

Connection

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This issue:

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Amidst a global pandemic and nationwide protests against racial injustice, emerging professionals are filling leadership voids to demand change. This two part series offers takeaways from successful EDI programs and committees, along with young architect perspectives on the year's events, challenges and opportunities.

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Due to the response to our call for submissions, this is the first of two issues on the subject of equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives in architecture.

Cover image: BAM Orlando; a young participant proud to show off the results of a successful workshop. (See page 12.)

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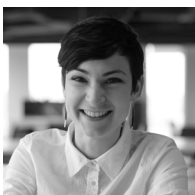
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Editors note:

Change through action

At face value, EDI presents a complex, wicked design problem. Where are we to start, and most importantly, how are we to measure success? Representative of the generation demanding change, this issue argues that solutions and change are best driven by action.

Fundamentally, architects are working to build equitable communities and grow a diverse profession that is representative of the people we serve. Yet a network of underlying symptoms, causes, and effects – including bias, representation in firm and AIA leadership, visibility to underserved communities, and more – all complicate the progress toward a solution. The events of 2020 brought other concerns into the forefront, including addressing institutional racism, shoring up support for the profession's women and parents, and investing in the most diverse generation of young professionals who face an uncertain economic climate early in their design careers.

When architects approach a design problem, each undoubtedly has a different perspective and process. As we know, each designer will arrive at a unique solution. The same is true as architects approach these problems from varied backgrounds. When facing such monumental challenges there is no single solution, there are no magic words, there is no model program, and there is not a perfect process. Working toward solutions and driving change requires thoughtful action focused on a particular aspect of this complex problem. Emerging professionals are leading through their actions, with each action building up our ideal profession.

AIA President Jane Frederick, FAIA, also stresses action from the profession, noting that “now is a time to ask: What more can we do?” While NOMA President Kim Dowdell, AIA, NOMA, highlights that a professional path to architecture “is not as accessible to those who experience economic hardship,” emerging professionals share ongoing work by BAM Orlando and Project Pipeline Detroit to help minority children see futures in design. Carl Sergio, AIA, and Katelyn Rossier, AIA, touch on mentorship and reverse mentoring. In the context of the profession, a single mentorship may seem like a small task, but it is of enormous value on an individual level and an asset in developing a diverse generation of leaders. Marissa Hebert opens discussion on innovative ways to support parents, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and cautions against continuing current expectations, norms, and culture. Our team also addresses equity in the built environment by examining monuments in American cities, segregation, and redlining.

As you will see the breadth of EDI challenges emerging professionals are passionate about, you will also learn more about their positive and thoughtful action that is driving change. Our editorial committee is excited to share each of the perspectives published in this journal. We sincerely hope that one resonates with your passion and inspires you to act in your community. Consider the words of the French philosopher Henri Bergson when addressing an EDI problem “Think like a man of action, act like a man of thought.”

Editorial committee call

Q4 2020:

Call for submissions on the topic of practice innovation.

Connection's editorial committee welcomes the submission of articles, projects, photography, and other design content. Submitted content is subject to editorial review and selected for publication in e-magazine format based on relevance to the theme of a particular issue.

2021 Editorial Committee:

Call for volunteers, contributing writers, interviewers and design critics.

Connection's editorial committee is currently seeking architects interested in building their writing portfolio by working with our editorial team to pursue targeted article topics and interviews that will be shared amongst Connection's largely circulated e-magazine format. Responsibilities include contributing one or more articles per publication cycles (3–4 per year).

If you are interested in building your resume and contributing to Connection please contact the editor in chief at: johnclarknm@gmail.com

President's message:

What more can we do?

“Whether it’s new challenges brought by a global pandemic or age-old injustices exposed anew, architects have solutions to contribute. The more diverse and inclusive our profession, the better those solutions will be.”

“Healthy, safe, and equitable.” They’re principles our profession has long been committed to. But they’ve taken on added weight as communities across the nation have taken a stand in new ways for racial justice. The architecture profession is taking a stand in new ways, too.

Following the decision by the AIA Board of Directors to prioritize racial justice solutions as an organization-wide focus in the same way climate leadership is a fundamental mission, it’s been a summer of listening, action, and accountability.

Colleagues within our membership, the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), the NAACP, and other essential voices are generously sharing their insights, creating an ongoing dialogue to inform steps for translating our ideals into meaningful progress and for holding ourselves accountable.

To that end, the AIA will participate in the NAACP 2020 Diversity & Opportunity Report Card for the sustainable building sector. Slated for release in 2021, the audit will evaluate equitable practices within the AIA, including staffing, programs and services, procurement, and governance. Part

of the NAACP’s Centering Equity in the Sustainable Building Sector (CESBS) Initiative, the program will help provide a transparent, comprehensive marker to measure against.

As a new school year begins, we’re also focused on addressing barriers for students and emerging professionals.

The latest statistics from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) show how far we have to go. While racial and ethnic diversity among individuals completing the AXP has improved 16 percent over the past 10 years, NCARB notes that “growth since 2018 was primarily seen in the proportion of Asian and Hispanic/Latino candidates, which increased by 2 and 1 percentage points, respectively ... with no change seen in the proportion of African American individuals in the profession.”

Overall, NCARB reports that “less than one in five new architects identify as a racial or ethnic minority.” That’s just unacceptable. How many budding architects are left behind because of structural barriers? How much richer would our profession be with the benefit of their talents?

The barriers, of course, don't just start during the licensure process. They don't even start in schools of architecture. They begin in the earliest days of a student's experience — with a child's first dreams of "when I grow up."

Seeing is believing. For children to see themselves as future architects, they must see themselves in today's architects and learn their success stories. Making that connection, letting students of all backgrounds see our profession as a home for their talents and a path for their dreams — that's our fundamental charge.

The AIA has a number of innovative K-12 resources to spark that recognition in young students. We have scholarship initiatives to support college education and grants to support early professional development.

But this isn't a time to talk about what we're already doing. It's a time to ask: What more can we do? It's a time to listen, to collaborate in new ways with our colleagues in NOMA and allies in the NAACP and National Urban League — as well as all underrepresented communities, like the American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers, Arquitectos, the Asian

American Architects and Engineers Association, World Deaf Architecture, and others. As we strive to live up to our pledge to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, this dialogue is not just a first step; it's an imperative every step of the way.

When we've talked about inclusion in the past, we've always said that today's challenges are too complex to be solved with a narrow set of perspectives. In a year like 2020, can anyone doubt it? Whether it's new challenges brought by a global pandemic or age-old injustices exposed anew, architects have solutions to contribute. The more diverse and inclusive our profession, the better those solutions will be.



Jane Frederick, FAIA

Frederick is principal of Beaufort, S.C. based Frederick + Frederick Architects, an award-winning firm specializing in custom residences. Frederick is the 2020 AIA President.

Chair's message:

The 3 4 E's

As a white man in a predominantly white, male profession, it's often difficult to fully understand the obstacles that so many people have in the A/E/C field. That perspective changed as I attended the 47th annual National Organization of Minority Architects Conference in Brooklyn, N.Y., in October 2019. I went on behalf of the AIA Young Architects Forum (YAF). As the 2020 chair of the YAF, one of my responsibilities is to meet with collateral leaders to understand what other initiatives are taking place and how we can all best use our membership, staff, and volunteers to meet our missions and committee goals. Of course, one of the main goals over the past several years within the AIA is to address the justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) issues that we face as a profession. While this isn't going to happen overnight, there have been some great strides, and there is so much more that we need to be doing as a profession.

For all my white, male counterparts out there, imagine this. You walk into a conference room for your next meeting, and the room is full of decision-makers who happen to be solely African American architects. All chatting, cutting loose, and catching up. How out of place do you feel? How do you present yourself to fit in? How do you strike up a conversation to be included?

That feeling of being "other" is what our minority colleagues (and women in general) feel every day when they go to work in the A/E/C field. They have to be extra careful when they speak — what they say, how they say it — to not come across as unintelligent or out of place. They may make unnecessary comments simply because they feel the need to say something or they won't be invited back to the table.

Did I often feel like I was the minority at a conference for NOMA? Yes, because out of the 1,200-plus attendees, I was

one of only a handful of white men in attendance. However, there was one major difference in my experience this past week: I was welcomed with open arms and encouraged to take part in the conversation, which I think we all know we can do better as a profession.

When NOMA was founded in 1971, African Americans made up less than 2 percent of the profession. Today, almost 50 years later, African Americans still make up less than 2 percent of the profession. We must do better to address this deficiency. Though the discussions at the conference touched on all topics of JEDI (including the many challenges women face in the male-dominated field, including unequal pay, harassment, lack of leadership/mentorship, etc.), this post focuses on topics of diversity, specifically for African Americans.

My key takeaways from the conference concern the four major obstacles people in underserved communities face every day and NOMA President Kimberly Dowdell's vision, ALL (Access, Leadership, Legacy) in for NOMA.

The underlying piece that needs to be addressed here is the pipeline and mentorship for people in marginalized communities, in particular African Americans. This includes not only all phases of K-12 education, but also beyond, as students enter architecture programs, graduate, and begin to practice and take the exams.

The first hurdle is exposure. A couple of years ago, Michelle Obama provided a wonderful interview at the AIA Conference, and one of the key takeaways was, "How would I know that I want to be an architect when I have never met one?" This very much remains the case today. We need to become more involved with underserved communities and provide education

on this great profession. I didn't have much direction as a child on the profession; my mother was a teacher, and my father was a farmer. But I at least had teachers hint that the profession of architecture existed and that I might be interested in learning more about it.

The second hurdle is education. Having someone to look up to and resonate with is an important part of anyone's education. Think about your own education. Who was the one teacher who made the biggest impact on your professional trajectory? It was very likely someone you connected well with and, quite frankly, looked like. Academia has the same challenges as our profession when it comes to attracting and retaining minority architects. However, we as professionals can help mentor students through these challenging times.

The third hurdle is experience. Architecture programs are providing students and graduates, but the incoming salary and mentorship opportunities often don't support people enough to keep them in the field. Too few people of color hold team and firm leadership roles. Again, think of your own time as a recent graduate. Did you have a friendly mentor/team member/supervisor help show you the ropes? A senior representative in the office who helped you sketch out your future two, five, and 10 years ahead and showed you how to prioritize? Too often, minority members of the profession are left to struggle through this challenge alone.

The fourth hurdle is examination. The Architect Registration Exam (ARE) is challenging enough for our profession, and it's that much more daunting when you have a rather limited support network to help you through the obstacle. The percentage of African Americans who pass the exam and remain in the profession is disappointingly low. And for female

African American members, even lower. In 2018, my now-colleague Nakita Reed, AIA, NOMA, was recognized with the AIA | DC Emerging Professional Award at the Design Fete. During her recognition, it was noted that she was the 340th registered (living) female African American architect. As my wife, a dentist, said at the time, "I thought the dental profession had a problem; that fact is simply embarrassing for your profession."

Once we have more minorities in the profession and passing the exams, I have no doubt that our work will be more inclusive and more appropriately designed for our clients and society as a whole. I also have no doubt that our African American colleagues will be rising to significant levels of leadership, helping to support the next generation of minority architects. The first step to making change is acknowledging that you need to change. The 48th annual NOMA Conference will take place virtually in October 2020. The content is rich, and the conversations are inspiring. Let's not let another 50 years go by before this deficiency is corrected. We can do better.

Edited by: Nakita Reed, AIA, NOMA, LEED AP



Ryan McEnroe, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP

As a licensed architect and landscape architect who grew up on an organic farm, McEnroe has a unique understanding of sustainability practices. An associate at Quinn Evans Architects, he serves as the 2020 YAF Chair.

2030 diversity challenge

When I was asked to contribute to the AIA YAF Connection in 2018, just before my presidency at the National Organization of Minority Architects began, I had no idea what would unfold over the coming 24 months. As I embark upon my final few months as NOMA's 33rd president, it has become very clear that we need to band together as a profession now more than ever. In the previous article, I was asked what is THE most critical issue to me as NOMA's incoming president. My response then and still today: **economic opportunity**.

In the midst of a global pandemic, a major economic downturn, and a season of awakening on racial injustice, we have a lot to process as a society and as a profession. Many leaders in our profession are asking NOMA what they can do to help address the lack of diversity in architecture. While I can share a laundry list of [actions](#) that may be taken by firms and individuals to support people of color and women in architecture who

“Architecture is not as accessible to those who experience economic hardship, and unfortunately, there is a higher prevalence of economic hardship in communities of color...”

(in pursuit of licensure) at a firm, the numbers are lackluster compared with the salaries of most other professions requiring similarly rigorous training and licensure requirements. While some might argue that we're privileged with the opportunity to practice architecture and our compensation is balanced out by our passion for design, this is a major barrier that contributes to the lack of diversity in the field.

Architecture is not as accessible to those who experience economic hardship, and unfortunately, there is a higher prevalence of economic hardship in communities of color, particularly Black communities. The average net worth of a white family in the United States is roughly 10 times that of a Black family. Regardless of race or ethnicity, architecture is not well known as a professional path in poorer communities, which contributes to a lack of awareness of design as an option to be explored by so many children in our country. NOMA is

working on this with our [NOMA Project Pipeline](#) program, but there's so much to be done beyond that initial introduction. Once a person from a lower-income community learns about architecture, the reality of the expense of a five-, six- or seven-year academic program leading to a relatively low starting wage can be a major deterrent.

Back in my 2018 response, I shared a link to an article about the [wealth gap](#), and this information still applies today. We've now seen through COVID-19 how those economic disparities can end up translating to health disparities, as illustrated by the higher incidence of infection and death of people of color in the United States. The sobering statistics relative to the wealth gap can begin to shift over time, but only if we're all intentional about expanding economic opportunities, specifically for people of color. The presidential platform that I debuted in late 2018 called for the profession to be ALL in for NOMA, meaning that we need everyone from every race and ethnicity to join us. ALL is an acronym for Access, Leadership, and Legacy.

Once we create greater access to the profession, we must help support people in their efforts to take on leadership positions in their firms, organizations, and communities. Finally, we must help architects build a legacy, not only of great work, but also for their families and the future of their firms. While this is the goal of any architect, we must be especially focused on increasing the number of Black architects, who have historically been woefully underrepresented in the profession. In response to this persistent problem, the AIA Large Firm Roundtable has partnered with NOMA to craft the 2030 Diversity Challenge, which aims to more than double the number of licensed Black architects in the United States from about 2,300 in 2020 to 5,000 in 2030. As the profession becomes more diverse and inclusive, we will also become more relevant to society. What I believe we'll find is that our unity as a profession will help us all prosper, enhancing economic opportunity for everyone. [Will you join us?](#)



Kimberly Dowdell, AIA, NOMA

Kimberly Dowdell is a licensed architect and frequent speaker on the topic of architecture, diversity, sustainability and the future of cities. She is the 2019-2020 national president of the National Organization of Minority Architects.

Moving from aspiration to action

An update from the AIA EQ+FA Committee

The first half of 2020 presented no shortage of opportunities for architects to stop, reflect, listen, and in many cases, lament. Social, economic, and racial upheavals have exposed our profession for its lack of equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice. The AIA Equity + Future of Architecture Committee is committed to changing this by expanding the perspective of those who have long held the social, relational, and economic capital and amplifying the voices of those who haven't.

Where We've Been:

The committee's work through the second quarter of the year focused largely on equipping emerging professionals adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This included K-12 students faced with virtual learning and college students and graduates grappling with a slowed economy offering limited internship and employment opportunities. Key initiatives included:

- Revised content for component and partner K-12 educators.
- Institute-wide 2020 graduate hashtag campaign – #ARCHGrad20 – to celebrate and encourage recent college graduates.
- Career-resiliency and remote-work webinars to equip architectural interns and recent graduates.
- Expanding complimentary access to AIA ArchiPrep through August.

Where We're Going:

Most recently, the work of the EQ+FA Committee has focused on moving from aspiration to action. Key initiatives include:

- Updating the AIA's Framework for Design Excellence to include a more equitable, relevant, and meaningful built environment by recognizing opportunities to include health, equity, resiliency, and zero carbon in each of the 10 measures.
- Advancing the Guides for Equitable Practice to expand EDI language.
- Advancing the Next to Lead Resolution (AIA Resolution 18-3), including the development and implementation of

Resources:

- [AIA Public Statement](#) Regarding Racial Injustice
- [NOMA Public Statement](#) Regarding Racial Injustice
- [AIA Framework for Design Excellence](#)
- [AIA Guides for Equitable Practice](#)

a leadership development pipeline of ethnically diverse candidates for election and/or service on the national AIA Board of Directors and Strategic Council.

- Creation of the AIA Framework to Address Systemic Racial Injustice and Inequity, which includes:
 - Dismantling barriers within AIA institutional systems by performing internal audits and repairing broken systems.
 - Diversifying the profession and culture through early career awareness and stronger education engagement.
 - Elevating knowledge dissemination and thought leadership by enhancing educational content and expanding resources for members.
 - Making connections and building bridges to advance equitable community and climate action priorities.

The Future We Envision:

The AIA Framework projects a bold vision: "It is 2030, and we have met the seemingly insurmountable climate crisis with courageous, creative, and decisive action. People everywhere are united under a common pledge to create an equitable, resilient, regenerative, and carbon-free future." As architects, it is our privilege to realize this goal by acting accordingly.



Matt Toddy, AIA

Toddy is a graduate of The Ohio State University and architect at Columbus, Ohio's Design Collective. He is the Strategic Vision Director for AIA Young Architects Forum and serves on the AIA EQ+FA Committee.

Black architects in the making

The United States has produced relatively few licensed Black architects. According to NCARB, there are approximately 115,000 registered architects in the United States. Black Americans make up only 2 percent of this number, and only about 400 of that 2 percent are Black women.

While these statistics are concerning, the number of minorities in the profession continues to increase. There remains, however, a disconnect between communities of color and our profession. The disparity for children from communities of

“The goal of BAM is to continue helping children of color around the nation with the development of a comprehensive curriculum that can be easily duplicated by others who are interested in creating their own chapter.”

color is created by a lack of access to architectural mentors who live and work in their neighborhoods.

Architect Craig Aquart, a principal at MCHarry and Associates, saw this challenge as an opportunity to become more

involved in the community. In 2015, he created the Black Architects in the Making (BAM) program. It was integrated as a community outreach program of the Miami Center for Architecture and Design and works with AIA Miami to garner support from local professionals.

BAM is led by diverse professionals in communities where Black children live, learn, and play and aims to spark an interest in architecture. While BAM focuses its efforts toward Black children and underserved communities, it encourages and welcomes all participants regardless of ethnicity. The goal is to create a more equitable architectural profession. BAM workshops address a multitude of creative subjects,

including drawing, history, city planning, digital design, and several other topics. They have been developed as both individual and group design challenges that allow students the opportunity to think, design, and create like architects. The workshops are meant to be fun and encouraging for the participants.

In recent years, BAM continued to expand across Florida. Malcolm Jones, a member of the original BAM program in Miami, had the privilege of bringing the program to the Orlando area after graduation. Over the past three years, he and eight other executive board members developed BAM Orlando, which is currently in the works of partnering with established local organizations to advance their mission.

Both chapters have conducted dozens of workshops since their inception and continue to positively affect hundreds of students and their communities. The goal of BAM is to continue helping children of color around the nation. BAM aims to do this with the development of a comprehensive curriculum that can be easily duplicated by others who are interested in creating their own chapter.

Developing a program from the ground up comes with challenges. The lofty goals of this grassroots organization are sometimes hampered by a lack of resources. Cloud-based software offers ease of access to programs such as SketchUp, Photoshop, and AutoCAD, but the computers required to operate these programs are sometimes not available through after-school centers. The pandemic has also hurt the group's efforts, as a virtual program has proved to be a challenge in communities where Internet access is sometimes limited.

Through it all, BAM continues to adapt and evolve with the generous support of local firms and allies in the form of encouragement, marketing, and financing.



Briana Johnson, Assoc. AIA

Johnson is a designer at DLR Group in Orlando. She is also a co-chair of BAM-Orlando, a recently elected Associate Director at large for AIA Florida, and a Jacobs Leadership Institute alumna.



(inset) BAM Founder, Craig Acquart, AIA, RID. Principal, MCHarry and Associates.



Top: Malcolm Jones works with students.

Middle Left: A young participant proud to show off the results of a successful workshop.

Middle right: BAM Orlando Executive Board members, left to right: Top Row – Arlenne Gil, Seher Hashmi, Trevor Boyle, Brittany Sosa, and Natalie Casey. Bottom Row – Malcolm Jones, Shane Ahsiong, Briana Johnson, and Richard Vanhorne.

Bottom Left: Seher Hashmi mentors a young participant.

Reach out: If you are interested in joining or learning more about BAM contact blackarchitectsinthemaking@gmail.com

The truth we favor

Monuments and African American legacy

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

– **James Baldwin**

Time heals all things.

More than ever, we must question this aphorism as the echoes of slavery continue to threaten our nation's great potential.

To move forward together, we must finally confront our past — in particular, the crimes against the African diaspora in America. How this can be done is beyond my ability to answer. I will only suggest the important role that civic architecture can play in illuminating truth and educating future generations.

Just 155 years after the official abolition of slavery, African American and white division continues to be an explosive source of political turmoil. We all know there is a problem, but our nation has not yet agreed on the nature of that problem. Confederate monuments, many built after the South's defeat in the Civil War, stand prominently in many cities. This signifies implicit approval of neo-Confederate mythology from their civic leaders.¹ African American families, especially those descended from the enslaved, suffer the burden of cumulative generations of oppression.

To empower African Americans as a cultural group, we must come to a firm acknowledgment of the roots of their suffering. This is a complex trauma that affects people differently depending on heritage and circumstance.²

One layer is personal prejudice. People of African descent worldwide can share their experiences of ostracization or unfair judgment based on their appearance. This prejudice stems from cultural imprints, ignorance, or simply a fear of “otherness.”

A deeper layer is inherited trauma. This is particularly evident in the descendants of the enslaved, and the United States was among the last nations to abolish the trafficking of Africans. The Confederacy was an agent of the Southern landowning class, which deployed racial pseudoscience to justify an economy that relied on exploitation.³ That society waged a centuries-long terror campaign against African Americans to prevent an uprising. Families were divided, stripped of their cultural practices, personhood, dignity, and the right to assemble, advocate for, and educate themselves. The inevitable outcome is a deep scar on the African American family unit, which often correlates with the duration of proximity to segregated American culture.⁴

Consider the different experience of families bearing an African surname, versus a surname such as Jackson or Davis.⁵

Confederate leaders also fomented racial division to sustain their exploitative society. Lower-class whites, mostly of Scotch-Irish descent, were appeased by the illusion of a hierarchy based on color.⁶ The Anglo-Saxon upper class went so far as to appropriate Celtic motifs to obscure their common cause with the enslaved and win loyal soldiers for the Confederate insurrection. After their defeat, Southern leaders attempted to salvage their reputation with propaganda: a revisionist history of Southern chivalry, Southern victimhood, minimization of the role of slavery, and the construction of some 700 monuments

1 The Costs of the Confederacy by Brian Palmer and Seth Freed Wessler, Smithsonian Magazine, 2018

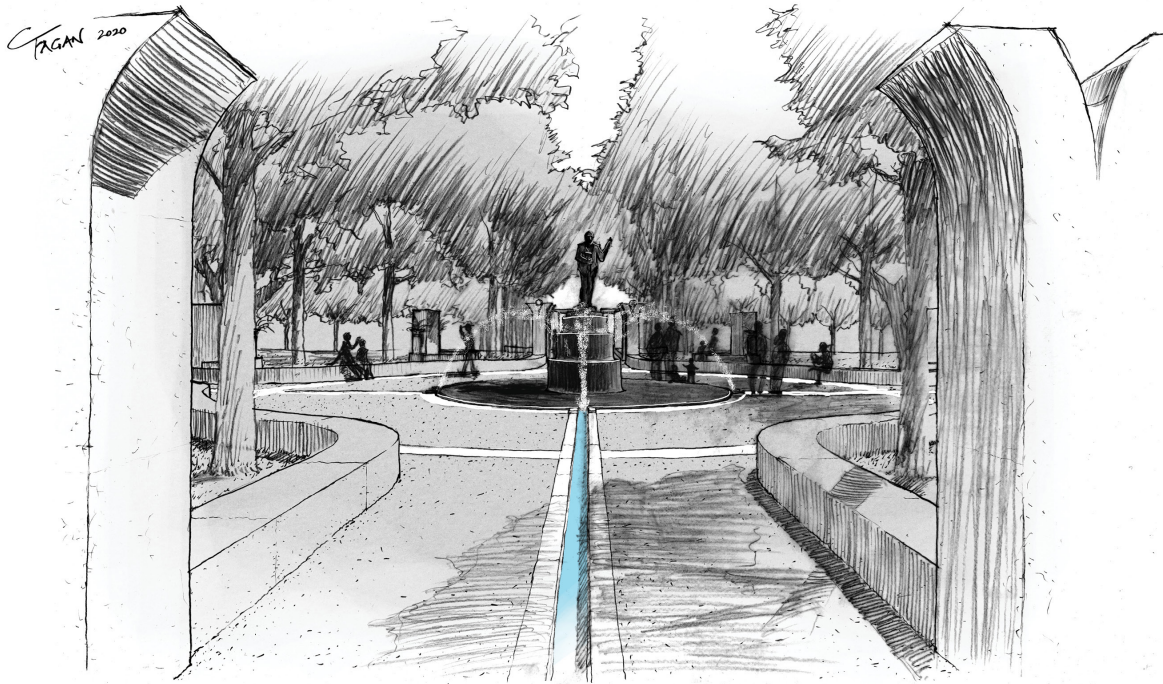
2 In Diversity Push, Top Universities Enrolling More Black Immigrants by Darryl Fears, Washington Post, 2007

3 A Brief History of the Enduring Phony Science That Perpetuates White Supremacy by Michael E. Ruane, Jamestown 400 Report, 2019

4 Ethnicity, Nativity and the Health of American Blacks by Derek M. Griffin PhD, Jonetta Johnson MPH, Rong Zhang PhD, Harold W. Neighbors PhD, and James S. Jackson PhD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011

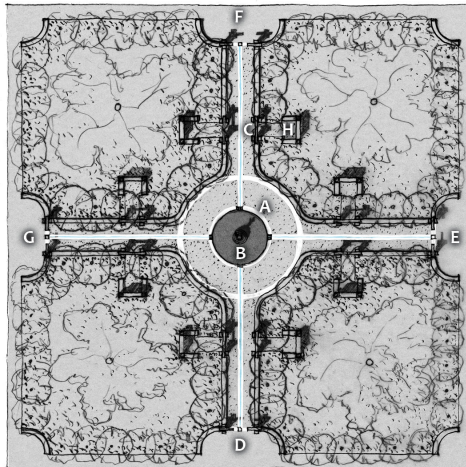
5 The Unspoken History Hidden Behind a Surname by Lolly M. Bowean, Chicago Tribune, 2017

6 A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn, HarperCollins, 1980



IN MEMORIAM JOHN ROBERT LEWIS AND THE LEGACY OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO CAME BEFORE HIM

THIS MONUMENT ASPIRES TO
ENLIGHTEN OUR IGNORANCE,
RESTORE PRIDE IN AND
KNOWLEDGE OF A STOLEN
HERITAGE, AND WELCOME
ALL PEOPLE INTO A SPACE
OF REVERENCE,
CONTEMPLATION, & HEALING.



LEGEND

- A. STATUE OF JOHN LEWIS
 - B. POOL OF THE UNNAMED
 - C. TOGUNA COLUMN
 - D. GATE OF ANCESTORS
 - E. GATE OF YOUTH
 - F. GATE OF HEROES
 - G. GATE OF ELDERS
 - H. MEMORIAL TABLET
- THE MONUMENT SITE
MEASURES 200 FEET
SQUARE, DESIGNED TO FIT
WITHIN A GREEN IN OLD
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA.

to Confederate heroes, collectively known as the “Lost Cause.”⁷ To this day, Southern white culture venerates tawdry symbols like the Confederate flag (derived from Saint Andrew’s Cross) and battle cry.⁸

Today, the African American community suffers from a deep anger, a feeling that their trauma has not been acknowledged or redressed.⁹ They have endured a legacy of disempowerment, financial, educational, and deeply personal, and alienation from their cultural roots. White Americans bear the subconscious imprints of guilt, fear of African American empowerment, and fear of revenge. Erasure of history was a balm to these fears.

Many are ignorant of how their culture was deliberately pitted against the common cause of the enslaved or the extent of crimes against African Americans throughout time.

That history will continue haunting our nation until its full extent is unearthed and encountered personally by each American. Civic architecture has the potential to verify history and heal. My first visit to Berlin was searing. I saw a nation that made penance, continuously, and preserved the truth of its crimes for future generations to witness. Monuments to the Holocaust weaken the hardest hearts, and it is to the credit of leaders like Willy Brandt, who demanded that the ancient persecution of Jewish people be laid to rest.¹⁰

We need new monuments. A successful monument to African American heritage must do several things: enlighten our

7 How I Learned About the Cult of the Lost Cause by Mitch Landrieu, Smithsonian Magazine, 2018

8 Reconstructing Dixie: Race, Gender and Nostalgia in the Imagined South by Tara McPherson, Duke University Press, 2003

9 The Negro in American Culture with James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, Emile Capouya, and Alfred Kazin, broadcast interview, 1961

10 The Age of Apology: What Brandt’s Genuflection Can Tell About the Potential of our Apologies by Renate Vink, What Is Happening Now, 2016

ignorance, bond African Americans to their stolen roots, and welcome all people into a space of contemplation, commemoration, and healing. To place such monuments prominently across our nation would signify consensus and respect for African American history from a high authority. Such tangible dignification may be a catalyst to aid the process of resolution.

We were meant to remain ignorant to the human cost of slavery and racism. Today, the mythology that allowed slavery to exist remains embedded in our collective psyche. Only a definitive, thorough accounting for the injustices faced by African Americans, from Calabar to Rosewood to Chicago, will challenge our comfortable assumptions. Greater consensus will grow when the truth is promoted by our leaders and made personal through public monuments, rituals, and media.

We must commemorate the cultures that African American slaves were separated from, in specific terms. These cultures meaningfully generate the architecture of each monument.¹¹ Of course, those who were brought to slave ships had diverse paths, so it is impossible to affirm exact places of origin. Historical records show a strong representation of enslaved Americans from the Bakongo, Mandé, and Akan cultures.¹² The layout of this monument and its use of color, water, and sound are drawn from the Bakongo cross: a cosmological diagram and sacred symbol that crossed time and oceans into the secret rituals of American slave gatherings.

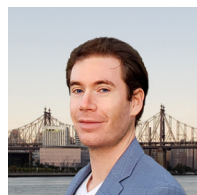
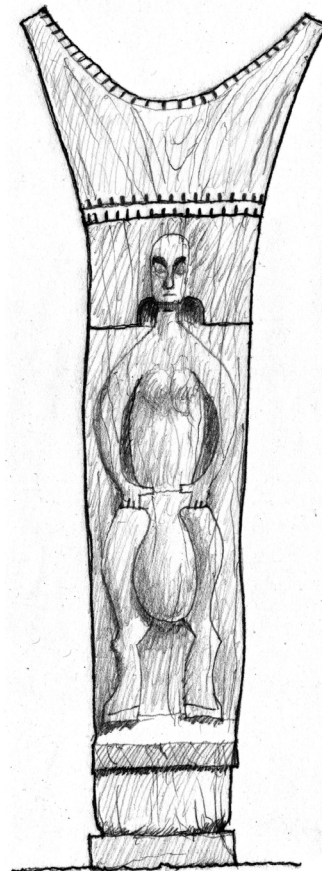
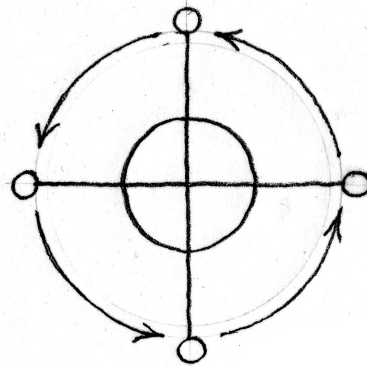
The act of bowing at the entrance signifies humbling oneself, making our ego receptive to knowledge. Columns flanking the gates of the memorial path echo the form of the toguna: a forked acacia branch used to support the low meeting houses of Mandé elders.¹³ Upon passing the threshold, visitors walk a tranquil path of bright white paving, shimmering trees, and the sound of rippling water and wind vessels. While proceeding, visitors will subtly experience “singing the point” until they reach the place of oath-taking at the monument’s axis.¹⁴ A central stone tablet is inscribed in counterclockwise fashion with the names of those to be remembered, submerged beneath a sheet of water.

It is time to face our truth and enshrine it in an architecture of unassailable power. This is not African American history. This is our history.

Previous: A monument concept for an American city center.

Upper: Bakongo Cross; a sacred diagram from the most common culture of origin of America’s enslaved

Lower: Sketch of a senegambian toguna column from the Art Institute of Chicago



Christopher Fagan, AIA

Fagan is the owner and Principal Architect at Christopher Fagan Studio Architecture, PLLC. He is chair of the AIA Queens Emerging Professionals Committee and believes diverse representation is essential to the architecture profession’s civic value.

- 11 Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy by Robert Farris Thompson, Vintage Books, 1983
- 12 African Origins in the US by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library, abolition.nypl.org
- 13 Les Masques Dogon: Ethnologie Savante et Ethnologie Autochtone by Anne Doquet and Sory Camara, Karthala Editions, 1999
- 14 Archaeology and Spirituality: The Conjuror/Midwife and the Praise House/Church at the Levi Jordan Plantation by Kristine N. Brown and Kenneth L. Brown, presented at Society for Historical Archaeology meeting, 1998

I'm a parent and an architect

As each protracted day has passed during the pandemic shutdowns that we are all experiencing, I have read a lot about a parent's place in this new world. As parents in our society and in the profession of architecture, up until now, we occupied a strange, invisible place. We put up a front, sometimes for our own benefit and sometimes for the benefit of others. We arrived at work, mostly put together, in a professional attitude, ready to do our jobs. We made it look "easy."

I know this because I did this every day. Before the pandemic, I would arrive at work, slightly sweaty from rushing each morning to deliver both of my boys where they needed to go, having already logged an hour in the car. I became a master of efficiency, packing the car the night before and choreographing a breakfast routine that would get us out the door mostly on time. I put my makeup on in the car at my son's elementary school parking lot while I called in to the first meeting of the day. After arriving at work, feeling like I'd already worked an entire day, I would often wonder whether my co-workers would believe what every morning was like, what I'd already been through by the time they were just starting their days. I won't

"My hope is that with better visibility comes more compassion, more resources, and more value for parents and kids alike."

lie, most days I was exhilarated by the challenge of it all, but I often wondered why I was hiding this other world from my co-workers, or if not hiding it, not actively making it visible. Now, with school in most areas on distance-learning-only plans and child care options extremely limited, parents have no choice but to allow outsiders a view into our world. Literally overnight, our work lives gained a window into our home lives.

The Messy Truth

Now we get to see the messy, complicated truth that parents

have always been hiding. Parenting in normal times is a complicated balancing act; parenting in a pandemic is something else entirely. Whatever balance there had been, whatever margin, it was gone. My kids started making frequent visits during my conference calls because I had no way to keep an acoustically separated office space and no one to keep them busy. Their demands were known ... to everyone. Some days, I had to simultaneously put my son on a school Zoom call, interact on a conference call of my own, and entertain my screaming 2-year-old.



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Photo: Courtesy of August de Richelieu

Every unplanned call was a fire drill. Even the planned conference calls were almost unmanageable. My husband and I alternated taking care of the kids while the other was on a call, but eventually our call times began to overlap as more virtual meetings were scheduled to make up for the lack of face-to-face interaction. It was nearly impossible in the best of these circumstances and absolutely impossible at some moments, and we were some of the lucky ones. Through all of this, I could not help but feel left behind. As one New York Times op-ed put it, “We are not burned out because life is hard this year. We are burned out because we are being rolled over by the wheels of an economy that has bafflingly declared working parents inessential.” I want our profession to learn from this pandemic, from these impossible moments now that everyone knows they exist. I want architecture to wake up and realize that parents are far from inessential, not simply because of their economic contributions to the industry, but because of the very fact that they are parents. With that acknowledgment should come the idea that shining a light on the impossible moments of parenthood should make them less impossible. My hope is that with better visibility comes more compassion, more resources, and more value for parents and kids alike.

Our Idols

Many of us are parents, but the image of an architect is often one of someone devoted entirely to the pursuit of design, working all hours of the day and night, a single beam of light in a darkly unaesthetic world. This person, if they have a family, is meant to sacrifice everything for their work. Great architects are held up to us in this way to be admired for their sacrifice, showcasing how this sacrifice sharpens their work. Even our schooling conditions us for a working life in this mold, not so subtly letting us know that if you haven’t stayed up all night to create it, it won’t be good enough. However, a casual viewing of “My Architect” will illustrate the impact a life like that can have on those around us and on ourselves. I’ve come to believe the opposite: that the people and family around us help us achieve satisfaction in our work and inform every aspect of that pursuit.

They make us who we are, and we make the architecture what it is.

Family also makes the profession healthier. Architecture school sets a punishing precedent. A recent study by Indiana University found that architecture students spend more time outside of class studying and preparing for class (22.2 hours per week) than any other college major. This was a precedent I felt I was expected to carry on into my working life. I felt that good design could be achieved only by putting in innumerable hours, making that sacrifice. This was personally unsustainable for me for mental health reasons (and that is another article entirely), but after having a family, I realized this pressure was unjust. Family demands allowed me a reason to take a break from work and reassess, to see what part of my work really mattered to me with a fresh perspective and then to home in on that part. I would never have experienced this personal growth without this perspective, and I attribute that to my family.

Because of my experience, I found myself seeking a more balanced reflection of the true profession. One whose idols don’t tread on one side of their lives to uplift the other. We have an opportunity to make our careers and our parenting richer by allowing both sides to see the other. As a mother, I want my children to remember my work not with resentment as something that took their mom’s time from them, but as something we shared, as something that brought enrichment to all our lives. I want them to see how passionate I am about my career and how it brings me strength and confidence. I want them to see all the real, tangible good it does in the world around us.

Physical and Figurative Space

All of this doesn’t mean I want the child care free-for-all we are experiencing right now, but if we had a managed, flexible system to begin with, we wouldn’t be going through this child care crisis. Children should not only be welcome at work, but they should also have a place, physically and figuratively. This

may mean space at our workstations and space in another location in the office for detachment from the active work. Some offices, like those of Wildbit, a software development firm, have eschewed the open concept, allowing each employee a private glass-enclosed space. This permits parents an enclosed area for their children to be the energetic and passionate beings they can sometimes be. It also eliminates the pressure put on parents to keep their children “library quiet” when at the office. Wildbit also has flexible space that accommodates anything from a work party to a group of children at play. Having physical arrangements like these tacitly changes the work culture from a place where children are tolerated to a place where children are welcomed.

Aside from physical space, children should be given the opportunity to understand the work being done and to engage in age-appropriate ways with it. It means aligning the work day with the school day and aligning school with work. It could mean having someone on staff to interface with children in the office or providing engagement activities for families during the work day, as Etsy does with a crafting event for parents and children every quarter. We should be embracing a child’s presence in our offices, not just allowing it. We all love this profession, and it’s our duty to share it with a future generation of architects. This does not mean creating some kind of curriculum, but simply allowing parents the flexibility to take

“We should be embracing a child’s presence in our offices, not just allowing it. We all love this profession, and it’s our duty to share it with a future generation of architects.”

the time while at work to be with their kids at some points.

To further promote a family-first approach, some companies have even gone so far as to offer on-site child care, allowing

parents to see their children throughout the day. Patagonia, for one, has offered on-site child care since 1983. The company makes a smart argument about the financial and business benefits of co-located child care, from greater employee retention and satisfaction to the resulting higher levels of productivity and engagement. However, my research did not turn up any architecture firms that offer anything similar, or even anything expressing a culture promoting family. The industry, if indeed it is making inroads into family engagement in the workplace, should give its initiatives a voice. Those firms that have been forced to adopt a more family-friendly approach during the pandemic should capitalize on their evolution by nurturing their new culture, and one way to ensure a culture like this endures is to make it profitable, i.e. Patagonia’s model.

A Culture with Kids

A culture with kids means tolerating that sometimes they are loud or messy. It means abandoning the idea that they are someone else’s kids and someone else’s responsibility. We should all be taking an interest, as a society and as a

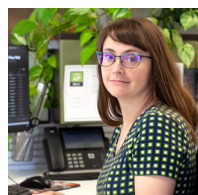
profession, in the children around us. So many times I have heard, “so and so doesn’t have kids, so they just don’t get it,” or someone tells me they just don’t know how to talk to kids. But they should get it. This is a future generation of architects and creative thinkers. We should all be there to foster that interest and growth in the kids around us. People without kids should have enough exposure to children through seeing them in the office or in other aspects of their lives that they don’t feel uncomfortable, that they know how to engage with them. Children should experience the workplace with its culture and routines. Maintaining two separate worlds for children and adults is not just no longer feasible, it’s also a disservice to both adults and children.

Economic Impact

We are at an immediate crossroads, where if children and child care are not more integrated into the working world, parents, mostly women, will be forced to drop out of the profession, setting this profession back decades on equality and forcing invaluable creative potential to go unfulfilled. Parents make up one-third of the country’s workforce, a third that is now crippled by mounting pressure from all sides of the equation. The loss of even some parents in the workforce would deal an unprecedented blow to the economic recovery we are pursuing and set us back on the world stage. As we work through this, it’s become clear that flexibility is no longer a perk; for parents and employers alike, it’s an absolute necessity. If we find balance, we will create a world in which children and parents are able to spend more valuable time together, enhancing rather than hiding each side of our lives from one another. After all, we are parents and architects.

Footnotes:

1. Perelman, Deb. [“In the Covid-19 Economy, You Can Have a Kid or a Job, You Can’t Have Both.”](#) The New York Times, The New York Times, 2 July 2020.
2. Keskeys, Paul. [“Dear Architecture Students: You Have a Problem - Architizer Journal.”](#) Journal, 6 Nov. 2017.
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5. Bellis, Rich. [“Patagonia’s CEO Explains How To Make On-Site Child Care Pay For Itself.”](#) Fast Company, Fast Company, 7 Mar. 2017.
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Marissa Hebert, RA, LEED AP BD+C

Marissa is an Albuquerque-based architect and mother to two wild, loving boys. She is a wife to a fellow professional in the industry, and her passion is creating order out of chaos in work and life.

Ten things to know about mentorship*

“At any stage in your career (or education), you have knowledge, experience, or a perspective that is valuable to others.”

Mentorship — a one-on-one, professional (but personal) relationship centered on career development through the sharing of advice, experience, and wisdom — is as important now as it has ever been. But what is it, really? How does it happen? It doesn't need to be difficult or complicated. But there are a few things to keep in mind to find a mentor, or be one, and have it go well.

1) Anyone can be a mentor ...

It starts with a simple conversation with someone you admire — professors, coworkers, bosses, even friends — and begins with a simple question — **can we chat sometime?** Don't overthink it. Just have a conversation with someone about something you'd like their perspective on — in their career or yours.

2) ... And you can, too

At any stage in your career (or education), you have knowledge, experience, or a perspective that is valuable to others. If you've ever found out something you wish you knew sooner, you now have newfound knowledge to pass on to another person. Seek out opportunities to contribute to the development and growth of someone else. [You also have things to teach your mentor!](#)

3) But a coach is not a mentor

Don't assume that a structured coaching arrangement at work can fulfill a mentorship role. Coaching is usually a short-term relationship, focused on the formal development of specific skills and competencies. It is about concrete growth toward a measurable goal or goals, typically within the framework of advancement within your role or company. Mentorship can also take place outside your organization — where you both can speak more honestly and candidly.

4) Early and often

It's never too early to start finding a mentor and forming relationships — even if you're still navigating your academic studies. And it's OK if your first mentor isn't your one and only. Mentors can and should change throughout your career as relationships ebb and flow and your direction pivots and focuses. Better to have a network of relationships to rely on before you need them. (Desperation/panic is hard to hide!)

5) Networking: It's easy ~~not as hard as you think~~ painful and awkward, but totally worth it

That dirty word: It's never too early to start. Most people start networking when they need something — a job, client relationships/business, or a mentor. This puts too much pressure on you, and the urgency will come across as clear as day. If you approach networking casually, over time, you can relax, and others will, too. Bonus points if you've discovered someone you'd like to meet and found a way to meet them!

6) People rarely say no, especially for coffee (But a heavy dose of flattery goes a long way, too)

It can't hurt to ask someone to have coffee or lunch — most of us “need” coffee, and everyone needs to eat lunch! More often than not, they're willing to meet, especially if you offer to take them out. Don't be afraid to flatter (especially if it's true): You've always loved their work, you admire their achievements,

“Be honest about where you're at and what you're struggling with, and see what advice/perspective they have to offer.”

or you're very interested to learn more about — insert something you saw on LinkedIn — because you really connected with it.



7) Be honest, be vulnerable

If someone agrees to talk, they're probably interested in helping. So be honest about where you're at and what you're struggling with, and see what advice/perspective they have to offer. Be specific so they can be specific. This will make the relationship much more beneficial and have some staying power over time. Mia Scharphie's blog at BuildYourselfWorkshop.com touches on connecting with a mentor.

8) The better way to find your first job, the best way to get a new job

Most of us finish school with no network beyond our classmates. Having a mentor who can speak to your interests and abilities is crucial when entering the workforce. It's extremely helpful to have a connection to the places you are looking — you might also get insight into what it's really like to work at your dream firm. Best-case scenario, the new job finds you!

9) Build a Board of Directors: Have as many mentors as you like!

Katie Rossier's blog post at MentorArchitect.com suggests having a suite of mentors — each to fill their own role in your development. You can have an advocate in the office, an ally in another professional organization, a friend who challenges you or just listens. Can you possibly have too many people to rely on or too much support and advice? Consider the Rule of Fives: Find mentors five and ten years ahead and a mentee five years behind. (As a mentee, you will also learn how to be a good mentor to others).

10) Before 2020, it was still about EDI.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion: Mentorship is about providing guidance and support to those who need it most. Mentors (especially those of like gender, ethnicity, etc.) can provide relevant perspective, advice, and even advocacy for the minorities in our profession who are falling back at every important career transition — whether it be graduation, licensure, or promotion.

11) BONUS: Near-peers are just as important (if not more so)

Who better to offer insight and advice than someone who has just recently navigated the same stage that you are in now? They are most likely to have relevant, relatable experience and may be able to offer a hand to pull you up the ladder. Just don't forget to turn around and lend your other hand!

For additional resources, see the AIA's "Guides for Equitable Practice" [Mentorship and Sponsorship page](#).

**this list goes to 11*



Carl Sergio, AIA

Carl Sergio is a Project Architect at Unispace. He is co-director of AIA Chicago's Bridge Mentorship Program, chair of AIA Illinois' Emerging Professionals Network, and Young Architect Regional Director for AIA Illinois.

Reverse mentoring

Reverse Mentoring

Reverse mentoring pairs young professionals with a member of the leadership team to mentor them on various topics of strategic and cultural relevance — the young professional being the mentor and the person in leadership being the mentee in this relationship. This is not a new concept. In the late 1990s, GE's Jack Welch used reverse mentoring to teach senior executives about the Internet. Reverse mentoring today can help leaders think about strategic issues, leadership guidance, and a mindset toward firm culture and project work. For young professionals, it is a way to extend their reach into the office workflow, expand their network, grow people skills, and work on their visibility within the profession.

In this relationship, the mentor and mentee are both invested. The relationship is crucial to the success of reverse mentoring. Sometimes reverse mentoring happens naturally, while some firms create formal programs. It is important to make sure that regardless of the approach, the pair is matched appropriately, both understanding the benefits and acknowledging it is crucial to have honesty and trust.

What are the benefits?

Enhances relationships and improves employee retention

Relationship building is as integral to the profession as the design work. Cultivating a relationship with a leadership team member helps young professionals increase their overall engagement with the firm, learn to give direct, honest

“Relationship building is as integral to the profession as the design work.”

feedback, and practice building relationships and networking. For the mentee, it builds relationships with younger professionals, offers a fresh perspective on potential initiatives, and fosters a connection that improves staff retention.

Promotes diversity

There is no hiding the lack of diversity in leadership positions in the architectural profession across the nation. But it is promising to see more diversity in the younger professionals joining the industry and in academic programs. However, this dynamic means there is a lack of senior mentors with diverse backgrounds available for the more diverse young professionals, when looking at traditional mentoring. Reverse mentoring helps pull younger minority professionals up, giving them a seat at the table while they learn and grow with the profession. It helps to improve leaders' understanding of minority issues, especially when the leadership is lacking diversity. It empowers emerging leaders.

Encourages sharing of digital skills

Those coming out of university programs have vast knowledge of a variety of digital platforms that enhance the design process and that leaders did not have at the time of their graduation. This will be a continuing disparity as new technologies surface without enough time to learn the new programs on the job. But there are opportunities to teach others new technologies along the way. For instance, when I was a year out of school, I helped a senior professional learn InDesign. He writes the monthly newsletters for the local CSI chapter. I worked with him to set up templates and taught him how to use the program. It helps reduce the time he needs to work on the newsletter and gives him more design freedoms. That is a simple example of how technology sharing from a younger professional to a senior leader can improve workflow.

Drives Firm Culture

The future of business and this profession cannot live in the past. As technologies change, so does marketing, advertising, business development, and firm culture. What is important for firm culture varies based on the generation and will continue to be different for future generations. The relationships built through reverse mentorship help break down barriers between



the levels within an office and allow the company to be more agile. The mentor in this instance is building a trustworthy relationship with the mentee, which can provide insight into the values of younger staff members. This may guide changes

“When those within a firm feel heard, listened to, respected and integral to the overall organization it improves their work ethic, mindset, and professional growth.”

to workflow, schedule, work-life balance, etc.

As we have seen in 2020, many young parents are learning to balance working from home, caring for children, and

the daily changes to routines and life dynamics. This presents a chance for mentors to propose changes that can help younger parents, not only during this time, but also in the future, without jeopardizing their value to the firm and professional growth.

Boosts productivity, engagement, and overall job satisfaction.

The other benefits listed above all add up to this overall benefit. When those within a firm feel heard, listened to, respected,

and integral to the overall organization, it improves their work ethic, mindset, and professional growth. A reverse-mentoring program exemplifies how young professionals, as mentors, can add value to a company through their current skill sets.

You need not be in leadership to make a difference in an organization and help it succeed. Talk to your leaders about how reverse mentoring can help empower the next generation of leadership and strengthen the company.

Resources:

[Considering Reverse Mentoring? Check Out These Tips](#)

[Reverse Mentoring: What Millennials Can Teach Executives and Managers](#)

[Why Reverse Mentoring Works and How to Do It Right](#)



Katelyn Rossier, AIA

Rossier is an architect at SmithGroup in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. She is a graduate of Kent State University and manages the blog mentorarchitect.com

Young architect spotlight

Advancing Indigenous architects



Tamarah Begay, AIA

Tamarah Begay, is the founder and CEO/Principal-in-Charge of IDS+A, she is one of only a handful of Native American women architects in the nation. Tamarah has built her firm around a hands-on process of design and planning to engage stakeholders and the community to create meaningful spaces that reflect culture, traditions, and history. She has instilled this approach with her team and clients on several projects, including planning, commercial, governmental, renovations, economic development, and education projects. She is recognized as a leader in the industry through her dedication to education, whether it is creating pathways for future planners and architects or advocating for indigenous communities. She is a licensed architect in 6 states and is also an assistant professor and lecturer at the University of New Mexico.

Of the handful of female Native American architects in the country, two work at Albuquerque's Indigenous Design Studio + Architecture, an office fully staffed by Indigenous professionals. Tamarah Begay, AIA, is the founder of IDS+A, focusing on providing sustainable, innovative, and culturally sensitive design for communities throughout the United States. Although her background and path into architecture parallel those of many minority architects, she leverages her unique experiences and culture as strengths in her practice, career and design process. A committed mentor, Tamarah's work within our country's tribes and her voice within the AIA are opening up opportunities for future generations of indigenous architects.

John Clark (JC): Can you describe more about your background and education, and what inspired you to become an architect?

Tamarah Begay (TB): I am originally from a community on the Navajo Nation called Iyanbito, located in Iyanbito, N.M. (15 miles east of Gallup, N.M.). I grew up playing in the dirt building and envisioning communities with mud, sticks, and whatever I could find around the home. I also have family members in the construction industry, where I helped draft, design, and construct my father's house on the reservation, as well as construct sheep corrals and structures out of many different materials for our animals. In 2002, I received my

bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of New Mexico, where I continued to pursue my master's degree in architecture and graduated from UNM in 2004. Along the journey, I have never stopped with my pursuit of education and am constantly looking to learn new industry techniques and styles that can help push the architecture and planning on Indigenous lands. My largest inspiration for wanting to join this profession would have been at my early ages of playing in the dirt, inspired by introductions of architecture in elementary school, and just watching my family design, plan, and construct things throughout my early years.

JC: What were challenging aspects of your journey as an entrepreneur, and how did you overcome these challenges?

TB: My challenges as an entrepreneur were not about the technical aspects of starting a business; they were mainly about the prejudiced perceptions of a business owner. Even today, I am viewed as a native that is uneducated and that I do not know what I am doing. I am constantly being judged by who I am (a native woman business owner). People will say "You are a business owner? But you are so young, and you don't even look like an architect or a business professional?" I would ask myself, then what does it take to look like an architect/business owner? Our profession continues to label an architect/business owner as only a white male, with a black business suit, drawing tube, and his briefcase. This stigma needs to change. An architect/business owner comes in many



different shapes, sizes, and colors. I don't change the way I speak, the way I dress, or look because this is who I am, and we need more people to be themselves. This is how I overcame these challenges throughout my career, by just being myself and keeping my roots and culture grounded into everything that I do. When I see myself gravitating away from these

“Other non-Indigenous clients can benefit from our Indigenous process. It’s about creating and building a project/community that has a connection to Mother Earth and everything around us rather than just a built object or form.”

decisions I have undertaken in my career. I am faced with challenges every day that help me make decisions that will prepare and make positive changes for myself, the business, staff, family, community, and the profession. The biggest one today is that just because my business caters to Indigenous communities does not mean IDS+A can only work on Indigenous projects. Other non-Indigenous clients can benefit from our Indigenous thinking/process. It's about creating and

aspects, I quickly remind myself who I am, and it's the person I have become that got me to where I am today.

Running a business that is eight years old has been one of the best and challenging

building a project/community that has a connection to Mother Earth and everything around us rather than just a built object or form. One day soon, hopefully, the business will not have to withstand prejudice from these individuals that think because we are an Indigenous-run firm we don't have the qualifications or experience to complete a non-Indigenous project.

JC: What is unique about your work in tribal architecture, what separates this work from more traditional practice?

TB: At Indigenous Design Studio + Architecture, we specialize in a community participatory planning process, which is used throughout the design, planning, and construction phase. This is used to explore possible solutions for challenging issues in a community, institution, facility, or neighborhood in a short period of time. It is through a storytelling process conducted on site in which participants gain an understanding of their shared community issues, values, wants, infrastructure, historical precedents, culture, history, language, and other resources so that design solutions can be considered and presented. Participants include design professionals, administration, staff, various stakeholders, and community members. This collaboration allows the various groups of the community to contribute to creating a place that is responsive to their current and future needs. In short, it's the participants guiding their own designs. This is all intertwined with the Indigenous worldview that everything is connected to each other.

Above, below, and previous: Navajo Technical University
Classroom Building



JC: You are one of the few female Native American architects in the country. With such small representation who do you look to for inspiration, mentorship, advice?

TB: There are less than 10 Native American woman registered architects in the country. When I passed my last exam, I became the first Navajo woman registered architect. The Navajo (Diné) is the largest tribe in the country, so becoming the first for my tribe had it's own challenges of discrimination and prejudice. Not being accepted as a business professional, because women don't own businesses and the Nation would rather work with a white male business owner. This type of thinking blew my mind: Why would my own tribe not accept me for who I am, going against our matrilineal society and clanship. The Western way of living has definitely took over parts of many tribes thinking about planning and designing, and I want to reinforce our traditional/Indigenous way of thinking and planning so that we can live in healthier and safer communities rooted to our Indigenous worldview. Becoming one of the first is just a start. It opens opportunities for future architects and business owners to have someone they can

"Becoming one of the first is just a start. It opens opportunities for future architects and business owners to have someone they can look up to that looks like them and comes from a community similar to theirs."

look up to that looks like them and comes from a community similar to theirs.

I did not have a role model or look to anyone for inspiration as I advanced through my career. I mainly looked at my strong female

family members as guidance. They taught me that as a native woman, we have a lot of responsibilities, but don't ever overlook what you want to do for yourself. Instilling this in me at an early age, I was taught to shoot for the stars, to not give up, to do what you believe in and to never forget where you came from.

JC: Can you share more about a memorable project or experience that best represents your work and process?

TB: Our most memorable project experience that best represents our Community Participation Process includes the Navajo Technical University (NTU) Classroom Building.

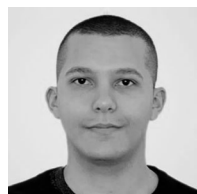
For NTU, we worked closely with the school/community in establishing a design that represents not only the vision and mission of the school, but the local history and culture of the community. When you are designing a new building in a rural community like the Navajo Nation, it's a big deal not only for the client, but for the community and the Nation as a whole, especially considering the condition of facilities prior to the completion of this project. IDS+A worked with the faculty, staff,

community, and students to come up with a project mission statement, which stated, "To create a state of the art campus that embraces a new, resilient community culture through the Diné philosophy and lifelong learning that will foster tradition, pride, sustainability, technology and economic development at the heart of the Navajo Nation." This, in addition to including the NTU users into the design process, is what drove the master plan and building design. As this was the first building to anchor the new campus, we connected this significance to Diné creation stories of emergence, beginnings, strength, protection, and nurturing. This is seen in how the form of the building grows out of the ground, as well as how the double-height space emphasizes attention to the sky above as you are greeted at the main entry space. By including the building users into our process and connecting design solutions back to guiding principles developed in master planning, we feel that our design process is greatly enhanced at giving the community, students, and staff a building that will be reflective of their values and culture.

JC: How does your work hope to inspire future Native American generations to consider a future in architecture and design? How can the AIA and other young architects help in this effort?

TB: Native American registered architects represent 0% of architects in the AIA. I would like our work to inspire future Native Americans to go into architecture and related fields. Architecture is much needed in our Indigenous communities; we need individuals that are knowledgeable about our Indigenous roots so they can reeducate and implement these principles back into their communities. As well as to continue to educate non-Indigenous people about the importance of the Indigenous world view.

The AIA can start by including the voices of the Native Americans and Indigenous people into the decision-making process within the AIA. The AIA can begin to support their local chapters with Native American members and schools with Native American students by providing resources, mentorships, internships, and scholarships. The AIA can also continue to support the national and student American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers (AICAE).



John J. Clark, AIA, NCARB

Clark is an architect with RMKM Architecture in Albuquerque. He is a graduate of the University of New Mexico and is the Communications Director for AIA National's Young Architects Forum.

Painting the town red

The indelible history of segregation in our built environment; A review of *The Color of Law*

On Saturday, April 11, almost exactly one month after reporting the first case of COVID-19 in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County added race data to those hospitalized or deceased in the county because of the disease. A daily email update stated:

“Health Department Director Dr. Debra Bogen said monitoring COVID-19 data by race is important because the department knows that communities of color already have poorer health outcomes in Allegheny County, and it is critical to know if COVID-19 is affecting those communities to a greater degree.”

Even that early in the pandemic in America, the message was clear: This health crisis is not going to affect all of us equally.

Pittsburgh has certainly not been alone in that disparity. A recent [investigation by the New York Times](#) revealed the effects across America, illustrating that Black and Latino people are two to three times more likely to contract the disease than their white counterparts. Wealth, income, housing, and health inequities that have come to the fore in recent years are being highlighted again, this time with even higher stakes.

Richard Rothstein, author of “The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America,” would argue that none of this was accidental. In his exhaustively researched and often bleak study of how political and governmental actions intentionally entrenched racial segregation in this country, Rothstein paints an undeniable portrait of a landscape hostile to Black citizens at every turn.

His main premise in writing the book is debunking the myth that neighborhood segregation happened inadvertently, with no intentional actors to be held to account. This is a falsehood, he explains, and he identifies numerous private actions, political



machinations, and governmental policies that explicitly created the de jure (by law) segregation our nation faces today.

“‘The Color of Law’ demonstrates that racially explicit government policies to segregate our metropolitan areas are not vestiges, were neither subtle nor intangible, and were sufficiently controlling to construct the de jure segregation that is now with us in neighborhoods and hence in schools.”

The book details a calculated system of discrimination in housing that was (and in many ways is) rooted in anti-Black racism reaching back over centuries. Each chapter outlines a particular tool of oppression used to deny suitable housing to Black residents across the country: ghettoized public housing, racial zoning, redlining, “blockbusting,” government-backed mortgages with racial requirements, predatory subprime mortgages, and “slum clearance,” much of which was reinforced through court rulings. The sum total is a layered

fortress of barriers to accessing economic freedom and wealth through the most basic tenet of achieving the American Dream: owning one's own home.

The lasting effect of these policies and practices is the yawning gap of economic inequality we recognize today. Early in the book, Rothstein describes the entangled systems that have caused the generational loss of wealth due to discriminatory housing practices:

... many African American World War II veterans did not apply for government-guaranteed mortgages for suburban purchases because they knew that the Veterans Administration would reject them on account of their race, so applications were pointless. Those veterans then did not gain wealth from home equity appreciation as did white veterans, and their descendants could then not inherit that wealth as did white veterans' descendants. With less inherited wealth, African Americans today are generally less able than their white peers to afford to attend good colleges. (xi)

[Studies from the Brookings Institution](#) and other sources illustrate that the average white family in America today has 10 times the wealth of the average Black family.

Rothstein draws a direct line from this history to our present, stating, "We have greater political and social conflict because we must add unfamiliarity with fellow citizens of different racial backgrounds to the challenges we confront in resolving legitimate disagreements about public issues" (195). As the book unfolds, it is impossible not to see the modern-day effects in the civil unrest and protests catalyzed by the police killing

of George Floyd that we have experienced this summer.

Most striking to read as an architect and planner is the notable absence of the design

"The question to the design community is: How do we help reverse this entrenched inequality and bring some measure of restorative justice to our neighborhoods?"

community in the book. (The one notable designer who does appear, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., does not emerge unscathed.) Rothstein, an economic and legal scholar, is writing this history through a legal lens. The book can occasionally get bogged down in court case specifics and

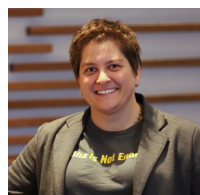
governmental committee particulars. As a designer with a focus on urban planning, I yearned for a perspective that included those who actually designed and constructed the housing and transportation infrastructure Rothstein describes. However, the book is still highly valuable to the design community in understanding how our built environment developed so unevenly along racial lines.

Many of the policies enacted in the history recounted here are visible in our cities today. From the concentration of communities of color in dilapidated public housing and in neighborhoods with poor access to public transportation to the federal highways that intentionally divided often-thriving Black neighborhoods, we live with this legacy daily. The question to the design community is: How do we help reverse this entrenched inequality and bring some measure of restorative justice to our neighborhoods?

There is, of course, no easy answer. As architects, we are often invited to the table after critical decisions have already been made. As "The Color of Law" so patently illustrates, segregation was caused and exacerbated by the enactment of legislated policy. When given a project to design, we are required to work within those established regulations and provide a particular type of solution.

And yet, as many recent practitioners and our own professional organization (with the Guides for Equitable Practice) have [recently decried](#), it is no longer enough to stick our heads in a sea of trace paper and pretty renderings. As highlighted in another section of this publication on the efforts of Women+ in Design Pittsburgh to address our roles and responsibilities in advocating for racial justice, the architecture community is predominantly white and may have previously been able to ignore the inequities in the communities where we didn't work or live. This is no longer the case. The greatest success of "The Color of Law" may be to bring awareness to those of us who have been privileged not to have lived its legacy in our own lives.

We can and must be advocates for more equitable policies and for an industry that more accurately reflects the communities within which we design. Perhaps then we, alongside policymakers and community voices, can start to reverse the insidious segregation that has too long plagued our country.



Emily Pierson-Brown, Assoc. AIA

Emily is a designer and planner at Perkins Eastman where she focuses on designing healthy, vibrant senior living environments. She is a co-leader of Women+ in Design PGH and an active member of AIA Pittsburgh.

Gender, sex, and architecture

This article is not just about “Women in Architecture,” although women in this profession are a critical piece of the conversation. A more expansive understanding of the confluence of gender, sex, and architecture seems timely. Cultural ideas about gender and sexuality are changing rapidly, the #MeToo movement is reckoning with our society’s rampant sexual harassment, and transgender rights have been mainstreamed by media representation and the recent spate of “bathroom bills.” Beyond these current themes, there is a conspicuous silence in the architectural literature on the topic of sex, considering its role in our daily lives for pleasure or procreation. Architects seem to always be designing spaces for “Live, Work, Play” and places to sleep and eat, with one glaring omission. Academia ignores sex, and the profession shies well away from anything with a whiff of taboo. We understand that laws affect different bodies unequally. The Americans With Disabilities Act, which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary, acknowledged the power of space to include or exclude certain bodies. If we do a little digging, we’ll find that space also has power to prescribe norms concerning gender, sex, and sexuality and that it affects differently gendered bodies in unequal ways.

The connections between gender, sex, and architecture are endlessly fascinating and have interested me for many years. Despite my interest, I couldn’t seem to crack the silence on this topic in either my academic or professional circles. I took on this topic not as an expert, but as a personal research project, in an effort to educate myself. Inspired by women around me who were educating themselves and sharing that passion with others, I devised the idea to formulate a course. In the winter of 2020, I developed and started teaching a seminar course

for the University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation titled: Gender, Sex, and Architecture.

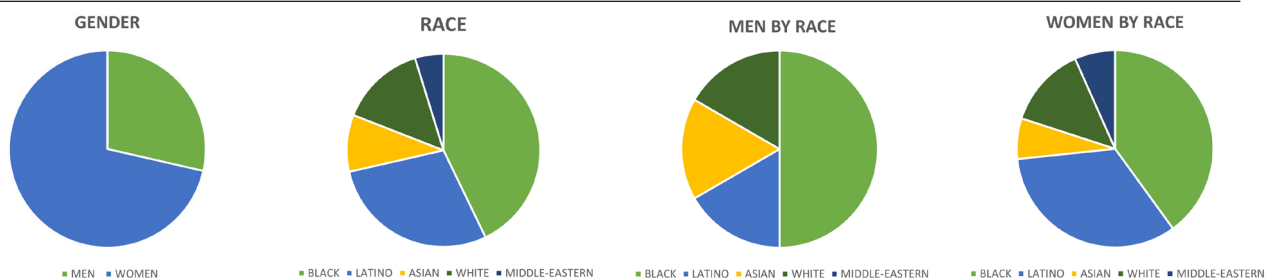
Stepping into the classroom on the first day, it was immediately apparent that I had never participated in a more diverse college course, either as an undergraduate, graduate student, or professor. Six of the 21 students were men, and the majority of the class was Black or Latino, along with Asian, Middle Eastern, and white students. (Pictured below are the statistics.) The diversity of the class speaks to the demographic changes shaping America and the profession in my lifetime and to the appeal that curriculum content focusing on “identity” has for students of all backgrounds.

On the first day of class, I asked why, of all the electives available, had they chosen to take Gender, Sex, and Architecture? Intersectionality, inclusivity, and representation emerged as themes. Some students were interested in how architecture affects all minorities, not just women; they were interested in discovering examples of inclusive architecture and spaces, particularly for women, women of color, and LGBTQ people. Others asked about the progress of women in the field of architecture and noted that they had never studied a female architect in three years of architectural education. Still others wanted to do something about gender inequality through architecture, asking, “How do the structures we inhabit contribute to gender inequality in our society?”

Students had the opportunity to explore these questions as part of the course, which was structured as a discussion seminar. The goal was to engage in architecture and the built

Gender, Sex and Architecture

Class demographics



environment through the lenses of gender, sex, and sexuality. We accomplished this by examining social notions of gender and sex and tracing their parallels in architecture. In class, we used feminist critique and [Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality](#) to unpack how cultural norms concerning gender and sex are built into architecture via government regulation including building codes, through convention or "best practices," and through unconscious bias. By analyzing a wide range of architectural typologies and styles, students investigated ways in which the built environment reflects and shapes our ideas about gender and sex. This scholarship was undertaken with the aim of answering the following questions:

- What can architecture tell us about our culture's understanding of gender? Of sex?
- How have changing notions of gender, sex, and sexuality been represented or not in architecture (stylized, interpreted, abstracted, ignored, etc.)?
- What would gender-equitable or sex-positive architecture be like?

Perhaps the best way to survey the incredible breadth of this topic would be to take a look at a few of my students' final paper topics, which illustrate the varied and interwoven strands of gender, sex, and architecture.

1. The interior architecture of strip clubs: embodiment of straight male fantasy and dominance in opposition to sex workers' rights and safety.
2. The suburban garage as a site for constructing American masculine identity.
3. Saudi Arabian domestic architecture as an expression of Quranic gender norms.
4. Queer space: WOC- and LGBTQ-centered architecture beyond the paradigm of the gay white cis-male.
5. The Pink House: envisioning an architecture of female power.
6. A sociological review of the impacts of genderless restrooms.
7. Condoms vs. The Pill: spatial prominence of birth control options in the American drug store.

You might be thinking, "Wow, that's a lot." And it is! There are so many ways that society's attitudes toward these concepts make their way into our built environments. So what does this mean for the practice of architecture? Recalling my students' complaints on the first day of class, I would suggest three courses for action:

Diversify Our Sources: We have to stop limiting architectural curricula and precedents to the same old European white, male architects. I don't care how brilliant they were (or weren't, depending on your opinion). It's lazy and unoriginal. There are so many diverse creators and architectures to cite if we exert the effort to research these resources. We, our students, and architecture as a whole will be better for it.

Acknowledge Our Role in Inclusion: Architecture, like any cultural artifact, is not neutral. Cultural ideas about gender, sex, sexuality (and race! a whole other course!) get built into our cities and structures. To acknowledge this is to acknowledge that diverse perspectives could change and improve architecture, buildings, and the profession — which in turn means we must consciously address the makeup of our profession.

Promote Equity Through Design: Finally, because architecture is not neutral, it can and should be a venue for experimenting and prototyping space for equity. The [Stalled!](#) prototype by Joel Sanders, Susan Stryker, and Terry Kogan is no minor accomplishment. It proposes a new model for gender-equitable restrooms that serve everyone, and its goal is to reconceptualize our built space and the laws that govern how that space is created.

As I discovered in my research, theorists, educators, activists, and practitioners have been exploring the landscape of gender, sex, and architecture for decades. Despite their efforts, these contributions have not been incorporated into mainstream university curricula or highlighted in studio courses, and they are only marginally referenced in "Women in Architecture" panels and events. Being a woman in architecture is the most surface of ways that gender interfaces with our built environment. If we limit our inquiry on this subject to just the professional class of women who have succeeded in architecture, we will miss all of the other intricate and intriguing facets of this discussion.

Inspiration, acknowledgments and suggested reading:

1. Lori Brown, author of *Contested Spaces: Abortion Clinics, Women's Shelters and Hospitals : Politicizing the Female Body*
2. Joel Sanders Susan Striker and Terry Hogan collaborators on *Stalled!* an inclusive restroom prototype
3. Gabrielle Printz, Virginia Black, and Rosana Elkhatib of F-Architecture, a feminist-architecture collaborative
4. Julia Gamolina, creator of the website [Madame Architect](#)
5. Caroline Criado Perez author of *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*



Siobhan Steen, AIA

Steen is a Project Manager at Hickok Cole in Washington, D.C., specializing in commercial office base building and complex jurisdictional approvals. She teaches at the University of Maryland, creating a course on the timely topic of Gender, Sex, and Architecture.

AIA Houston Latinos in architecture



Rosa Linda Camacho

Camacho is a senior associate at Kirksey Architecture, where she has worked for 16 years and is a Senior Project Coordinator and Project Manager. She has been in the architecture industry for 22 years and is active in the community. She obtained her bachelor's degree in architecture at the University of Monterrey in Mexico.



Cesar Dominguez

Dominguez is the principal and owner of Quadro Architecture. With over 30 years of experience, he has designed, managed, and constructed diverse types of projects in several parts of the United States and Mexico. Throughout his career, Dominguez has also participated in nonprofit associations and committees, as well as fundraisers for scholarships to help students achieve their dreams in architecture.



Bayardo Selva

Selva has turned his childhood building-blocks playtime into a career that spans over 20 years. He actively participates in the community through organizations promoting architecture and protecting the environment and serves as a mentor to underprivileged youths. He considers himself a student of the profession and enjoys perfecting his craft.



Ricardo Martinez

Establishing a passion for architecture in high school, Martinez pursued a degree from the University of Houston. Since establishing Martinez Architects, he has received national design awards, has been published, and has spoken at national design conferences. He continues to support the AIA through the AIA Houston Board of Directors and is a member of the Aldine ISD Education Foundation.

One of the beauties of Houston is how culturally diverse its population is. However, while 45 percent of Houston's 2.34 million residents identify as Hispanic, only 12 percent of AIA Houston members (and 7 percent of licensed members) identify as Hispanic.

In 2019, AIA Houston launched its Latinos in Architecture Committee (LiA), which saw immediate success in its Celebrating Hispanic Heritage — Architecture, Art, Cuisine, Music, and Language event in September 2019, which featured Brian Zamora (Gehry Partners), Silvia Chicas (Antena Houston), and Luisa Duarte (artist).

Amaya Labrador (AL): Tell me how the AIA Houston Latinos in Architecture Committee (LiA) came to be.

Linda Camacho (LC): It was a conversation that's been happening for a long time, but Bayardo was the instigator.

Bayardo Selva (BS): Yeah, I'm just like an instigator, and I bounced it off a lot of people. "Hey, I think we should form something!" And Jennifer Ward at AIA Houston was a big help. Even though the Houston committees don't rely on staff, Jennifer was a big part of getting those early meetings together.



Ricardo Martinez (RM): Part of the challenge in the early days of our conversations was the perceived exclusionary perception nature of a Latinos in Architecture Committee. Our success has to be credited in part to the Women in Architecture Committee being formed (and being successful) before us, which helped everyone understand that the “Latinos” or “Women” in the title isn’t about who can join, but what the focus is.

Typically, Hispanic is used to indicate people from a Spanish-speaking country (which includes Spain, but theoretically excludes Brazil). Latinos, then, would be people from Latin American countries. Although both terms are often used interchangeably, the US Census Bureau counts only the Hispanic category.

LC: There was also a push from AIA National on the EDI front; Marsha Calloway was pushing for this as well.

Cesar Dominguez (CD): And it was a void that we could see — about six years ago, this group started presenting at the Houston Hispanic Forum Career Fair. Some of the Latino

kids in school — and especially for their parents — they just don’t have that exposure and knowledge about the field. And although we are there representing field, the overall goal is to encourage them to pursue higher education.

AL: The Latinos in Architecture Committee has a strong community focus — was that deliberate?

LC: The committee is inclusive by design — “Latinos in Architecture” doesn’t mean that you can’t join us if you’re not Latino; you don’t need to speak Spanish, and you don’t have to be an architect! It’s open to anybody who wants to support us, wanting to help the community and wanting to learn about all the different cultures that make up the Latino term. Furthermore, we don’t just focus on reaching out into the architecture world to discuss architecture. AIA Houston already has a lot of committees that can focus on the actual architecture, and nationally there are a lot of resources for that. We want to reach out to the community and reach Hispanic students and show them people who look like them and show how they’re successful and what they’ve accomplished. To have those students understand that they can go anywhere they want if that’s what their goal is.

AL: How does the committee define success for itself?

BS: I think our biggest success is seeing some of the younger

LiA members who are taking over the subcommittees and making it their own. Even though they might not have the opportunity to take on a leadership role in their own firms yet, I think that's where we've been the most successful, in bringing those people out to light in their community. It's very rewarding to see.

AL: Your first event took shape very quickly! What was that like?

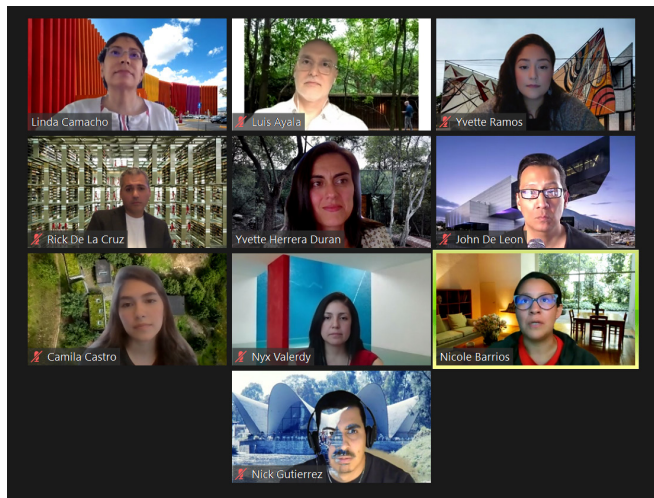
RM: Our first event was very successful. In a short amount of time, we were able to round up folks that were interested in participating. We had a panel of speakers that included art, architecture, and language, and we utilized the culinary and musical aspects to supplement the event experience. Cesar had the connection to Brian Zamora, one of our firms agreed to host us, Linda had the connection to the catering, and we brought in a margarita bar from a local restaurant. The event had a great turnout, was financially successful, and created a reputation for LiA's events. We were on track to host Noche Argentina in the spring, which already had generated a lot of buzz. Unfortunately, that had to be rescheduled due to COVID, but we are already working on retooling the events for the fall.

[Watch the AIA Houston 2020 Latinos in Architecture – Amplifying Voices roundtable, on YouTube.](#)



Houston LiA's advice for members wanting to start an LiA or JEDI committee:

1. Surround yourself with passionate people.
2. Embrace the differences! Multiple points of views is what makes our events so rich and successful.
3. Empower those people to lead their own events or campaigns.
4. Establish a mission and clear goals and then ensure that each event is consistent to that mission and is helping meet those goals.
5. "The way we've always done it" is not the way things have to be done going forward.



Previous page: 2019 LiA Houston: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage – Architecture, Art, Cuisine, Music, and Language Symposium held at Kirksey Architecture.

Left: Virtual LiA Houston HCC Mentorship Program

Above: Houston Hispanic Forum Career and Education Day



Amaya C. Labrador, AIA

Labrador is a healthcare architect in the Houston studio of Perkins and Will. She currently serves on the AIA Houston Board of Directors, and is the Young Architects Regional Director for Texas.

‘Good Will Reconsidered’

By Martin Gold, Ravi Srinivasan
A Book Review

Students and faculty from the University of Florida’s School of Architecture and M.E. Rinker, Sr. School of Construction Management collaborated to design a cultural arts center for the Newtown community in Sarasota, Fla. This academic team sought to draw out community priorities and then develop those ideas as comprehensive design proposals for a designated site on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The students worked in teams to evaluate an existing structure, develop appropriate goals for sustainability, evaluate the cost and value of their proposals for the facility, and define an architecture that is inspiring and representative of themes put forward by the community.

“Good Will Reconsidered” proposes to program and design a cultural arts center for the Newtown community in Sarasota, Fla. The arts center will exemplify the integrity, heritage, and cultural identity of Newtown while providing a place for experimentation in art, music, dance, cinema, and other forms of human interpretation and expression. It will offer an opportunity to strengthen community identity, nurture local talent, and extend beyond the neighborhood through events, exhibits, and workshops that feature local talent and bring regional and national artists, musicians, thinkers, and agents of change into the community.

The arts center will be located in the heart of the Newtown community on an economically challenged but emerging main thoroughfare: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The program of activities will include community meeting rooms, a performance space, gallery space, administrative offices, exterior gathering spaces, studio spaces, media rooms (recording and production), digital fabrication spaces, classrooms, parking, and other activities to be determined. These facilities will support arts, crafts, and other skills that can move citizens toward employment and self-improvement. The project may also be linked with artist housing in the neighborhood, located off site.

Process

The academic work was built around three interrelated investigations — context (site and culture), typological precedent, and inspired design proposals. Students explored the physical and cultural context through site visits, field studies, precedent studies, stakeholder presentations and discussions, and traditional scholarly research. Students developed philosophical and conceptual ideas that were personal, collective, and drawn from the project context. These core ideas provided the basis for scheming: master planning, architectural form and language, scale, light, interior/exterior, and building systems. Students used a hybrid design process, including traditional sketching and schematic physical models along with computer-aided design (CAD) software, parametric plug-in analysis software, and rendering software



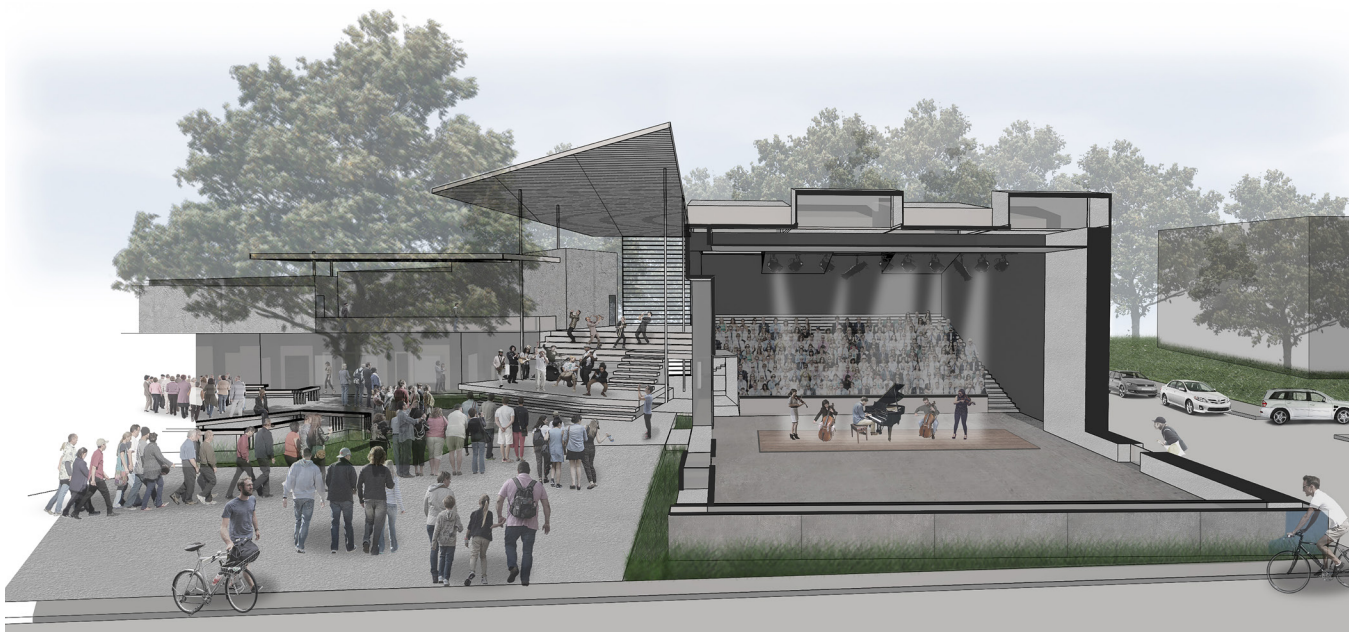


to translate contextually driven ideas into schematically resolved architectural proposals. The studio required ever-advancing design iterations that become more complex in their architectural detailing, philosophical exploration, and refinement of emergent architectural vocabulary. Intermediate informal class reviews, desk critiques, and formal presentations that included stakeholder meetings and academic critiques were the primary evaluation mechanism of students' work.

Project Proposals

Students from the University of Florida School of Architecture and Rinker School of Construction Management, in collaboration with students from New College of Florida, developed cultural arts programs in response to the study of the cultural and physical context of Newtown. Cultural arts programs emerged from larger themes arising from interacting with the community, such as access to creative careers, creativity as personal expression, celebration of the local history and prominent community leaders, access to healthy foods, and access to economic prosperity within the community. Student teams approached these goals as opportunities for the arts center to catalyze and elevate existing initiatives and aspirations of the community. Students looked at related case-study arts centers, past initiatives in the community, and existing neighborhood equity, aiming to craft a set of activities that would be mutually supporting and lead to a vibrant, regularly occupied cultural arts center. To this end, there are in most cases multiple program activities designed to operate in a complementary fashion and to be supported by the architecture put forward. Goodwill's path-to-employment program is one of the foundational activities that would occur in all the proposals. Additional program elements that were explored include economic incubators, music performance and production facilities, an oral history museum, urban farming and aquaculture, food markets, and education.

The student proposals strive to find inspirational architecture that draws the community together while expanding opportunity throughout the neighborhood. The schemes offer resource efficiency, affordability, and economic viability over the life of the new cultural arts center. The interdisciplinary teams of future architects and constructors worked collaboratively to conceive this expressive architecture, use appropriate building materials and techniques, model energy use, and evaluate cost as part of the iterative design process.





This approach led to inspiring architectural proposals that embody community aspirations and house emerging arts and community support programs with the potential to reverberate throughout Sarasota.

Presentation

Student teams exhibited and presented their cultural arts design proposals to neighborhood stakeholders and civic leaders at the Center for Architecture in Sarasota on April 20, 2018. The presentations marked the culmination of a 16-week academic semester, three field trips to the community, an interim review by stakeholders and local architects, countless hours of design and modeling, and much reconsideration. Each of the six student teams presented a complete schematic design that integrated urban planning, building structures, landscape ecology, materials systems, parking, environmental control considerations, and construction cost estimates. Plan, section, and elevation drawings, along with architectural renderings and architectural scale models, were produced and presented to characterize the designs. The proposals provided a visual perspective of the potential for the site and demonstrated a range of cultural arts programs that could support existing community values and advance emerging community equity.



Top left: Formax group's presentation © Good Will Reconsidered, Martin Gold, Ravi Srinivasan

Bottom left: Studio 941: Music Program – Formax Group © Good Will Reconsidered, Martin Gold, Ravi Srinivasan

Above: Urban Porch – Taktile Group © Good Will Reconsidered, Martin Gold, Ravi Srinivasan

Right: Newtown Exchange Center – Degree 6 Group © Good Will Reconsidered, Martin Gold, Ravi Srinivasan



Arash Alborzi

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Next to lead

Deconstructing barriers to leadership for ethnically diverse women

In January 2019, I was asked to serve on an AIA National Diversity Pipeline Task Force to establish a program to support ethnically diverse women in architecture. I enthusiastically accepted — few times had I felt so expertly qualified to lend my voice. With many years spent pursuing architecture, I have intimate familiarity with the challenges and barriers facing

“My hopes are that women who seek to enter the program take comfort knowing that it was carefully designed with their unique lives and futures as the focus and that a central space of belonging and acceptance is a priority.”

Black women in this career. Sharing those experiences to help future architects was an opportunity and responsibility I could not refuse. The idea for the task force started with an AIA member's inquiry at an AIA National business meeting. She questioned the lack of racial diversity in the representation of AIA leadership and challenged the AIA to pursue radical action to create a culture of diversity and inclusion within the institute. With support from AIA Georgia, the cause was brought forward as a resolution, voted on, and approved, bringing to life this task force and its special focus. With the AIA's 2017 Diversity and Inclusion Statement and its commitment to

“champion[ing] a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion,” the task force and resulting program are a major step toward action on this commitment.

The goal of the one-year task force was to design a leadership program for ethnically diverse women in architecture. The historically low numbers of racially diverse female architects are well documented, and attrition along the licensure path persists. Although the AIA is tackling issues of representation through K-12 education, increasing awareness of the profession earlier in the stage of a person's development, the Diversity Pipeline program addresses these issues from a different angle. It offers opportunities for emerging professionals and female architects to find role models in the profession, paths to advancement, and opportunities to lead within the institute.

From the diversity of task force member representation to the research, data, and case studies provided, each detail of task force interaction was carefully and intentionally designed. Task force members were diverse in race, age, gender, and professional background. Our leaders, Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA, Principal and Director of Global Diversity at Perkins+Will, and Luke McCary, AIA, 2019 Strategic Council representative, served as chair and co-chair, respectively. Each brought intrinsic knowledge of the history and inner workings of the AIA and a great ability to lead the group toward a sustainable program addition to the AIA's portfolio.

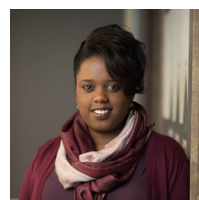


Over the course of a year, the program was designed through a series of face-to-face and virtual meetings. Work sessions included open and honest dialogues from all perspectives. From the beginning, all agreed that a truly effective program acknowledges the unique barriers to leadership and volunteer participation at the intersection of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and class. Each member brought personal experiences to the table to break down understanding of perceptions, realities, and bias and worked together to create a path forward to a successful program design. As one would expect with such an impassioned subject, conversations were sometimes difficult, but with help from a great facilitator, Maureen Linker, Ph. D, University of Michigan at Dearborn, we were guided to engage deeply and with intellectual empathy.

Efforts of the task force resulted in a framework recommendation to the AIA Board of Directors, which was approved and funded to move forward at the end of 2019. Next to Lead, an annual leadership development program, aims to recruit its inaugural class in spring 2021. The program aims to expand professional and leadership pipelines and prepare future leaders. My hopes are that women who seek to enter the program take comfort knowing that it was carefully designed with their unique lives and futures as the focus and that a central space of belonging and acceptance is a priority. While the commitment to volunteer is their own, they should know that the AIA has committed to match their efforts with a support structure and a transparent pathway to achievement.

Task force members (from left to right). Front: Luke McCary, AIA, Pond Co.; Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA, Perkins+Will.

Back: Del Ruff, AIA National; Maureen Linker, Ph.D., University of Michigan at Dearborn professor; Corey Clayborne, FAIA; Jeffrey Ostrander, AIA National; Susan Chin, FAIA, DesignConnects; Shannon F. Gathings, Associate AIA, Duvall Decker Architects; Nicole Hilton, AIA, Cole Hil; and Suzanne Frasier, FAIA, Morgan State University. **Photo courtesy: Gabrielle Bullock**



Shannon Gathings, Assoc. AIA

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