

Committee on the Environment

AIA Knowledge Communities



Letter from the Chair

Hello COTE Community!

Last year, Ralph Keeling [speculated](#) that 2015 might be the last time we would see atmospheric CO2 concentrations below 400 ppm. This May, typically the month with the highest levels, CO2 reached [407.70 ppm](#).



That's well above May 2015's 403.94 ppm and May 2014's 401.88 ppm. And May 2016's average global temperature was the highest in the 137-year record, climbing more than 1-degree Celsius over the 20th Century average. Not great news when we remember that the Paris Agreement at COP21 pledged to keep atmospheric warming to less than 2-degrees Celsius.

That's why it's exciting to see the giant leaps in solar research and development. From bionic "[Leaves](#)" that produce liquid fuel, [ultra-thin](#) and wearable PV cells and solar paving on the iconic [Route 66](#), to [peer-to-peer solar networks and mandatory installation](#) of photovoltaic systems on new buildings, we are poised to begin seriously upscaling use of our largest, free energy source. In fact, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) [predicts](#) that as solar costs decrease and scalability increases, solar power generation could jump from 2% of global energy generated to 13% by 2030. Deploying solar electric to meet the increasing energy demands in developing countries could push that number even higher. We'll need radical changes to global energy productions in order to avoid the 2-degree temperature increase. These innovations are making the future look pretty bright.

Regards,

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2016 Chair, AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group

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Features

Why we made the AIA 2030 Commitment

By Angie Brooks, FAIA

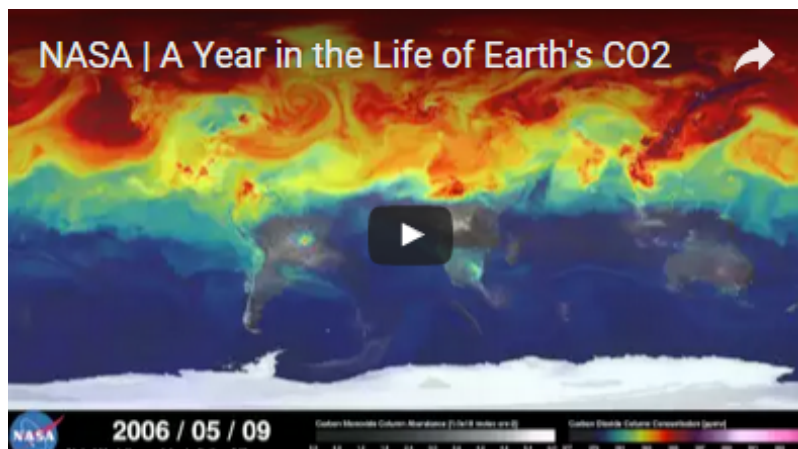


Magnolia apartments is a 19-unit mixed use residential project in Los Angeles that is among the first entered into the AIA's design data exchange tool. Image: Brooks + Scarpa.

With five AIA COTE Top Ten awards (three that have also won Institute Honor Awards for design), including a building designed to be net zero more than a decade ago, I really didn't see the need. Our firm has been committed to these goals for a very long time and we apply our principles to every project, whether the client requests it or not. A few years ago I went through my usual thought process: *Will we learn anything from it? Will it matter to our clients? Do our colleagues recommend it?* [Read more.](#)

New England AIA COTE Leadership Summit

By Karen Robichaud, Communications Editor, Payette



Earlier this month AIA COTE leaders from across New England gathered in Boston for a regional summit centered on the theme Integration. The Summit kicked-off with an opening keynote from Paul Hawken who energized the crowd by addressing the need to change the messaging around climate change. Hawken's keynote remarks included statements like "science is not something you believe in...we don't believe in climate change, no more than we believe in gravity." His comments initially focused on how to reframe the urgency of climate change as a matter of fact, rather than one of gloom and doom.

[Read more.](#)

The Case for COTE's Obsolescence

By Kira Gould

This piece originally appeared in the Metropolis [Point of View](#) Blog.

[COTE]'s longevity is peculiar, in a certain way, because so many of its leaders over the years have suggested that real success would mean the group's obsolescence. (That includes me: I served as an Advisory Group member for AIA COTE, as well as its chair, in 2007.) If and when the AIA and the profession fully embrace the integration of design excellence and sustainability, we have long argued, then COTE's reason for being might evaporate. Unfortunately, we're nowhere near that.

How to get there? There are steps the AIA could take. [Read more](#)

COTE Hackers: Lessons from our first hackathon

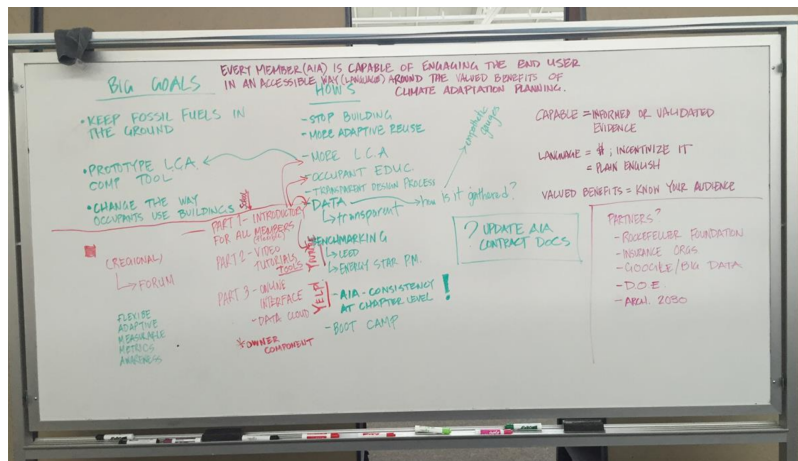


Photo credit: Jonathon Penndorf.

What do you get when you gather over 40 COTE leaders in an inspirational meeting space, divide them into small groups, and give them a little over two hours to save the planet? Over the next few issues we'll be hearing directly from the hackers themselves.

"I quickly realized how important messaging is"

By Kira Gould

AIA member David Strauss attended the convention in Philadelphia, and was invited to the COTE Hackathon because one of his students was receiving an AIA/COTE student award. But he wasn't at all sure what to expect. [Read more.](#)



Photo credit: Jonathon Penndorf.

"What if there were materials transparency/healthy materials districts as well?"

By Steven Burke

What we came up with was a spinoff of 2030 Districts, the self-delineated urban pockets wherein private building owners voluntarily opt into a public-private partnership to cut their energy, water, and greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030. We thought, what if there were materials transparency/healthy materials districts as well? "[Read more.](#)"



Photo credit: Jonathon Penndorf.

"What exactly did we mean when we said 'resiliency'?"

By Evan Oskierko-Jeznacki

"Overhearing some of our neighboring groups, we quickly discovered that [defining terms] was a common strategy as we had to understand how exactly would we be 'hacking' these topics...We came to a particular debate over the term 'resiliency' and 'resilient design.' We asked ourselves: Should we be focusing on something that should already be an inherent part of design anyway?" [Read more.](#)

Submit an abstract for 2017 Convention

Phase 1 deadline - July 15

Download the reference guide [here](#)

Each year, attendees rate our speakers as a top highlight of their convention experience. Your proposal should show how you'll create an experience that inspires and empowers; features interactive, engaging

learning; and showcases emerging trends and innovations.

During the first round of review, we'll evaluate how well proposals reflect emerging trends, new ideas, engaging learning, and knowledge level in support of our curricular framework. In particular, we're interested in proposals for sessions that are 60 and 90 minutes in length and appropriate for intermediate, advanced, and expert knowledge levels. [Learn more.](#)

Upcoming Events

Want more information on these and other upcoming events? Do you have an event you would like to post? Visit our [homepage!](#)

Summer Leadership Summit

Chicago / July 22-24

Getting There from Here: Navigating the Transition to a Radically Reformed Healthcare Industry

Join us for the Summer Leadership Summit (SLS), a comprehensive "deep dive" into the healthcare industry's adaptation to revolutionary change. How are healthcare sectors responding to unprecedented demands for transformation from selling health services to creating accountable outcomes at attainable costs? Conference attendees will learn the status of change, the barriers and opportunities within the industry transformation and how to help our clients reach their future. [Read more.](#)

Taliesin West Colloquium

Scottsdale / February 10-12

Architects are at work re-using all types and ages of buildings more than ever before. This practice is yielding more dynamic reuse projects, new approaches to the modernization and alteration of buildings and mixing up the once-static lines between cultural heritage, new design, and resource conservation.

Join us at Taliesin West to learn about and discuss inspiring and unexpected case-studies that will make you rediscover the potential within your own community. More details will be available in late-summer.

[Sign-up](#) to receive Taliesin email updates.

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