, it’s a home run for me.”***

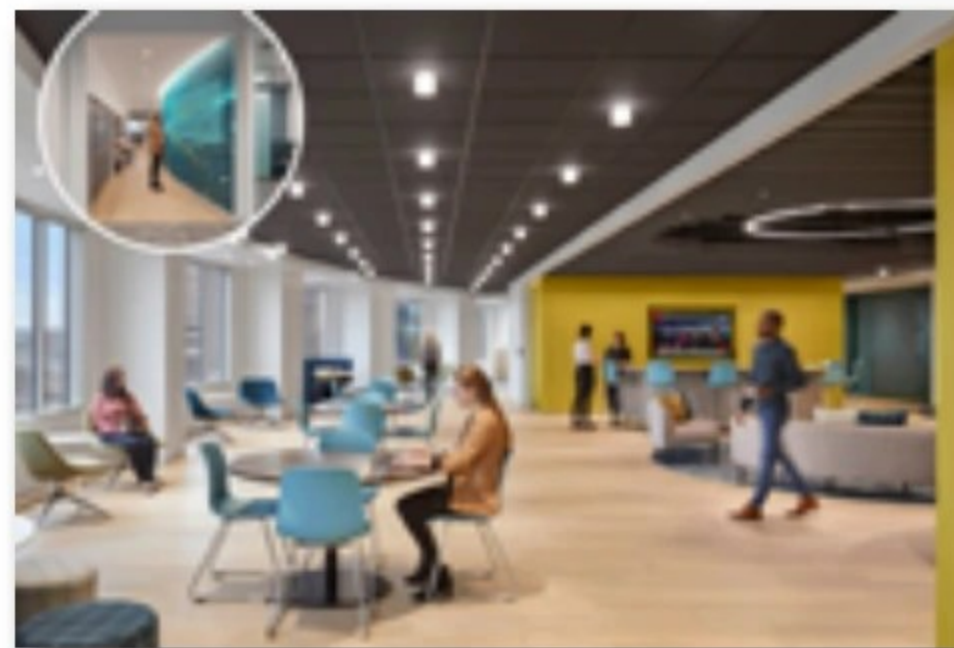
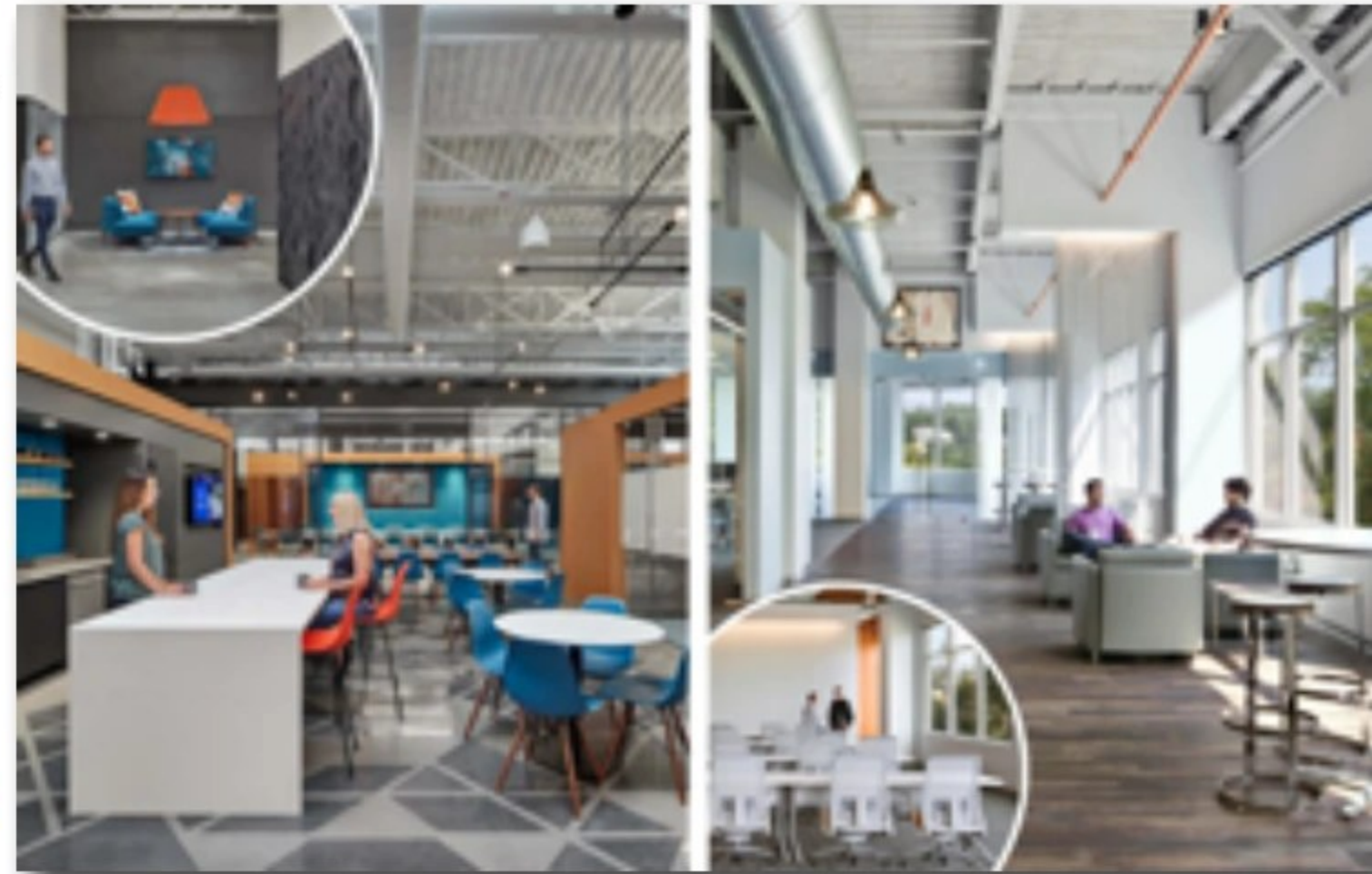
***-Tom Quarticelli, reflecting on his architectural philosophy***

Beyond his project leadership, Tom has been a driving force in Amenta Emma’s operational excellence, overseeing office production, quality control, and technological advancement.

Tom’s retirement marks the end of an era at Amenta Emma, but his influence will continue to shape our work and culture for years to come. His commitment to excellence, innovation, and client service has set a standard that will guide our firm’s future.

**Tom’s impressive portfolio includes several landmark projects:**

The award-winning designs for Connecticut Innovations and The Burgess Group, both recipients of AIA CT Business Architecture Awards for their exceptional impact on workplace experience and business performance



The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company (HSB) office restack in Hartford, Connecticut, HSB’s Boise, Idaho office renovation, and subsidiary company office renovations for Meshify, and Solomon



The innovative Animal Resource Center for the Connecticut Humane Society in Wilton, Connecticut



Nationwide projects for Subway, including comprehensive master planning and renovations at their Milford headquarters



Significant institutional works including the Springfield College Bugbee Family Pavilion, CCSU Energy Center, and transformative renovations at Hartford’s Gold Building and the Southeast Mental Health Authority in Norwich.

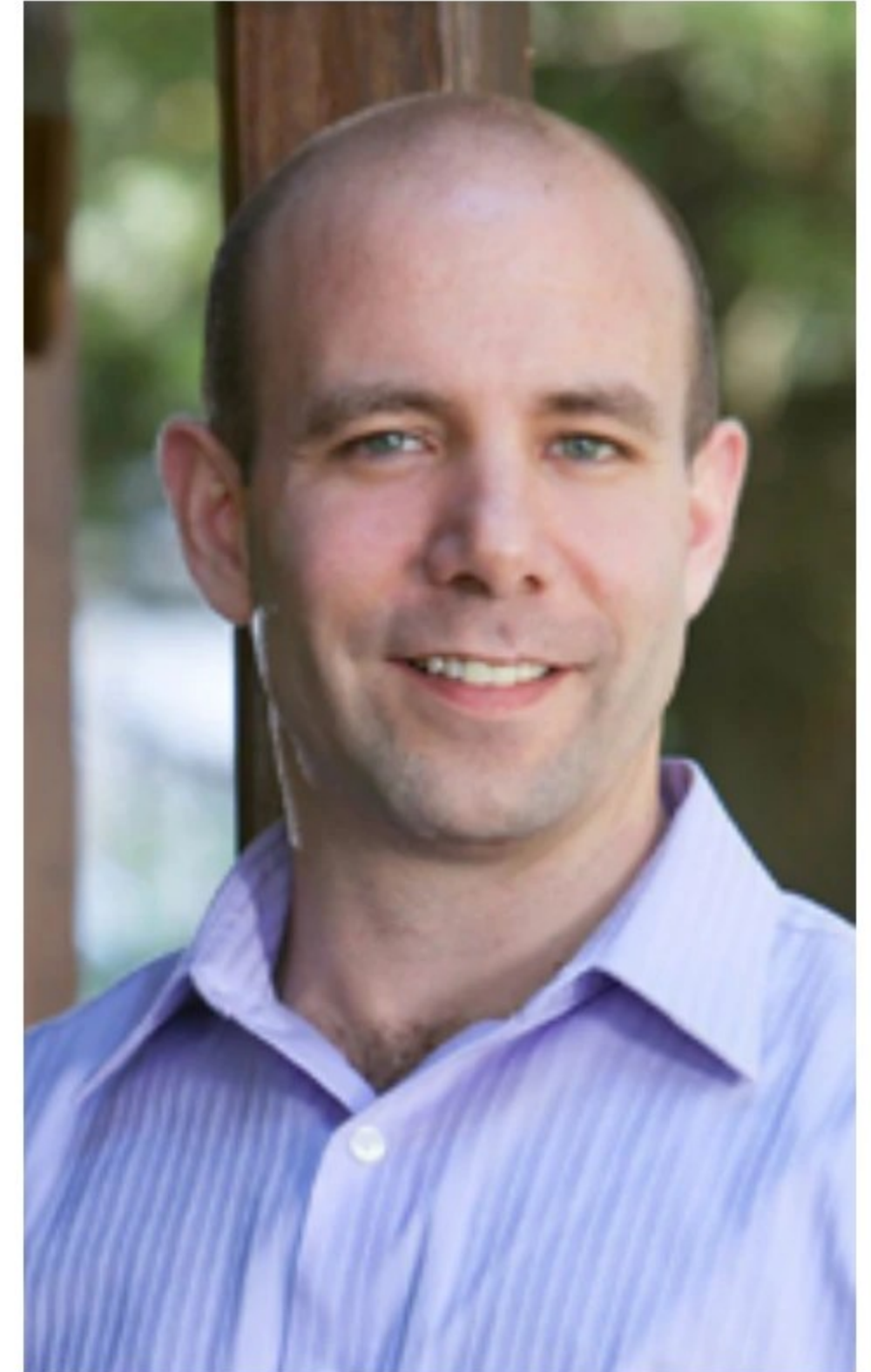
# Hoffmann Architects + Engineers Senada Dushaj and Nicholas Moroniti



**Guilherme C. Pinho, Assoc. AIA**, an exceptional member of Hoffmann's Connecticut team, has been promoted to Project Manager. His promotion reflects his expertise in managing complex building envelope rehabilitation projects. Since joining Hoffmann in 2019, Pinho has demonstrated his ability to provide investigation, design, and construction administration for a wide variety of projects, with a particular focus on historic preservation. The most notable projects under his leadership include overseeing the facade restoration of Vassar's Main Building, providing historical consulting for The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and several roof replacement projects at Collins Aerospace.

Pinho earned his Bachelor of Architectural Engineering Technology Degree from University of Hartford. He then went on to complete an expedited Master of Architecture program at Boston Architecture College while working full time at Hoffmann. Dedicated to sustainability, Guilherme is designing and hand-building his own zero-carbon Passive House, embodying his commitment to eco-conscious living and proving that sustainable design is more than a principle, it's his way of life.

Pinho is a founding member of Hoffmann's Diversity and Inclusion Committee in which his efforts helped launch the Diversity and Inclusion Blog. He is also an associate member of AIA and a member of the CT AIA J.E.D.I. Committee.



Nicholas Moroniti For over two decades, Moroniti has developed state-of-the-art solutions to meet the evolving technology needs of the firm, providing Hoffmann's architects and engineers the infrastructure to deliver exceptional projects.

In his new capacity, Moroniti collaborates with executive leadership to shape the strategic vision for the firm's digital environment. He leads initiatives to implement advanced technology solutions tailored to our architectural and engineering needs. He oversees IT operations, enhances cybersecurity measures, integrates cutting-edge tools, and fosters interdepartmental collaboration to drive operational excellence.

Moroniti's career at Hoffmann, spanning over 20 years, has been marked by significant achievements. He has managed the firm's information technology operations, promoting security, reliability, and optimal performance.

# rs Promotes Guilherme C. Pinho, roniti



**Senada Dushaj, Assoc. AIA** of the firm's New Haven, Conn. team, has been promoted to Project Coordinator. Dushaj joined Hoffmann in 2021 as Project Representative and was promoted to Senior Project Representative shortly thereafter, showcasing her dedication and expanding expertise. She has worked on numerous projects, demonstrating her knowledge and expertise in roof repairs and replacements, window replacements, facade rehabilitations, plaza renovations, and building envelope assessments.

Dushaj is currently serving as the team lead on the Irwin House project in New Canaan, Conn., where she is performing a condition assessment of the facades, low-slope and slate roofs

for the town-owned property that was once the country home of Thomas J. Watson, former CEO of IBM. She has also spearheaded several rehabilitation projects for Aetna buildings in Hartford, specifically the Rogers Building, which included repairs to limestone facade units, removal of elastomeric coating, repair of spalled elements, and application of new mineral silicate stain.

Dushaj holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Keene State College and a Master of Architecture from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In addition to her project work, she actively contributes to the firm's professional development initiatives. This year alone, she's hosted a variety of "Lunch and Learns" with subject-matter experts, including sessions on

TPO roofing systems, integral crystalline waterproofing, fluid-applied roofing, and solar cladding. She is also a member of the Emerging Professionals Committee, further underscoring her drive for growth.

# Kristin Hawkins AIA Joins Pickard Chilton as Associate Principal



***Pickard Chilton announced that Kristin Hawkins AIA has joined as Associate Principal.***

Ms. Hawkins brings more than 30 years of global design expertise across a diverse portfolio. Her philosophy centers in the power of place; that transformative, responsible architecture is both a poetic and pragmatic response to cultural and physical context. Prior to joining Pickard Chilton, Ms. Hawkins was a Partner at Pelli Clarke & Partners, where she led major projects in the academic, master planning, corporate office and cultural arts sectors.

“Kristin’s thoughtful approach to design combines intuitive, visual creativity with analytical problem solving. Her ability to embrace each project’s unique challenges and build strong client relationships perfectly aligns with our culture,” said Pickard Chilton Principal William Chilton, FAIA, RIBA. “Her

extensive experience designing and leading a tremendous portfolio of complex, unique projects will allow the studio to broaden and develop additional areas of practice.”

Ms. Hawkins’ recent work includes the multi-award-winning Chengdu Museum of Natural History in Chengdu, China; West Palm Point, a 470,000 GSF class A office tower in West Palm Beach, Florida; and a confidential next-generation condominium tower in midtown Manhattan. She also led the design of the Red Building at the Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood, CA; the Center for Innovation in Medical Professions at Cleveland State University; and Future VU, the master plan for Vanderbilt University.

“I have long admired the design excellence and collaborative, equitable culture of Pickard Chilton. The firm’s integrity is further exemplified by its established commitment

to climate action and affirmed support of women in the field,” added Ms. Hawkins. “I look forward to contributing my passion, energy and professional experience to the studio’s stellar work.”

Ms. Hawkins holds a Master of Architecture from Yale University and a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from The University of Virginia School of Architecture. A dedicated educator, she is a long-standing and current faculty member at the Yale School of Architecture and has lectured and served as a juror for institutions and organizations nationally.

# PICKARD CHILTON



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# Redding Selects Pirie Associates to lead the Georgetown Revitalization Master Plan

**T**he Town of Redding Board of Selectmen has selected New Haven firm Pirie Associates to lead development of a revitalization plan for Redding's downtown Georgetown neighborhood. "We are grateful for the support of the DECD. This financial support from DECD's Office of Brownfield Redevelopment is critical to the Town's efforts to return Georgetown to a vibrant center of community activity," said First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton at the meeting last week.

The project will be funded by a \$200,000 Brownfield Area Revitalization Grant awarded by the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). Work under this grant will include community engagement, market and economic assessments, infrastructure, and holistic planning. The outcome will be an area-wide plan that reunites Georgetown and the former Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill site, with design guidance for the Georgetown business area and a



phased implementation plan to revitalize the wire mill site. The planning project is expected to take about 15-18 months.

Pirie Associates is a multi-disciplinary, award-winning architectural, planning and landscape practice that envisions, plans, and designs inspiring built environments for positive impact. For this project, Pirie has partnered with BJH Advisors for market and economic analysis, Langan for engineering, infrastructure assessment and climate resilience, and Peter Olsen of Land Use and Conservation Counsel for zoning regulation guidance. Known for their highly collaborative process to engage and bring clarity to complex, multi-faceted challenges, Pirie Associates is excited to lead

this multidisciplinary team with their place-based economic development design approach. This approach elevates master planning by integrating a vision-driven and community-forward focus, prioritizing tailored solutions that are site-specific, holistic, regenerative, and equitable.

According to Laura Pirie, President, "We are thrilled to help Redding shape a robust, community-driven vision and master plan for Georgetown Village. The Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill was once the soul of this community, and we believe that it can again be a generating catalyst, along with the Village business district core, for a thriving community and cultural hub. Our goal is to weave the past and future together in a way that benefits the entire living system, creating a place that gives back in multiple ways. We are inspired by the Town of Redding and its committees who have put in so much effort to lay the groundwork for success.

# TSKP STUDIO ANNOUNCES OPENING DATE FOR ASTRONOMY CENTER

TSKP  
STUDIO

The Astronomy Center and Planetarium will expand SM&NC's educational offerings with a hands-on "learning lab," including school programs, summer camps, public programs, adult enrichment, and family activities. This facility is the second phase of the master plan developed by TSKP STUDIO for the SM&NC campus.

## Key Features:

- **Planetarium:** A 100-seat planetarium will have flexible seating arrangements for various events and educational programs.
- **Observatory:** A roll-away roof enables a teaching observatory designed for multiple advanced telescopes and viewing by groups of visitors. Celestial observations also provide real-time feedback to monitors in the entrance and lecture halls.
- **Innovative Design:** The interior design maximizes flexibility and interaction, with operable wall panels that can open the planetarium to the lobby, creating a large, multidisciplinary event space.
- **Architectural Harmony:** The 40-foot diameter planetarium dome is housed within a barn-shaped structure, respecting the center's location on a working farm museum. The third-floor observatory is elevated above mature tree canopies, preserving those trees to retain the natural presence of the campus.





# Russell and Dawson Inc. Earns Excellence in Construction Award 2024 From CT ABC

**T**he Young Pharmaceuticals Headquarters project was honored with the Excellence in Construction Award 2024 from the Associated Builders and Contractors of Connecticut (CT ABC). The project exemplifies architectural and engineering excellence, designed by Russell and Dawson Inc. and constructed by PDS Engineering & Construction, Inc.

The collaboration between Young Pharmaceuticals, Russell and Dawson Inc., and PDS Engineering & Construction, Inc. ensured a seamless execution, resulting in a facility that reflects both innovation and craftsmanship.

***John Kulesza, President of Young Pharmaceuticals, praised the project, stating:***

“The entire Russell and Dawson team has done an exceptional job in the design and execution of this project. They have provided outstanding architectural and engineering services, from conceptual design to obtaining approvals from the Town planning and zoning committee through the development of bid documents and supervision of the construction contractor.”

As a leader in skincare and pharmaceuticals for over 45 years, Young Pharmaceuticals expanded with a new 20,000 sq. ft., two-story facility. Inspired by the Filoli Estate, the building features custom design elements, including green-tinted arched

windows, a clock tower inspired by the clock tower design of Sir Christopher Wren, and bespoke interiors. Notable highlights include an 18th-century wood-paneled office and a state-of-the-art chemistry room for skincare production, seamlessly blending timeless elegance with modern functionality.

“We are honored to receive this recognition and to have played a role in bringing Young Pharmaceuticals’ vision to life,” said John Wilcox, Director of Design at Russell and Dawson. “Our team’s dedication to precision, creativity, and client satisfaction remains the foundation of our success.”



**RUSSELL AND DAWSON**

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# Desai Chia in Forbes Top 200 Residential Architects in America

**D**esai Chia Architecture has been a purveyor of cool Minimalism since 1996. Founded by MIT grads Katherine Chia and Arjun Desai, and the winner of numerous honors, this small New York City-based office is known for conceptually bold designs that blur the boundaries between architecture and nature.

Houses are often divided into linked pavilions (as in their Featured Project, located in Roxbury, Connecticut), whose wood exteriors frame floor-to-ceiling walls of glass sheltered by gravity-defying overhangs. Wood floors and ceilings help warm the ascetic interiors, which defer to the landscape with an almost reverential obeisance. In lieu of ornament, shafts of light rake across surfaces, accentuating their texture, while intimate gardens sprout from the pockets between volumes, adding a more immediate engagement with nature.

This is architecture that's art—and a sensory experience, as well.

Two projects have been recognized for awards as well.



## Osprey House

*Nesting on the coast*

- Architecture MasterPrize
- SARA National Design Award of Merit
- AIA Long Island Design Award of Merit
- Interior Design Best of Year Award Honoree

## Stanfordville House

*Idyllic farmland and agricultural cues*

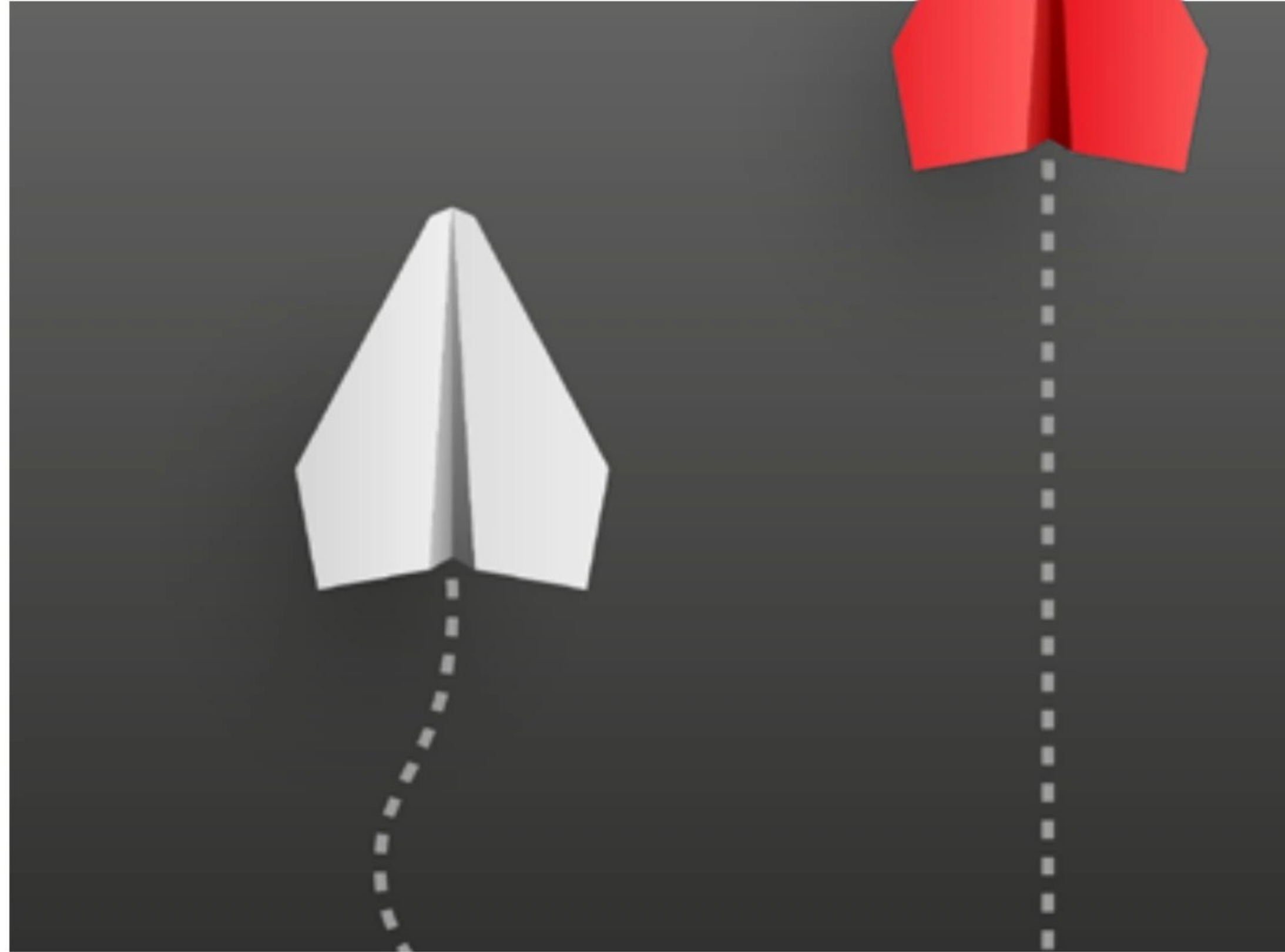
- Architecture MasterPrize
- SARA National Design Award of Merit



## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

USING OUR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE VOICES TO THRIVE IN 2025 AND BEYOND.

BY EVELYN LEE, FAIA, NOMA



As I look ahead to 2025 and beyond, one word captures my vision for the AIA and its members: “thrive.” To truly thrive, architects and our profession must do more than adapt to challenges—we must actively shape the future with intention and courage. At last week’s Leadership Summit, when over 400 architects took to the Hill, I saw firsthand the power of collaboration. When we come together, share knowledge, and build on each other’s ideas, we move the profession forward in ways that no individual could accomplish alone.

“Thrive” is more than just a theme; it is a call to action, a mindset shift, and a reminder that growth does not happen by accident. It happens when we choose to embody what it means to be Transparent, Human, Resilient, Intrepid, Visionary, and Empowering. These are not just aspirational words; they are the foundation for how we can lead with intention and build a stronger, more impactful profession together.

To set the stage for thriving, we begin with Transparent. Transparency builds trust, and trust drives collaboration. To thrive, we must commit to a culture of

openness—within our firms, within this organization, and with the public we serve. Clear communication and shared accountability are the foundations of everything we hope to achieve together. By being transparent, we not only earn trust but also empower others to share their voices, fostering an environment where ideas flow freely, and solutions emerge organically.

Next is Human. At its core, architecture is about people. It is about empathy—designing for human experiences and improving lives. It is about engagement—making sure every member of this organization feels seen, valued, and heard. And it is about connection—because, as I have said before, we are truly better together. Let’s celebrate our humanity by embracing our creativity, curiosity, and shared drive to make the world a better place for all.

Resilience is critical as we face increasingly frequent natural disasters and a rapidly changing world. The statistics are clear: from fewer than eight major disasters per year in the 1980s to a staggering 28 last year, the risks are only growing. Our built



environment must not only withstand these threats but also address rising energy costs, material shortages, neighborhood disinvestment, and affordability challenges. But resilience also applies to our own well-being. We cannot pour from an empty cup. Taking care of ourselves—mentally, physically, and emotionally—is essential if we are to lead with strength and intention. As architects, our responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public is our greatest duty. This year, as federal proposals emerge that could reshape our profession, we must speak with one voice, advocating for the policies that empower us to meet this responsibility head-on.

Being Intrepid means being bold, courageous, and fearless in our pursuit of ingenuity. Whether adopting new technologies, pushing the limits of design, reimagining our work models, or exploring new business models, we must lead by example. Nowhere is this more critical than with artificial intelligence. AI is reshaping not only our design processes but also the very infrastructure that supports modern society. As architects, we must ensure

that the growth of AI is balanced with equity, access, and sustainability, designing projects that serve all communities.

The same forward-thinking approach applies to housing. Like AI, housing intersects with nearly every system—transportation, healthcare, education, and economic opportunity. The equity and access issues we navigate in AI infrastructure development are mirrored, and often amplified, within the housing crisis. The AIA has a pivotal role to play, from shaping policies to forging partnerships with developers, policymakers, and community leaders.

This brings us to Visionary. To thrive, we must not only envision a better future but also have a greater voice in tackling some of our most complex challenges—like housing. It's about amplifying diverse voices, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that our impact is lasting and meaningful. We have the opportunity—and the obligation—to position architects at the forefront of conversations that balance technological advancement with equity, sustainability, and opportunity for all.

Finally, we must be Empowering. The AIA exists to empower our members, but empowerment is more than tools and resources—it is about building practices that thrive. Architecture firms are businesses, and to succeed, they must think strategically, manage effectively, and communicate their value clearly. By elevating design alongside operational excellence, we will create more resilient practices and open new opportunities for growth and impact within our communities.

I invite you to join me in embracing the spirit of THRIVE, and to take action—within your firms, your communities, and your projects. Let us make 2025 the year we turn intention into impact, where every conversation, every design, and every decision moves us closer to a profession that is truly transparent, human, resilient, intrepid, visionary, and empowering. Together, we can build a legacy of leadership, set a new standard of excellence, and inspire the next generation of architects to dream bigger, design smarter, and lead boldly into the future.



## ARCHITECTS ARE EXCITED ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF AI, BUT CONCERNS ABOUND

A NEW AIA RESEARCH STUDY REVEALS THAT ARCHITECTS ARE EVENLY SPLIT IN THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND WARINESS ABOUT THE NEW TECHNOLOGY.

BY MICHELE RUSSO



In a profession where innovation meets responsibility for public health, safety, and welfare, artificial intelligence (AI) sits at that intersection—offering both opportunity and cause for hesitation. Findings in a new AIA research study, *Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Architecture*, underscore this dichotomy, revealing how AI is used in the profession today and the sentiment around its use in the future. This duality is clear throughout the research, but most notably in this finding: 78% of respondents want to learn more about the potential of AI in the industry, and the same percent noted they have concerns about AI.

To date, AI adoption at architecture firms is small—only 8% of firm leaders report integrating it into their practices. However, there is curiosity and experimentation—another 20% report they are in the process of implementation, and 35% are considering adoption. Most of this activity is driven by the largest firms where there are more likely to be resources dedicated to technology training and implementation.

Individual practitioners are using or experimenting with it at similar levels—6% of the study respondents

report using it regularly, while another 53% are experimenting with its use. Today, most of that adoption is in low-invasive uses—helping with notetaking, recording meeting minutes, writing proposals, drafting communications, and editing: 79% of respondents reported they use Chatbots, 45% use grammar/text analytics, and 25% use transcription or meeting assistants. One small firm leader expressed the broader response well: “We use ChatGPT to write simple project descriptions for marketing purposes.”

Younger professionals are more likely to use image generators in their work—two-thirds of those under 35 reported using an image generator (e.g., Dall-E), while 55% of those aged 36 to 50 and 41% of those over 50 report the same. Those using image generators mostly do so for concept development, feeding the system with their own work. As one large firm leader noted, “[We are] presently using [it] to move from conceptual massings to character sketches of possible options.”

However, many professionals noted concern about this trend. A recently-licensed architect at a large firm stated, “I don’t like the idea of AI-generated design [as in AI designing buildings

rather than architects]. I am concerned about the integrity of the practice and the risks posed by AI-generated design to the health, safety, and welfare of the public. There is a problematic misconception among the general public that AI can create art when it actually steals from or copies actual artists."

Cautions are not limited to concerns over AI-generated images. Across all areas tested, an overwhelming majority of respondents express multiple concerns in the areas of inaccuracy (94%), unintended consequences (94%), privacy and security (93%), authenticity (90%), and lack of transparency (90%). As one respondent noted, "AI can be useful in sorting through data quickly, as long as the reference databases are secure and valid. The danger is that AI-generated information can look good but be very wrong. I remain concerned that

major mistakes will occur by too-early adoption of AI tools."

There is a notable opportunity in AI to advance the profession further. To date, these low-risk adoptions do not align with the tasks that architectural professionals find most inefficient—cost estimation and project takeoffs, updating product libraries, and writing technical specs. The one area of alignment between inefficiency and adoption is the use of AI for new product research—while the fourth lowest-rated task in efficiency, it is the third-highest task in AI use or experimentation.

Like most creative ventures, the tools have a long way to go before they can reliably serve the profession, though there was a general sentiment that they are here to stay. Only 5% of respondents have used AI and then stopped.

One thing is for sure, AI is ever-changing—and quickly. This firm leader summed it up well: "We will see the AI landscape quite differently in the near future."

This report is the latest issue of AIA's The Architect's Journey to Specification research study series produced in partnership with Deltek and ConstructConnect. It is based on a statistically valid survey of architectural professionals, including firm leaders, licensed architects, and those responsible for technology adoption in firms.

Download the report for more detailed findings and methodology.

*Michele Russo is Vice President, Research & Practice at AIA.*



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## QTL HEADQUARTERS TOUR & PROGRAM MILFORD, CT

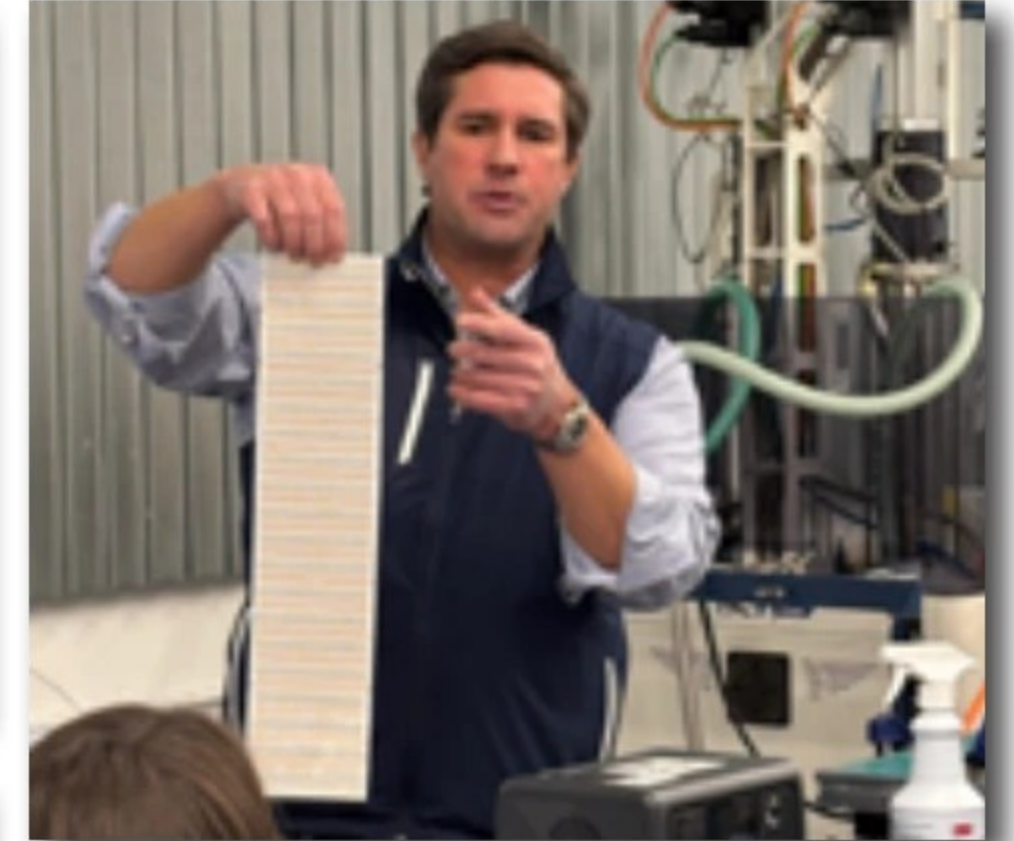
FEBRUARY 18TH

Attendees embarked on an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of QTL's state-of-the-art LED light fixture manufacturing facility, gaining firsthand insight into the production of both flexible and rigid linear LED fixtures.

Following the tour, guests enjoyed a curated selection of food and cocktails while networking with industry peers. The event continued with QTL's CEU program, Sustainability in LED Lighting,

which explored the latest trends and best practices in eco-friendly lighting solutions.

Presented by Taylor Pogue, QTL's Senior Project Manager, the course took a comprehensive approach to sustainability in LED lighting. Topics included energy efficiency, human health considerations, life cycle energy consumption, and the impact of lighting choices on ecosystems.



# MAR

- 13** AIA Connecticut Board of Directors Meeting
- 14** Women in Architecture (WIA) Meeting with Guest Speaker Dominique Moore, AIA
- 19** Government Affairs Committee Meeting
- 20** Emerging Professionals (EP) Community Meeting
- 25** 2025 Wild West Bowling Invitational
- 26** From Vision to Reality: A Panel Discussion on Starting Your Own Firm
- 27** Lessons Learned from the First Congregational New London Church Tower Collapse Committee on Design
- 28** Alice Washburn Awards - Submission Deadline Today
- 31** Introduction to Fellowship Meeting

# APR

- 2** Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (J.E.D.I.) Knowledge Community Meeting
- 3** Building Performance & Regulations (BP&R) Meeting
- 5** HisTOURy Tours | Historic Homes of Housatonic Valley Tour
- 8** Small Firms Exchange (SFx) Meeting
- 9** Government Affairs Committee Meeting
- 10** AIA Connecticut Board of Directors Meeting
- 11** Women in Architecture (WIA) Meeting
- 14** Committee on the Environment (COTE) Meeting
- 16** Professional Practice Knowledge Community Meeting
- 17** Emerging Professionals (EP) Community Lunch meet up

## AIA CONNECTICUT CALENDAR

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