
Citizen Architect Handbook

A guide to elected, appointed,
and volunteer positions
2nd Edition, 2018

Center for Civic Leadership

an **AIA** member group

Content

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3	Introduction
4	Section 01 What is a Citizen Architect?
16	Section 02 Become a Citizen Architect!
26	Section 03 Levels of impact
38	Section 04 Creating a Citizen Architect Committee
44	Section 05 Suggested resources
47	Acknowledgments

Introdu

uction

“Citizen Architect” has been used to describe architects who have given back in a civic capacity. The term is most commonly associated with Founding Father and architect Thomas Jefferson, and Rural Studio co-founder Samuel Mockbee, FAIA. Both narratives tell compelling career stories that illustrate the spirit of creative leadership applied through design and activism, and have inspired generations of architects that followed. In essence, Citizen Architects give back to their communities through civic work in public roles to help educate on the value of architecture.

The profession of architecture is inherently suited toward civic engagement because architects design both the public and private spaces that citizens live, work, and play in. With specialized knowledge, skills and experiences of how the built environment affects the wider community, architects have the potential to be an influential voice in government.

The American Institute of Architects seeks to serve as a resource to Citizen Architects by encouraging greater involvement through AIA Advocacy programs and by enriching professional leadership resources, programming, and networking opportunities. In 2008, the AIA Board of Directors created the Citizen Architect initiative to assist architects as they continued to engage at the local, state, and federal level through their service in elected and appointed governmental positions. At the same time many AIA components had already started developing local Citizen Architect programs. Parallel conversations were also stirring within the AIA on the topic of leadership development to train architects to be stronger leaders in their firms, projects, and communities.

The AIA Center for Civic Leadership, a member group of AIA, was formed and became an early champion of both the Citizen Architect movement and leadership

development initiatives within AIA. Inspired by a broader vision of helping members with resources and support, the CCL took on in-depth research on this subject matters, and produced two complimentary resources: “Living Your Life as a Leader” and “The Citizen Architect Handbook”. Both aim to promote greater civic participation by AIA members, and foster continued dialogue about these growing areas of practice.

The “Citizen Architect Handbook” offers insight into the important role architects play in advancing public policy and methods that encourage greater civic engagement by architects. Inspired by the work of AIA components across the organization, CCL has included examples on how to establish a local Citizen Architect committee, and other strategies for engaging at a local, state, and national level. We also discuss pro bono work, and the growing public architecture movement.

AIA believes that society and the profession benefit from civically engaged architects and emerging professionals. Components that actively support members who wish to become civically engaged ultimately shape their communities and advance best practices within the industry. The long standing history of AIA includes continued bipartisan advocacy efforts, specifically focused on the advancement of policy and regulations impacting the construction industry.

There are many AIA members serving as Citizen Architects nationwide. Component programs can support these members and those interested in becoming more involved through networking opportunities and focused programming. Civic engagement is a win-win for the profession and the wider community. We encourage all AIA members to work together to encourage and support our Citizen Architects.

01

What is a Citizen Architect?

“Architecture profoundly affects people. The work of architecture is essential to human well being, and architects must embrace their ethical obligation to uphold this public trust.”

AIA Illinois Public Position Statement

1.1

Citizen Architect

The term “Citizen Architect” is currently being used as a title informally bestowed on AIA members by their peers, given with great pride and representative of a call to action for architects to take a greater role in their civic responsibility. These Citizen Architects are influencing public policy and the practice of architecture across our country.

As determined in 2008 by the AIA national board of directors:

“The Citizen Architect uses his/her insights, talents, training, and experience to contribute meaningfully, beyond self, to the improvement of the community and human condition. The Citizen Architect stays informed on local, state, and federal issues, and makes time for service to the community. The Citizen Architect advocates for higher living standards, the creation of a sustainable environment, quality of life, and the greater good. The Citizen Architect seeks to advocate for the broader purposes of architecture through civic activism, writing and publishing, by gaining appointment to boards and commissions, and through elective office at all levels of government.”

In 2013, a survey revealed that Citizen Architects were influencing government at all levels:

- 6 mayors
- 9 state legislators
- 24 environmental board members
- 55 city council members
- 55 zoning board members
- 64 community development commissioners
- 74 building codes board members
- 135 historic preservation commissioners
- 137 architectural design review board members
- 226 planning commissioners

In 2015, the AIA Center for Civic Leadership made the recommendation to further expand the definition of Citizen Architect to recognize AIA members engaged in a breadth of leadership capacities, including:

Elected: an AIA member that has or is serving a term in public office as an elected official at the local, state, or national level.

Appointed: an AIA member that has or is in an appointed position within a local, state, or national board, commission, or committee that supports initiatives that enhance the quality of life and future of the communities they serve.

Volunteer: an AIA member that volunteers their time to enhance the built environment through civic and community engagement.

1.2

Purpose

Today more than ever there is a critical need for leadership and creative vision in our communities. Architects can fill these leadership roles and strengthen communities through the power of design to improve the quality of our cities, states and nation.

Because architects are credible messengers and trusted by the public, the skills and qualities of an architect’s professional training are valuable assets in the public arena. Creative problem-solving and team work are only two examples that are deeply engrained in a design education and training. When these skills are applied in the larger context of civic work, it offers a powerful method for advancing conversations.

Other qualities architects bring to the table include:

Inquisitive Trained not to begin with assumptions to an answer, architects are advanced problem-solvers, using thorough fact finding and research.

Non-linear Experience through studio culture teaches an architect to explore multiple paths simultaneously to arrive at the best answers.

Open minded The studio culture also requires architects to involve others in the process of problem-solving as a method of learning from diverse experiences to solve the problem together.

Collaborative Collaborating with entities that often have disparate and conflicting points of interest is a skills that architects continue to gain exposure to over the duration of their careers. Architects learn important mediation and facilitation skills with groups and individuals.

Holistic thinkers An architect's specialization is also built through the integration and synthesis of many parts rather than the concentration on one fragment of an issue.

1.3 Calling all Citizen Architects

In 2015, AIA launched a campaign entitled “Calling all Citizen Architects” as a call to action for members across the country to join the AIA Advocacy Network as Citizen Architects. This program is for architects and designers looking to make a difference in their local community, or who are already advancing leadership across the spectrum of government, institutions, or neighborhood. In identifying Citizen Architect members, AIA can create stronger networking and collaboration opportunities that will insert our Citizen Architects at the forefront of their work, while also creating a forum to learn about each other and assist with carrying out public facing responsibilities.

If you are a member serving in one of these Citizen Architect categories, we want to hear from you. Contact us and share your story by visiting AIA's Advocacy Center through aia.org/ccl. You can also reach out to Kimberly Yoho, Director of Practice & Professional Resources at AIA.

1.4 Recognition

AIA understands that recognizing professionals who serve as civic leaders is essential to encouraging others to pursue these endeavors. The organization offers recognition to Citizen Architects through a variety of channels, including: national honors and awards, state and local AIA component programs, and a new initiative by the AIA Center for Civic Leadership.

Thomas Jefferson Awards for Public Architecture

Great public architecture embodies the identity and values of a society. The Thomas Jefferson Awards for Public Architecture recognize architects in the public and private sectors, public officials, or other individuals who design distinguished public facilities and/or who advocate for design excellence.

A self-taught architect who designed his own and colleagues' homes, Jefferson wrote extensively on architecture, developed an architectural style that's still influential today, and positioned architecture as an essential element in establishing the new nation and capital.

Any AIA member, group of members, component, or AIA knowledge community may nominate candidates in the following three categories honoring Thomas Jefferson's contributions to architecture:

- **Category one:** private sector architects licensed in the US with an established portfolio of accomplishment in distinguished public facilities
- **Category two:** public sector architects employed in the US public sector or in US government agencies that manage or produce public architecture
- **Category three:** public officials or private individuals advocating for or furthering public awareness and appreciation of quality public architecture

Whitney M. Young Jr. Award

Civil rights leader Whitney M. Young Jr. challenged the profession to pursue progressive values in architecture. This award is named in his memory and is one result of that challenge. This award distinguishes an architect or architectural organization that embodies social responsibility and actively addresses a relevant issue, such as affordable housing, inclusiveness, or universal access.

AIA Component Excellence Award, Category 3: Citizen Architect

This award recognizes AIA members who have applied their skills, training, talents and experience to serve their communities and profession as advocacy leaders. It also recognizes active engagement and public demonstration of some of the best things an AIA member can offer in service to the public. There is only one recipient each year, and the award is given at AIA Grassroots Leadership Conference.

Component Awards

A number of state and local AIA components have already established recognition programs focused on Citizen Architect, leadership, and government advocacy to recognize and inspire members through civic engagement. A few robust examples of these component led programs at the state level include:

- **AIA Florida Citizen Architect program** Promotes member involvement of those who have contributed to their communities through service on not-for-profit boards, governmental office or boards, design charrettes, or related efforts that demonstrates leadership of the architect as a citizen in the community. Each year, AIA Florida recognizes a class of Citizen Architects. For more information, visit aiafla.org.
- **AIA Illinois Buckminster Fuller Award** Along with access to high quality advocacy and engagement opportunities focused on advancing legislative priorities within the state, the Buckminster Fuller Award recognizes architects involved in humanitarian, social impact or community endeavors. For more information, visit aiaill.org.

- **AIA Michigan, Architects in Public Service**
-- **Citizen Architects program:** Recognizes all members who have engaged in public service in their communities, and have committed time and expertise to public service. To see the full list of Citizen Architects across the state, visit aiami.com.

Many equally exciting programs exist across the AIA component network and deserve being shared, discussed, and promoted. Therefore, the AIA Center for Civic Leadership is tracking this data to better understand what programs exist, and encourages AIA components to contact us with updated information about your recognition efforts. Connect with us at aia.org/ccl.

Citizen Architect Recognition Program

In addition to these prestigious national and state awards, the AIA Center for Civic Leadership hosts a national recognition program focused on identifying and promoting AIA members as Citizen Architects within AIA and to the public. Individuals are eligible if they have demonstrated commitment through leadership, including service through:

- Elected public office.
- Appointment to a public board, commission or committee, either as AIA representative or individually as an architect.
- Volunteer community outreach as an architect, including participation in an AIA or AIA component task force, as well as pro-bono services for government, a school or a non-profit community organization.
- Advocacy activities intended to improve the built environment and social equity.

Tell us more about yourself by visiting surveymonkey.com/r/X55NFN2.



Stephen Ayers, FAIA

Legacy of leadership

In 2010, President Barack Obama appointed Stephen Ayers to a 10-year term as Architect of the Capitol. Stephen is responsible for facilities maintenance and operation of the historic U.S. Capitol Building, the care and improvement of more than 570 acres of grounds and the operation and maintenance of 17.4 million square feet of buildings including: the House and Senate Congressional Office Buildings, the Capitol Visitor Center, the Library of Congress Buildings, the U.S. Supreme Court Building, the Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building and other facilities.

Citizen architect focus

Eleventh Architect of the Capitol
Nominated February 24, 2010
Confirmed May 12, 2010

AIA component

Washington, DC

Location

Washington, DC

Honor & Award

2018 Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture Recipient

“

[Stephen] has made himself a resource for the public, showing how public architects can help make a better world through design excellence.

”

Carolyn Sponza, AIA
President, AIA | DC

As the 11th Architect of the Capitol, a position he was appointed to by President Barack Obama in 2010, Stephen Ayers, FAIA, cares for the nation's architectural treasures and uses his prominent voice to advance the profession. His leadership has seen him testify before Congress on more than 50 occasions, where his keen insight on matters of historic preservation, long-range master planning, and sustainability has elevated the discourse on good design to the national level.

"In so many ways, Stephen Ayers has used his national leadership role to go well beyond what would normally be expected of a public servant," wrote Carolyn Sponza, AIA, president of the AIA/DC Board of Directors, in a letter nominating Ayers for the AIA Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture. "He has made himself a resource for the public, showing how public architects can help make a better world through design excellence."

A recognized leader in sustainability, Ayers guides more than 2,300 employees and a \$600 million budget in the stewardship of some of America's most important buildings. He oversaw completion of the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, a project that was well over budget and behind schedule when he was appointed. When he committed to a completion date and final budget – both of which proved to be accurate – Ayers demonstrated to Congress that the country's architects can lead and deliver. More recently, his restoration of the Capitol dome and rotunda repaired more than 1,000 cracks and deficiencies in the structure.

"Can you imagine an architectural position with heavier demands than the Architect of the Capitol? Yet, Stephen has not only shouldered this heavy load, he has enhanced the status and relevance of the office of the Architect of the Capitol by insisting on the highest standards of historic preservation and sustainable design," wrote 2018 AIA President Carl Elefante, FAIA, a principal at Quinn Evans Architects, in a letter supporting Ayers' nomination. "Stephen has gone to great lengths to tell the stories of architecture, consistently leveraging the inherent interest in the iconic buildings for which he is responsible."

Ayers has received several design awards from AIA for his restorations of the Thomas Jefferson Building and U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory, among others, and initiated and oversaw a comprehensive master plan for the U.S. Capitol complex. The plan was developed concurrently with one for the National Mall, and encompassed the House of Representatives, Senate, Library of Congress, and Supreme Court. His widely recognized sustainability initiative for the Capitol Complex has resulted in a 30 percent reduction in energy consumption across the campus, with a further 20 percent reduction on the horizon.

As the voice of the profession at the highest levels of government, Ayers' commitment to the past and concern for the future enhance projects nationwide. "When Stephen Ayers speaks," says 2014 AIA President Helene Combs Dreiling, FAIA, "Congress and industry leaders listen... and the citizens of our country are the beneficiaries."



R. Steve Lewis, FAIA, NOMA

Legacy of leadership

Steven Lewis is an architect and advocate for social justice and diversity within the field of architecture. In 2016, Steven accepted an appointment by Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan to serve as Urban Design Director for the central region of the City. Steven is also an entrepreneur, previously launching "Thinking Leadership" - a consulting practice distinguished by a facilitated approach to collaborative problem-solving.

Citizen architect focus

Urban Design Director, City of Detroit

AIA component

Michigan

Location

Detroit

Honor & Award

2016 Whitney M. Young Jr. Award Recipient

“

I can only encourage my fellow architects to seek out interaction and relationships with colleagues of differing backgrounds in order that we might turn ordinary chicken stock into a rich gumbo for all to enjoy.

”

R. Steve Lewis, FAIA, NOMA

As the son of an architect who practiced during the Civil Rights era, R. Steven Lewis saw early in life the unique challenges that faced black architects attempting to work in what he described as a “white gentlemen’s profession.” His own career has been dedicated to helping people of color enter and navigate that profession as it evolves to be more inclusive than even a generation ago, and to documenting the stories of those who have fought to make it so. Lewis has been a tireless advocate for social justice and diversity within architecture, where less than two percent of the nation’s licensed architects are black and less than three-tenths of one percent are black women. The practice of architecture “casts its seductive spell widely and indiscriminately,” Lewis has written, “yet there remains in play a certain structural inequality that disadvantages people of color, who simply aspire to practice this thing that we all love, equally.

Now Urban Design Director for the central region of the City of Detroit, he previously co-founded and headed Los Angeles based RAW International in 1984, he has served as president of the National Organization of Minority Architects (and edited its magazine, where he published profiles of the work of pioneering architects of color), and he played a key role in forging a partnership between NOMA and AIA.

In 2006, while a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Lewis explored the structural inequality that serves to keep the number of practicing architects of color so low. At the end of his fellowship, he convened a symposium on the issue, entitled “Forced Perspective: Widening the Lens Through Which Architecture Views Itself.” The symposium bridged Lewis’ career of advocacy with an urgent question for architecture’s future: what existing attitudes and practices need to change in order to create equity within the profession?

Lewis’s father, Roger C. Lewis, was an architect who, among other things, was part of a team that designed the Venezuela Pavilion at the 1964 World’s Fair in New York. A then-eight-year-old Steve Lewis vividly recalls watching that structure go up in Flushing Meadows Corona Park and, around the same time, watching a Modernist house that his father designed

reach completion in Scarsdale, New York. The pride of achievement that his father felt was palpable, Lewis recalls, but “I also witnessed firsthand while at the side of my father how great a struggle that he and his colleagues endured as they endeavored to enter, what was then, an elitist realm.”

His decades of work on behalf of minority architects, both present and past, has been a tribute to the people he saw while trailing his father as a child. His work on their behalf has been fruitful, wrote Marshall E. Purnell FAIA, a founding partner of the firm Devroux+Purnell Architects-Planners and Professor of the Practice at the College of Design at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. “Steve enlightened a generation of architects on the importance of knowing the history of those who came before them. He built bridges that they crossed,” Purnell wrote in support of Lewis’s nomination for the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award. “He has mentored minority architects through his brilliant leadership by example.”

Lewis wrote that he has been subject to racism in his own career, but has also “experienced the respect, admiration, and love of colleagues of all races and backgrounds.” As a result, he advises persistence. “I can only encourage my fellow architects to seek out interaction and relationships with colleagues of differing backgrounds in order that we might turn ordinary chicken stock into a rich gumbo for all to enjoy.”



Nicole Martineau, AIA

Legacy of leadership

Passionate about project management, Nicole is a licensed architect with 16 years of experience as project manager and project architect, leading a diverse portfolio including historic preservation, hospitality, commercial, and residential. Her commitment to the built environment includes designing resilient buildings through applied building science.

Citizen architect focus

Vice Chair, Exeter, New Hampshire Historic District Commission

AIA component

New England

Location

Boston

Honor & Award

2018 Young Architects Award Recipient

“

After licensure I asked the same question as so many others—now what? I knew I wanted to give back to my profession and to my community, and a colleague suggested I look into the AIA Young Architects Forum (YAF).

”

Nicole Martineau, AIA

Motivated by a ceaseless desire to improve the profession, Nicole Martineau, AIA, is a model leader who is committed to engagement and has embraced the role of citizen architect. A clear representation of the future of architecture, Martineau is an innovator at her firm and an eager mentor of her fellow young architects.

A senior designer at Boston's Arrowstreet, Martineau has thrived in her leadership role and develops new project delivery standards, leads mission-driven initiatives, and advances firm-wide goals. Her impressive toolset was required when she led the refresh of the firm's 1999 award-winning design of Providence Place in Rhode Island's capital city. Nearly two decades after it opened, Arrowstreet was re-engaged to refresh the entry points of the 1.4 million-square-foot shopping complex, and Martineau was instrumental in the design and ensuring the mall remained open and operating during the renovation. At Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, she ensured that three new faculty housing units adhered to the school's ideals of environmental stewardship and delivered its first LEED-certified residences.

After achieving licensure, Martineau's drive for advocacy led to her involvement in the AIA and the Young Architects Forum. She quickly became the YAF regional director for New England, a position she held for four years before assuming the role of the knowledge director. Inspired by the energy of like-minded professionals, she organized nine sessions at the 2016 AIA Convention in Philadelphia. In addition, she helped plan YAF Summit25, which in October 2017 gathered design professionals nationwide to document ideas that will redefine practice and advance the profession in an economy of innovation and change.

Prior to her work at Arrowstreet, Martineau spent over 13 years at TMS Architects. Her passion for historic preservation was vital to the success of TMS Architects renovation of The Music Hall in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a Victorian theater constructed in 1878. In 2009 she completed a sabbatical in Washington, DC, for National Park Service Heritage Documentation Programs, which administer the Historic American Buildings Survey. After completing the program, she applied her experience to become vice chair of the historic district commission in her hometown, Exeter, New Hampshire. In this role she facilitated community

outreach programs and rewrote the town's historic guidelines and applications—which had not been updated since 1984—to conform to current federal standards.

Dedicated and prolific, Martineau has already made considerable contributions to the profession in her young career. Her programs and ideas provide guidance for her colleagues and have enabled her fellow architects to become stronger business leaders.

1.5

Where we stand

Now more than ever, the collective voice of architects is essential for designing a better future for our country and planet. Even in times of change, AIA's values remain constant. We are at the table with policymakers who are committed to a better built environment and a prosperous architecture profession. But we will not hesitate to call out those whose values we oppose.

Today our nation faces unprecedented challenges: the impacts of a changing climate on our communities and critical infrastructure that is deteriorating from neglect. We need policymakers to put politics aside and get to work. No more delay—it is time to act.

The American Institute of Architects works to advance our nation's quality of life and protect the public's health, safety and welfare, as it has done for 160 years.

Each day AIA members across the country and throughout the world create the places where people live and learn, work, and play. We design hospitals that heal us and houses of worship that sustain us. We create next generation energy-saving buildings to make our communities healthier and safer. All the while, architects work with clients and allied design professionals and construction partners to improve the built environment in a \$1 trillion sector that accounts for almost 6 percent of the economy.

These priorities form the basis of our legislative goals for the 115th Congress. They are derived from the feedback we have received from thousands of members since the election. This federal agenda is our blueprint for achieving positive change in Washington by harnessing the power of architects and their allies to advocate to their elected representatives.

Combined with architects' advocacy in state houses and city halls across America, this agenda serves as a solid foundation upon which we will anchor our profession in this constantly changing political landscape.

Finally, our federal agenda represents the charge from our Board of Directors to reassert our values as a profession. As we have done since our founding we are committed to advancing public policies that seek the greater good and that foster stronger, more sustainable communities and a prosperous, equitable society for all.

This is where we stand—today and every day.

We stand for equity and human rights

Access to good design is a fundamental right, and architects are the agents of change to make this right a reality. We stand for human and civil rights, the universal respect for human dignity, and the unbiased treatment of all persons in employment, civic, and business transactions regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical abilities, or religious practices. Our commitment to tolerance is evidenced not just by the policies we adopt, but in the words we speak, the actions we take, and the buildings we design.

This is why we advocate for protecting and expanding laws that reflect these values, such as fair housing policies, civil rights protections, and accessibility to the built environment for all.

We stand for architecture that strengthens our communities

Infrastructure is more than roads and bridges. It is the public buildings that are the bedrock of our communities—like schools, hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, parks and government buildings. For too long, policymakers allowed these spaces to deteriorate, reducing safety and diminishing the quality of life for millions across the nation. Architects are uniquely positioned to guide policymakers to make informed decisions about reinvesting in our communities' essential buildings and spaces. That is why we advocate for policies that invest in well-designed civic infrastructure.

We stand for a sustainable future

At a time when the world is feeling the damaging effects of excessive carbon in our atmosphere, AIA will continue to advocate for policies that protect the environment by encouraging the design, preservation and construction of high-performing buildings.

Reducing the carbon footprint of buildings is not just good for the environment; it's good for business. According to a 2015 study, from 2011 to 2014, the green construction market generated \$167.4 billion in GDP, supported over 2.1 million jobs and provided \$147.7 billion in labor earnings. That is why we advocate for policies that lead to energy efficient, carbon neutral buildings.

We stand for protecting communities from the impact of climate change

Global warming and man-made hazards pose an increasing threat to the safety of the public and the vitality of our nation. Rising sea levels and devastating natural disasters result in unacceptable losses of life and property. Resilient and adaptable buildings are a community's first line of defense against disasters and changing conditions of life and property. That is why we advocate for robust building codes and policies that make our communities more resilient.

We stand for economic opportunity

Architects, the backbone of the nation's design and construction industry, are entrepreneurs and small businesses. Working in offices, storefronts, and home offices in every community, design firms do more than simply create great spaces: they create well-paying jobs and opportunity. But with narrow profit margins and increasing costs of running a firm, many struggle just to meet their business plans.

We stand for federal policies that help firms thrive, not hold them back. That means a tax code that treats architects fairly, small business programs that provide loans and financing support and programs that give small firms the chance to compete. That is why AIA advocates for policies that ensure small firms remain strong contributors to the nation's economy.

We stand for investing in the future

A generation of young people is being held back by a lack of access to education and the crushing burden of student debt. Nowhere is this truer than in architecture, where recent graduates are often forced to leave the profession to pay down student loans. Without a pool of qualified architects to design buildings, projects will not move forward, stifling economic development. That is why AIA advocates for policies that provide better access and financing for young people to enter and remain in the profession of architecture.

We speak up, and policymakers listen

Together, AIA members carry a powerful voice for the values they uphold in their practices each and every day. As natural facilitators and problem-solvers, architects stand ready to develop new policies that create a better, stronger, and more equitable and sustainable society. Through a culture of values-based advocacy, AIA members are committed to engaging in the policy making process and to focus the power of design on solving the challenges facing our great nation.

More on the "Where architects stand" series can be found by visiting aia.org.

02

Become a Citizen Architect!

“The practice of architecture not only requires participation in the profession but it also requires civic engagement.”

Samuel Mockbee, FAIA
co-founder of the Rural Studio

2.1

Become a Citizen Architect!

Republished with permission from “Become a Citizen Architect!,” Rosa T. Sheng, FAIA, Equity by Design [EQxD], eqxdesign.com, July 24, 2017:

Think global, act local!

Think about some big ideas and values that matter to you. (Such as the ones you may have discovered by reading EQxD Action #11: Article Your Values). Often the most straightforward and impactful way into those issues is through advocacy and activism within one’s own local community. There are many ways to get involved with policy change at a local level. Click on the links in the list below to explore some ideas.

1. Attend a local meeting:

In most communities, the city council, planning commission, and zoning commission all hold regular public meetings. The agenda is published before the meeting so that you can keep track of when matters that are important to you will be discussed.

faseb.org/Science-Policy--Advocacy-and-Communications/Become-an-Advocate/Advocacy-Tool-Kit/Attend-a-Local-Meeting.aspx

2. Attend your congressional representative’s town hall:

Most members of congress hold regular town hall meetings in which constituents are given an opportunity to ask their representatives to publicly address their concerns. These meetings are generally covered by the press, so they provide a way to build awareness for your issue, especially if you attend with a group of like-minded constituents.

townhallproject.com

3. Become more aware of the issues that affect you professionally and personally:

There are many resources now that keep you connected on the policies/laws being implemented and pro/con issues related to each.

countable.us

fivethirtyeight.com

4. Call or visit your elected official’s office: Find your elected official right now!

act.commoncause.org/site/

[PageServer?pagename=sunlight_advocacy_list_page](http://act.commoncause.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sunlight_advocacy_list_page)

5. Volunteer with a local organization:

There are thousands of options out there that can serve most any interest!

6. Organize an outreach event:

Outreach events provide an opportunity to engage with your neighbors, and discuss the issues that are most important to you in your community.

This consensus-building process helps shape a shared vision for the future of your community.

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development has useful

toolkits for organizing this type of event in support of their New Urban Agenda. habitat3.org/engagement/toolkits

7. Become a community leader

- **Join a board or a committee** – There are a host of local and state-level boards and committees that would benefit from architects’ voices. Like Florida, your local or state AIA may have a list of committee appointments, and may even offer assistance with the application process.

- **Run for office!** – Whether you plan to run for your local school board, or are contemplating a run for city council, there are a host of resources available to first-time candidates hoping to make an impact in their communities.

slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2017/01/a_guide_to_resources_for_running_for_office.html

Why it is important:

While your values and goals are likely expansive, you don't need to change federal laws to make a positive impact. Many of the policies that shape our workplaces and the built environment, from paid leave policies to zoning ordinances that provide equitable access to housing and public spaces to regulations governing environmental stewardship, are legislated at the local or state level. By getting involved in local organizations and politics, we, as architects, can leverage our reputation as creative problem solvers to delve into complex issues and advocate for a better future for our communities and the environments that they inhabit.

Further reading:

- 3 Unique Ways You Can Volunteer as an Architect archdaily.com/770111/3-unique-ways-you-can-volunteer-as-an-architect
- The Social Responsibility of Architects di.net/articles/the_social_responsibility_architects/
- AIA Advocacy Center aia.org
- AIA Center for Civic Leadership - Citizen Architect aia.org/ccl
- #Architalks Blog Series - Citizen Architect October 2015 eqxdesign.com/blog/2015/10/10/we-are-the-champions-citizen-architects

2.2 Volunteer

As we discuss in depth in “Living Your Life as a Leader” volunteer work provides a foundation in growing towards greater civic leadership contributions. The initial spark of taking on an idea and running with it can result in meaningful long term projects that shape a community. We place an equal emphasis on volunteering as part of the Citizen Architect movement, because the community leadership involved in volunteering through civic engagement, philanthropy, pro bono work each demonstrate the essential elements of what it means to be an advocate through design and activism.

Pro bono service

Pro bono is the shortened version of Pro bono public, the Latin phrase for professional work undertaken voluntarily and without payment for the public good. When applied to the architectural profession, the term pro bono services refers to architects using their creative problem-solving skills to assist not-for-profit and public sector entities in their communities with planning and design of projects that will improve quality of life.

Members of the AIA have a long tradition of serving their communities without seeking financial remuneration for providing their professional expertise. These include serving on or with local planning and historic preservation commissions, faith-based housing providers like Habitat for Humanity and K-12, school-age, youth programs involving environmental education, recycling, creative arts and robotics.

The current emphasis on the provision of pro bono services by state and local chapters grew from the AIA 150 Blueprint for America which was undertaken from 2006-2008 as the “grassroots” component of the Institutes sesquicentennial (1857-2017) celebration. More than 150 chapters involving thousands of AIA members provided tens of thousands of pro bono hours of planning and design services that addressed issues that the respective communities had designated. They employed diverse approaches to offering their services from multiple charrettes to single, multi-day conferences to partnering with local schools of architecture on design-build projects.

The program was lauded by mayors, neighborhood development entities, and local planning advocates as well as local AIA chapters, but it also raised some very pertinent questions and issues regarding professional liability, the infringement on fee-paying practice, applicability of existing AIA documents and what groups legitimately qualify for pro bono services.

The result was the first edition of the AIA Guidelines for Pro Bono Services (2008). It was written with the expressed intention of providing encouragement, guidance, and recommendations for the management of the provision of pro bono services by members of the Institute, firms, and AIA components who are presently, or contemplating becoming, engaged in providing such services. The updated version contains a Checklist

for Pro Bono Services which provides guidance in evaluating when these services are deemed in the best interest of the architect, firm, or AIA component, as well as their community clients. The revised guidelines can be found at aia.org/pages/11646-pro-bono-services-guidelines-and-resources

The logical next step was for the Institute to provide AIA Contracts Documents that were specific to its members offering pro bono services. Developed in 2010, AIA Document B106™ provided the standard form of agreement between owner and architect for building design, construction contract administration, or other professional services provided on a pro bono basis. Learn more at aiacontracts.org/contract-documents/19701-owner-architect-agreement-for-pro-bono-services

Parallel to conversations within AIA, a growing movement for community oriented architecture was taking shape by new organizations including Public Architecture and Architecture for Humanity. A new generation of designers leaving architecture school were rallied by the cause of taking architecture into marginalized communities in need. Major disasters prompted resilience outreach and recovery efforts using these skilled individuals to respond to impacted areas, including Japan and Haiti.

Beginning in December 2011, AIA and Public Architecture encouraged AIA members to pledge to 1 percent, a nationwide program of Public Architecture that challenges architecture and design firms to commit a minimum of 1 percent of their time to pro bono service and facilitates a matching service to connect firms with nonprofits seeking pro bono design services.

The growth of the pro bono movement continues, and AIA members are primed to step up to the leadership challenge with allied organizations such as Open Architecture Collaborative and Design Corps. Emerging professionals are seeking these opportunities inside their firm experiences to expand their overall impact.

“

...choose a function that you are passionate about. Even if you don't have as much experience in the area, if you are passionate about it, you will be able to contribute on a greater level. Take ownership of projects and see them through. Coordinate with other citizens that have the same passions and translate them to those that don't. Enthusiasm truly is contagious.

”

Terry Glade, AIA
Former Sioux City
Environmental Advisory
Board Member



Samuel “Sambo” Mockbee, FAIA

Legacy of leadership

Samuel “Sambo” Mockbee dedicated his life, as a teacher, an architect and an artist, to the goal of providing “shelter for the soul.” His inspirational and authentic architecture served to improve the lives of the most impoverished residents of rural Alabama through his work with Auburn University Rural Studio. For his work at Rural Studio, Mockbee received the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation “Genius Grant” in 2000 and was posthumously awarded the AIA Gold Medal in 2004. Courtesy, ruralstudio.org

Citizen architect focus

The Rural Studio, affiliated with Auburn University located in Hale County, Alabama

AIA component

Alabama

Location

Hale County

Honor & Award

2004, AIA Gold Medal Award Recipient

Republished with permission from the Mockbee family from samuelmockbee.net/biography.

About Samuel “Sambo” Mockbee

You can search skylines and neighborhoods to see the legacy of countless architects. But to get a true sense of the legacy left behind by Samuel Mockbee, you’ll need to search into the hearts and minds of students he taught, the disadvantaged he helped, and the colleagues he influenced.

Samuel Mockbee—“Sambo” to those who knew him—was an architect, educator and artist who dedicated his life to teaching, and to providing sustainable, low-cost homes to those who could not afford them. As the co-founder of the Rural Studio in Alabama, and as a professor at Auburn University, he co-created a program dedicated to building houses, community centers and other structures for the residents of poverty-stricken Hale County, Alabama, while introducing his students to the merits and possibilities of their chosen art form.

“Architecture is a social art,” Mockbee said. “And as a social art, it is our social responsibility to make sure that we are delivering architecture that meets not only functional and creature comforts, but also spiritual comfort.”

“All architects expect and hope that their work will act as a servant in some sense for humanity—to make a better world. This is a search we should always be undertaking,” Mockbee said. “Architects should always be in position to nudge and cajole and inspire.

Mockbee died in 2001 after a three-year battle with leukemia. He was the recipient of numerous architectural and design awards, including the National Building Museum’s first Apgar Award for Excellence (1998), a MacArthur Genius Grant (2001), and a posthumous AIA Gold Medal.

Influenced by upbringing

Born on Dec. 23, 1944, Samuel “Sambo” Mockbee was a fifth-generation Mississippian from Meridian. Growing up during the Civil Rights movement, he was deeply influenced by the treatment of the African-American population in his home state. The killing of three civil rights workers—including James Chaney,

who also hailed from Meridian—particularly affected the young Mockbee, according to his closest friends.

After serving two years in the Army following high school, Mockbee enrolled at Auburn University and graduated in 1974 with a degree in architecture. He returned to Mississippi and created a partnership with former classmate Thomas Goodman.

In his work, Mockbee was known for displaying regional flare and utilizing vernacular items. It soon led to the creation of Mockbee Coker Architects.

Mockbee Coker Architects

Over the 13-years of its existence, Samuel Mockbee and Coleman Coker’s architectural firm provided a necessary forum to create entirely unique and exclusively local constructions. The projects Mockbee Coker Architects created simultaneously garnered critical praise and exposed the social and economic contradictions Mockbee initially set out to change.

Mockbee and Coker’s work set the framework of each architect’s approach, using largely recycled materials and expressing modern themes. Nevertheless, Mockbee’s greatest undertaking came with his return to Auburn University and the formation of the Rural Studio.

The Rural Studio

“As an artist or an architect, I have the opportunity to address wrongs and try to correct them,” Mockbee once said.

In 1992, Mockbee was hired as a professor within Auburn University’s School of Architecture. Viewing the opportunity to help less fortunate citizens while teaching architecture students to care for their community, he co-founded the Rural Studio with longtime friend and colleague D.K. Ruth.

To date, Rural Studio has constructed more than 80 homes and civic buildings in Hale County. The structures are often a perfect storm of design-build ingenuity – sustainable, cost-efficient and bold.

December 30th, 2001

Samuel Mockbee was diagnosed with leukemia in 1998, but continued to live an active life throughout his

final days, completing some of the more remarkable and lasting Rural Studio constructions between 1998 and 2001. This includes student quarters “Supershed and Baths,” “Butterfly House” and “Akron Boys & Girls Club.”

Republished from the July 19, 2016 issue of “Citizen Architect Quarterly Magazine”, a publication of AIA Georgia:

“Sambo” was the perfect figure in architecture at the perfect time. He combined a larger than life personality with a genuine love and deep empathy for people no matter their station in life. Yes, unquestionably, his efforts as the spiritual leader of Auburn’s Rural Studio will be his greatest accomplishment. What is often lost is how skilled he was at the artistry of architecture and how rapidly his star was rising at the moment he started the studio. Without that clout, without being able to command a certain kind of respect from the young architects he was leading, without the access to the media that a budding “superstar” can command, it’s hard to know if the Rural Studio would have achieved the acclaim it did so quickly. “Sambo” was the first to recognize this – as one of his students during the formation and fermentation period prior to the Rural Studio, he would talk about what he was giving up but what he was also gaining. He was acutely aware that he could bring attention to the moral and social mission of the Rural Studio through his own work. And, in that regard, he was one of the most successful “citizen architects” ever, someone who could bring design to the poorest places in a way that inspired others to action and elevated the dignity of all involved.”

–Greg Walker, AIA (former student of Mockbee)

Disaster Assistance Program

Architects can use their building knowledge to help their communities both before and after a disaster. AIA's Disaster Assistance Program supports Components and equips architects with the knowledge and skills to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster. Since 1972, the program has ensured that AIA, chapters, and members are prepared to assist communities nationwide and internationally in leadership and volunteer roles.

2017 brought devastating natural disasters across the country. AIA members mobilized to respond to these communities in need. The following is an update from AIA's Disaster Assistance Program, last updated December 14, 2017:

California fires

In this unusually extended wildfire season, more than 5,400 structures have been damaged or destroyed in California impacting many members and firms. To aid the response effort, architects in California are evaluating structures for viability of re-entry throughout Napa and Sonoma counties. To date, more than 300 detailed structural assessments have been completed.

Members of AIA Redwood Empire are also engaging in recovery through the recently established Firestorm Recovery Committee. Chapters near the affected area have also developed and staffed Local Assistance Centers to provide resources and information to hundreds of displaced residents.

AIA California Council has established a fund to support the rebuilding efforts using a text message-based donation. In order to donate, follow these steps:

- Open a new text message to the number 41444.
- In the message body, type CAFIRES, a space, and the dollar amount you want to give. Example: CAFIRES 100.
- After you "send," you will receive a text message with a link that you can click to fulfill your pledge by entering your credit card info. (All donations are tax deductible.)

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Jose and Maria

It has been a wicked hurricane season. In addition to significant damage to buildings throughout the affected areas, loss of power and cell service has made it very difficult to connect with members and coordinate disaster response on the islands. "Emergency" AIA Safety Assessment Program training has been conducted throughout Texas, Miami, and Georgia and more to come in Puerto Rico, South Carolina and Louisiana in the next month. Register for a Safety Assessment Program training in your area: aia.org/resources/9271-the-safety-assessment-program-sap

How to help those impacted

We encourage you to donate funds to a trusted organization, so that the most important resources get to those in need. A few options:

- United for Puerto Rico by Puerto Rico's First Lady, Beatriz Rossello
- One America Appeal organized for hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria by the five living former U.S. Presidents
- Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands – USVI Recovery fund

How to help our members: donate to rebuild Architecture Center Houston

AIA Houston's offices experienced more than 4 feet of flooding. In addition, the new Architecture Center Houston was within three weeks of completion when the storm hit and flood mitigation was not yet fully installed. The risk policy carried by the contractor will cover some of the costs, but has a \$250,000 deductible. Architecture Center Houston could use your help. All donations will be acknowledged on a special donor wall and are tax deductible.

Donate to the Architecture Center Houston:
gofundme.com/rebuild-architecture-center-houston

Volunteer

At this time, we do not have member volunteer opportunities to assist with the wildfires and hurricanes Irma, Jose and Maria. Contact the voluntary organization of your choice through the National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disasters (NVOAD) for other ways to engage.

Information for firms, members, and your clients

- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Disaster Help Desk for Business to navigate the recovery process.
- Residents and business owners in designated areas who sustained damage should apply for assistance by registering online at [DisasterAssistance.Gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov).
- The FEMA mobile app for directions to open shelters and weather alerts.
- FEMA – Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) and Rental Assistance
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – FEMA Operation Blue Roof
- Small businesses can contract with the federal government to assist in relief and recovery efforts following a major disaster.
- Loans from the Small Business Administration

Repair, rebuild and plan for resilience

The AIA Disaster Assistance program has compiled a short list of hazard mitigation resources for design and reconstruction, for all types of hazards. Incorporate hazard mitigation strategies: [aia.org/pages/69771-hazard-mitigation-design-resources:56](https://www.aia.org/pages/69771-hazard-mitigation-design-resources:56)

As rebuilding and reconstruction efforts begin in areas affected by recent disasters, consider rebuilding with resilience in mind. Is it a home in an area that experiences hurricanes, hail or high winds? For existing houses or re-roofing projects consider incorporating a standard such as Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) FORTIFIED Home. This standard helps to strengthen existing single-family homes using a systems-based method for creating stronger, safer homes which can fortify a home for the next time disaster strikes. Learn about FORTIFIED: disastersafety.org/fortified/fortified-home/

Firms and businesses should prepare in advance of wildfires, hurricanes and floods to prevent loss of life, property or disruption to operations. Businesses can review and update their business continuity plans and ensure their staff knows what to do before, during and after the hazard event.

Providing pro bono services post-disaster

Disaster relief and rebuilding efforts often present opportunities for architects to provide pro bono services. Of course, as with every professional endeavor, it is important that the nature and scope of any Pro Bono Services, and the terms governing those services, be memorialized in writing.

We publish an Owner-Architect agreement, AIA Contract Document® BIO6™– 2010, Standard form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect for Pro Bono Services and is a standard form of agreement between owner and architect for building design, construction contract administration, or other professional services provided on a pro bono basis.

The architect's pro bono services are professional services for which the architect receives no financial compensation other than compensation for reimbursable expenses. If the architect is providing construction phase services, BIO6–2010 is intended to be used in conjunction with AIA Document A201™–2007, General Conditions of the Contract for Construction, which it incorporates by reference. NOTE: BIO6–2010 is available in AIA Contract Document® software, but not in paper. An interactive BIO6 form is available free of charge from AIA Document on Demand®.

There are responsibilities and risks associated with professional services rendered on a pro bono basis. In order to fully understand those responsibilities and risks, in addition to reviewing the suite of tools on our website, practitioners should consider discussing any pro bono services with their firm leadership, insurance providers, and legal counsel.

Join the national AIA Resilience Network

The AIA Resilience Network is a virtual member forum focusing on topics of hazard mitigation, disaster assistance, climate adaptation and resilience. Network members share knowledge, news, research and events and based on your interest and expertise, AIA matches members with opportunities to participate in conferences or panel presentations. Resilience is a systems-based approach to addressing shocks and stresses, and it requires a variety of perspectives, skills and experience.

2.3

Appointed

Appointed officials include roles such as: planning commissioners, design review board members, board of zoning appeal members, community professionals (i.e. architect or engineer), community special purpose task force appointee, standing committee representatives, etc. A few successful appointments across the country include:

- Stephen Ayers, FAIA, Architect of the Capitol
- Steve Castellanos, FAIA, former California State Architect
- Clark Manus, FAIA, Planning Commissioner with the City of Oakland, California
- F. Michael Ayles, FAIA, Chairman, Board of Finance for the Town of Guilford, Connecticut

Different jurisdictions have different framework for appointments in their region, so it is important to check what those requirements are. Relationships, reputation, and demonstrate leadership experience are key areas that influence successful appointments.

2.4

Elected

Elected roles include positions such as: mayor, city council, state legislator, school boards, and in some jurisdictions, planning commissioners or design review board members. While architects haven't historically been seen as common candidates for the role of elected government official, there are several success stories across the country including:

- Christopher Widener, FAIA, state senator from the 10th Ohio District, and president pro tempore of the Ohio Senate

- Harvey Gantt, FAIA, former mayor of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina
- Jeffrey Gee, AIA, council member with Redwood City, California
- Judson A. Kline, FAIA, city councilman, and planning commission and architectural board of review with Orange Village, Ohio
- Jeff Stodghill, AIA, school board member with the City of Newport News, Virginia

Getting Elected

The decision to run for elected office is no small task and requires a commitment to the arduous task of the campaign. Effective leadership in the public sector requires sensitivity to the concerns of the community. A critical component of such leadership is the dynamic of discriminatory versus obligatory leadership. Public leaders are in a position to make decisions on issues that may not satisfy all parties, opinions, and positions in a diverse constituency. An elected leader must effectively demonstrate a higher level of understanding. Having the ability to set aside personal views to embrace and represent the interest of the constituents served using the knowledge and experience gained through education and practice is where architects can have a significant impact on the legislation and community.

The signature event that differentiates the leadership role of an elected official is the campaign. Through the campaign process, potential leaders build trust with the district constituents, and by democratic process, position themselves to be elected to a leadership role. In "Living Your Life as a Leader" we discussed the basic leadership attributes needed to be an elected leader. To order a copy of "Living Your Life as a Leader" visit aia.org/ccl.

How to pursue elected office, 12 things you need to do

Irrespective of the office, the decision to run for election can be challenging, exhilarating, and exhausting. However, with a successful result, individuals have the ability to make a real and significant contribution to their communities and their constituents. Therefore, the objective is to get elected. Then, the question is how to do it? To this end, candidates should consider the following 12 things to do in pursuing a winning election:

1. Understand your commitment and your qualifications: “to thine own self be true”
2. Recognize how you differentiate yourself from others in the race and why it matters
3. Develop your message based upon your qualifications, commitment and how the community will benefit from it
4. “Before you run for office, you must walk the city”
5. Listen to the people who you meet to determine what are the electorate’s concerns
6. Understand the requirements of the Board of Elections
7. Enlist a team of supporters
8. Strategize the district to identify where campaign signs should go
9. Enlist the people who own the properties to place the signs
10. Develop ads that are pointed and supportive
11. Engage the media
12. Get creative

For further information and support through an election boot camp, prospective candidates may want to connect to the following web site candidatebootcamp.com/how-to-run-for-political-office-2018/

“

The decision to enter public life is both an opportunity and a challenge. In committing to pursue elected office, the lesson is to recognize your strengths and determine how they can be beneficial. Draw from your passions to differentiate yourself and build a message that others can understand derived from your character.

”

Judson A. Kline, FAIA

03

Levels of impact

3.1

Local outreach

Local outreach is the most logical place for many individuals to begin their civic journey. Practicing and living in a community can sometimes result in discovering you have a strong idea about improving something within that community. There are many ways to participate from getting involved with your local AIA component, participating on a local committee, attending town hall and other civic events, community organizing, and more.

Leadership development

As champions for leadership and civic engagement, components offer a breadth of leadership development programs targeting various subjects, including firm, industry, and community leadership. Skills members need to impact public perception include sharing and conveying of ideas to different audiences through civic engagement and government service, philanthropy, public policy and advocacy skills building. We strongly encourage every AIA component and firm leader to invest in leadership training for their people. More information on leadership training, visit aia.org/pages/81841-leadership-education-for-architects-and-emer

City architect

The range of ways to inject the value of design and influence the making of cities is extensive. In order to garner effective implementation of meaningful localized agendas, the AIA Strategic Council has identified a need for communities of all sizes to have the presence of city architects within local government as a resource for community design and smart growth development. While community needs differ, the voice of creative architects within local governments can influence positive and profitable change at a key moment of tremendous growth. Where communities show a willingness to embrace this type of resource and capture the value of design thinking, engaged local architects can be the best vehicle to encourage and promote the development of this role.

Regional / Urban Design Assistance Team Program (R/UDAT)

In 2017, AIA's program R/UDAT—pronounced roo dat—celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Since 1967, the AIA's Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) has worked in over 150 communities in the United States. The program has also been widely adapted for use outside the country. Over the last half century, R/UDATs have addressed a wide variety of community challenges, including urban growth and land use, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, environmental issues, waterfront development, and disaster recovery. More than 1,000 professionals representing over 40 disciplines have donated millions of dollars in services as members of R/UDAT teams.

How it works

Like every community, every R/UDAT process and team is unique. The first step is talking with AIA. Your community then forms a group to garner support and generate ideas before submitting a R/UDAT application. We assemble a multidisciplinary team of experts, selected to address your specific needs. The R/UDAT team immerses itself in your community for four days, listening and gaining insight on the community. On the last day, the team presents a comprehensive report and recommendations at a public meeting. The community then shares the R/UDAT report and uses it as a roadmap for implementation. Often, there are actions they can get started on immediately.

Why it works

We've been helping communities design their future and overcome unique challenges for more than 50 years. Together, we find design solutions to tackle challenges including zoning, affordable housing, abandoned industrial spaces, neighborhood and commercial district revitalization and historic site preservation. Our highly flexible R/UDAT process works for small towns, neighborhoods and cities. The R/UDAT process generates creativity and new connections in a community. We engage diverse local expertise at all levels and provide an objective outside perspective. To learn more about the R/UDAT program visit aia.org/pages/2896-regionalurban-design-assistance-team-program-rudat



Hon. Craig A. Stough, AIA

Legacy of leadership

Craig Stough was sworn in as Mayor of Sylvania on January 3, 1996. From 1986 to the time he was sworn in, he served on Sylvania City Council. He was President of Council in 1994 and 1995. Mayor Stough was born in Toledo in 1953, and attended Sylvania Schools, graduating from Sylvania High School in 1971. He has undergraduate and graduate degrees from Ohio State University. Mayor Stough is an architect with the firm of Stough and Stough Architects and was honored as the 1997 Toledo Architect of the Year.

Citizen architect focus

Mayor, City of Sylvania, Ohio

AIA component

Ohio

Location

Sylvania

“

My architectural training and experience have given me the broad base needed to envision and coordinate Sylvania’s quality of life improvements. I think being an architect has also helped me to stay above the political fray with broad support.

”

Hon. Craig A. Slough, AIA

As Mayor of Sylvania, Ohio, I have worked to improve the quality of life in Sylvania. In our small city of 19,000 residents and surrounding township totaling 45,000, quality of life is composed primarily of educational opportunities, recreation programs and venues, safe and attractive neighborhoods, cultural opportunities, dependable infrastructure, and responsive city services.

As a young architect, I entered local government for two reasons – to give back to my community, and to enlarge my world beyond a six person architectural office and its clients. In 1980, I applied for an empty seat on the five member Sylvania City Planning Commission. In 1985, I was asked to run for City Council to replace a retiring member. I was successfully re-elected in 1989 and 1993, and in 1994 was elected President of City Council. In 1995, the current mayor began working for the Governor of Ohio and had to resign his office, and by City Charter the President of Council automatically becomes Mayor. I became Mayor on January 1, 1996 and continue in the position today.

During my tenure, we have pursued downtown redevelopment, built an urban bikeway along our riverfront, started monthly Art Walks with an energized Arts Commission, strengthened our downtown and historical organizations, improved recreation opportunities, started a street repaving program, continued to improve our downtown street scape, and actively supported school and park levy issues. Even though Sylvania is no longer an outer ring community, we are striving to keep our quality of life the highest in northwest Ohio.

I have also been privileged to serve as President of the Northwest Ohio Mayors and Managers Association, and am the current Chair of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments. These positions have allowed me to influence quality of life issues beyond Sylvania's borders, and I am chairing work on a new regional water system.

3.2

State outreach

All AIA state and local components are working to impact legislation and public policy at all levels of government. Engaging in AIA Components Advocacy Committees is a great way to lend your voice and to learn about government, the process and explore different levels of participation.

Legislative day

Many AIA Components offer a Legislative Day, or Advocacy Day, where members drive to the state capital to meet with their elected representatives. This level of engagement allows AIA members to stay engaged in public debates on policy issues, active elections and campaigns, and most importantly, to speak up on issues that impact architects and construction. Check with your state AIA Component to learn about how you can get involved in these conversations in your state.

Testifying at the state capital

For the purposes of demonstrating what it's like to participate in the advocacy process at the state level we are republishing an article originally included in a special campaign issue of *The Citizen Architect* by AIA Illinois entitled, "Testifying at the Capital":

Charlie Klecha, AIAS, has said "yes" a lot over the last two years. Getting involved in his AIAS chapter at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, then being selected to represent students statewide as a Director on the AIA Illinois board, then running for nationwide election and winning the presidency of AIAS, a two-year term that he'll serve headquartered in DC. In addition to graduating, moving his home base with his wife to Detroit, and attending the triennial World Conference of Architecture in South Africa this year, he also found time for another first: testifying before the Illinois General Assembly.

AIA Illinois: How did you prepare for your day testifying at the State Capitol?

Klecha: Preparing to speak at the State Capitol was a pretty intense task. Most importantly, I made sure to study and review everything I could get my hands on relating to the NDSA; statistics, citations, the history, the language of the bill itself. Even knowing that I was very unlikely to need to call upon much of that knowledge, I couldn't walk into that room feeling like anything but the expert. Beyond that, it was simply a matter of preparing myself mentally for the intimidation factor of that moment when I was to make my presentation!

AIA Illinois: What role did AIA Illinois staff play in your preparation? The day of?

Klecha: AIA Illinois Staff was absolutely crucial in preparing me for the reality of the process I was taking part in. Dan Hohl and Mike Waldinger gave me their best crash course in state politics and policy. Understanding the basic context in which these sorts of discussions take place was essential to knowing how, and to whom, my own knowledge and experience would be best communicated. Dan guided me around the Capitol for most of that day, constantly filling in valuable legislative insight in between our visits to various offices and officials.

AIA Illinois: Did the committee process seem clear to you? Or, at what point did it become clear?

Klecha: In my current role as Chairman of the Board for the AIAS, I'm still learning just how complex committee structures and processes can be! While I already had an understanding of the basic format of the state legislature, and how the committees and subcommittees work, I think it was more intriguing to learn the ins and outs of how the committees related to one another, and how lobbyists influence the process on behalf of various interests, including our own.

AIA Illinois: What was the most difficult part about testifying?

Klecha: As a compulsively organized person, the most difficult part of the day was the uncertainty; not knowing exactly when I was speaking, or who I would be meeting with, or what we'd be doing in between! By the time it came to actually sitting down to testify,

I think I was more relieved than anything else to just have the opportunity to finally speak my piece and hear the reactions of the committee.

AIA Illinois: What feedback, if any, did you get from legislators?

Klecha: There wasn't a great deal of feedback immediately following the testimony itself, but over the course of the day, I had the opportunity to meet several legislators around the building, in offices and in corridors, and give them what ultimately became a very well rehearsed set of talking points. The feedback in those exchanges was largely very positive and encouraging, expressing support for the financial difficulties that currently deter many students and young professionals from being more involved in socially conscious design work, or causing them to leave the field entirely. Even those comments I received which expressed the counter-argument to the proposals, both in Illinois and at the national level, were framed in a very frank and respectful way, and actually gave me a much better understanding of the many different constituencies involved in situations like these. As wonderful as it is to hear the sound of consensus among peers, there is much more to learn and more progress to be made by hearing well articulated opposition.

AIA Illinois: What would you say to other interns or architects who may be able to move a bill forward with their personal testimony?

Klecha: Whether we believe it or not, our legislators are ultimately beholden to the people they represent, whether out of noble public service or self preservation. If no one is telling them that bills like this matter, they have no motivation to express that stance in the halls of the Capitol. The squeaky wheel gets the grease, and plenty of people make a living being squeaky. If you have a strong stance on an issue, either in support or opposition, it is critical that you squeak, squeak loudly and squeak often.

Tips for meeting with your legislators

- **Introduce yourself:** Remember to tell the legislator or staff member who you are, where you are from, what you do, and that you are a member of the AIA. Do not assume they know.
- **Be flexible, be polite:** Members of Congress have very busy schedules that change constantly. It is important to stay flexible and understand that you may have to meet with staff, your meeting may be cut short or interrupted, or that you may be meeting with someone who may disagree. Always maintain flexibility and be polite, regardless of your personal opinion.
- **Ask for something:** Remember to make specific asks on the AIA's bills and key issues. When in doubt what those issues are, contact the AIA National staff at govaffs@aia.org.
- **Make it personal:** You are the expert on the design industry, and you should utilize this opportunity to educate your elected officials about the needs and concerns of the industry. Legislators want to know how a specific issue will affect their district, so use personal or local experiences to emphasize your points. Members of Congress relate most to issues that have a direct impact on the constituents they represent.
- **Set the expectation for future interaction:** Invite the representative to take part in future in-district activities in the district (component meeting, site visit, etc.). Let the legislator know that this is the first of (hopefully) many future interactions.
- **Say 'Thank You':** We are always asking our legislators for something, so thank them for their hard work and ask what you can do for them.
- **Follow up:** Take the time after your meeting to let AIA National staff know how your meeting went and if they should follow up with the legislator's office. And send your legislator a thank you note reviewing the issues you discussed.
- **Have fun:** This is not only a great opportunity for you, but it's a great opportunity for legislators and staff to hear from their constituents. Enjoy it!

Learn more about the latest State issues by visiting the AIA's new legislative action center through aia.org.



Cheri R. Gerou, **FAIA**

Legacy of leadership

Cheri Gerou is a licensed architect practicing in Colorado. In 2008, Cheri was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives. She has served on the Committees of Health & Human Services and Finance, Chair of the Joint Budget Committee and Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee. As chair of the Joint Budget Committee, Ms. Gerou was charged with crafting a \$20 billion dollar state budget and convincing the Governor of Colorado and 99 other members of the Colorado State Legislature that it is money well spent.

Citizen architect focus

Colorado State Representative, House District 25

AIA component

Colorado

Location

Evergreen

“

As a state legislator, Gerou has not only represented the architecture profession but has been a vocal and prominent advocate for issues concerning the profession. At the time Gerou was one of only seven architects nationwide to hold a statewide seat.

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Cheri R. Gerou, FAIA

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written by Kelly Roberson:

An architect in the statehouse

Newly elected representative Cheri Gerou, AIA, capitalizes on her design and construction skills as well as her lifelong passion for giving back.

Gerou calls her involvement in politics “an act of blind faith,” but others who watched her see it a little differently. Rob Witwer has known the Gerous for more than 20 years, and when he decided to retire from the state legislature, he contacted Gerou to gauge her interest. “She approached her candidacy in a systematic way,” says Witwer. “Instead of jumping in willy-nilly, she spent time doing due diligence. She talked to knowledgeable people, learned what she needed to do, developed a plan and executed the plan. She was the best first-time candidate I’ve ever seen, and I’ve seen quite a few.”

She has taken the same approach to office: talking, thinking, learning, planning. Each of the five bills she has sponsored was passed unanimously out of committee and on the floor. “I believe that speaks to an architect’s ability to build consensus—that’s the best way to solve a problem. That’s what we do best, and that’s also why I firmly believe we need more architects in public office. We are good at what we do and we can do much good for the people we serve,” says Gerou.

Again, her success is not a surprise to those who know her well. “Public policy decisions are often influenced by emotion, but emotional responses sometimes lead to the wrong long-term results. The best decisions are governed by reason and logic. They must take into account not only what is good right now, but also what will be good in the future,” says Witwer. “Cheri brings analytical rigor... she breaks down complex problems into manageable components, which she then solves one at a time. The result is better public policy.”

Those in the profession agree that the rigorous training and practice make her well suited to the ins and outs of the legislature. “Architects are natural problem solvers... and they understand quality of life issues, too,” says Yonushewski. “Cheri has a need to serve and a desire to make a difference, and with those architect traits, it’s a powerful combination.”

Gerou credits her background with her ability to seamlessly make the switch from architect to legislator, too. “I am used to process-oriented problem-solving, or studying a problem in search of a solution without preconceptions,” she says. “Many of the programming processes we use in architecture can be applied to sponsoring and researching legislation. But mostly, the ability to take a long view of a problem and proposed solutions has been of the most value in the legislature. Just as with each part of a design solution, each piece of legislation impacts the whole and produces either a better or worse quality of life for the user. There is a very direct and immediate correlation between architecture and legislation.”

A Look Ahead

Gerou has found that as many hours as she works, as much as she listens, there is always more to do: 120 non-stop days in the session, hundreds of daily emails to answer, public events to attend, committees that meet constantly, votes to be cast. Making a positive impact on her state is a humbling and daunting aim. “My goal is to do no harm,” says Gerou. “Understanding the unintended consequences of legislation is a minefield. That is what will keep my attention steady in a seven-and-a-half-hour committee meeting when we are listening to public testimony. What we do does make a difference and it is that difference that worries me most.”

But no matter the challenges for the state or profession or mistakes she might make—“I love to learn and I’m good at making mistakes,” she says with self-deprecation—Gerou looks at it all with a characteristic upside. She believes that everyone can and should get involved, that everyone has the responsibility and the power to help make the state a better place, that she is grateful for the chance to serve, and that the future is bright for architects. “The profession is made up of smart, well meaning, hardworking, talented people, and the tools we learn will continue to make the world a better place,” Gerou says. “Our training makes us more observant and therefore more empathetic. Most of us don’t ever put down our mantle of problem analysis and problem solving. We love to solve puzzles.”



John Glenn, AIA

Legacy of leadership

Through John's work on projects from Scottsdale to Downtown, he has gained a detailed understanding of the chances for even more opportunities and growth in Arizona. He has served his community for a decade on the Phoenix Planning Commission and the Central City Village where he worked with the community to support investment in Light Rail and begin to build a vibrant and walkable downtown. As an architect and builder bringing people and interest groups together have been at the core of what he does.

Citizen architect focus

Candidate for Arizona State Representative District 24

AIA component

Arizona

Location

Phoenix

“

Architects are well suited for this because we are natural agents for change, we work to make our communities stronger. We work in spaces that go beyond property lines, and spaces that we all share. We're always looking towards the future to plan and prepare.

”

Place Holder, AIA

Place Holder City
Position Title

John Glenn, AIA, an Architect and AIA Arizona Member, is a candidate for Arizona State Representative District 24. John has been instrumental in his leadership of the AIA Arizona Government Affairs Committee which monitors proposed legislation that could have a detrimental impact upon our profession.

It is critical for all of us in the Design Industry to understand that many state legislators and governors across the country, including Arizona, are pushing an agenda to de-license many professionals including Architects; all under the guise of supporting small business. As a result, in 2016 Geologists now have an optional license in Arizona, and Landscape Architects would have suffered the same fate, if not for a concerted effort by the Design Community to stop the state legislature from implementing this change.

This legislation will be considered again and I am sure an effort to deregulate Architects will be part of the agenda. The Design and Building Industry needs a voice to speak on behalf of architects. It has been 40 years+ since Arizona sent an Architect to the legislature and the time is long overdue. Although District 24 is located in Phoenix, John will be an advocate for all architects in Arizona.

John Glenn is the front runner in his race but has 6 opponents; we can't take this opportunity for granted. To-date just over 3 percent of the Architects in Arizona have supported his campaign, we can do better and we have to do better.

According to Glenn:

My path to becoming a Citizen Architect was very long. I knew this idea of public service was ingrained in me from an early age, perhaps it's the legacy of the name I share with a certain former U.S. Senator. I have always felt Senator Glenn's legacy existed as an example and implicit challenge for me. Public service is both a privilege and a duty to pursue.

A couple years after grad school the firm I was working for hosted a fundraiser for the Mayor of Phoenix, we all attended. After things were winding down, at that event, I took it upon myself to ask the Mayor, "...how do I get involved, I want to make my community a little better, what is the first step?" Many times, it's that first

step that is the hardest. Sometimes we have to conquer those fears and take the first step just to see where it takes us.

I quickly found myself working on the Mayors campaign and subsequently being appointed to a city planning committee, then after 8 years I was elevated to the Planning Commission and today I am running for the Legislature (state house) in Arizona. It's been 40+ years since the last Architect had served in the Arizona Capitol. Subsequently I served on AIA Arizona governing board chairing Government Affairs because I proved to be an invaluable asset to the AIA based upon connections I cultivated over many years. I quickly learned that the Arizona Legislature is a hostile environment to Architects and other design professionals.

3.3

Federal outreach

In 2017, at the beginning of the 115th Congress and a new administration AIA announced its federal legislative agenda. The agenda was the result of the AIA Call for Issues Survey and represented the views and beliefs of AIA members across the organization. Member feedback and a tumultuous political climate, prompted AIA to begin publishing the “Where we Stand” series. These position statements advocate for the profession at all levels of government. They re-assert the values of the architectural profession and clearly state where architects stand on a host of issues, including equity and human rights, sustainability, climate change, economic opportunity and the profession’s ongoing commitment to a bright future for its emerging professionals. (See section 1.5)

From tax policies that impact an architectural firm’s bottom line to legislation promoting sustainability and the environment—it is more important than ever that architects demonstrate the strength of the profession in a Federal capacity.

According to AIA Federal issue brief, for more than 150 years, the members of AIA have worked to advance our quality of life through design. From designing the next generation of energy-saving buildings to making our communities healthier and more vibrant, from helping neighborhoods rebuild after disasters to exporting American design know-how to the rest of the world, architects turn dreams and aspirations into reality.

AIA has a number of ways that architects can begin a path toward activism and build skills to be more effective at the federal level. The new Advocacy Center is AIA’s one-stop shop for all things legislative and political. It is now easier than ever to make your voice heard. With this center, you can find out who your legislators are and how they have voted on issues important to AIA and the design industry, as well as contact them on the issues important to you.

Legislative action network

The Legislative Action Network (LAN) is a grassroots legislative and political advocacy network for AIA members who want to carry AIA’s message to Congress. The ultimate goal is to build a lasting relationship between AIA and Congress, and for AIA members to be the messenger on key federal legislative issues.

By joining the LAN you will have a chance to learn about the legislative process and make an impact for architecture by helping advance federal policies. Participating is easy and at your pace; it can be as simple as sitting in on a webinar, sending an email to your member of Congress or you can really get involved and schedule meetings with your member of congress in your home district. Network members will be kept abreast of federal legislative and political activity and can choose to participate in a number of different ways.

- Monthly information sharing conference calls
- AIA action alerts
- Attending meetings with federal legislators
- Contributing to and raising funds for ArchiPAC
- Engaging AIA members, the public and legislators on social media
- Access to special legislative briefing calls and webinars throughout the year
- Access to short advocacy oriented trainings

Learn more about the latest Federal issues by visiting AIA’s new legislative action center through aia.org.

Speak Up

SpeakUp is AIA’s annual legislative and political advocacy leadership event. SpeakUp is a dynamic, three-day hands-on training with workshops, role playing, and interactions with federal and state political and policy experts where architects will develop skills to advocate for their profession and their communities. SpeakUp is the perfect training for members of AIA component advocacy or PAC committees, the super activist that wants to move to the next level or the emerging professional who wants to engage to build power for the profession and learn new skills. SpeakUp is open to any AIA member, and an excellent opportunity for those who believe they can make a difference.

ArchiPAC

AIA is working to build the power of architects through its federal and state political action committees (PAC). ArchiPAC directly contributes to candidates running for the US House and Senate who support AIA's policies and positions to preserve the architecture profession and promote positive solutions for the built environment.

ArchiPAC's mission is to support candidates running for the U.S. House and Senate who support AIA's initiatives to preserve the profession and promote positive solutions for the built environment. ArchiPAC is the political arm of AIA, giving over 91,000 members a stronger voice before the U.S. Congress and building power for architects.

Associations like AIA are prohibited by federal law from making political contributions to candidates for federal office. ArchiPAC is the bipartisan political arm of AIA, which exists to help elect architect-friendly candidates to the U.S. Congress. Pursuant to federal law, ArchiPAC is completely funded by individual, voluntary donations from AIA members.

One of the key reasons for AIA's strength is its active political affairs program. AIA's political action committee, ArchiPAC, enables members to strengthen their civic involvement by helping to elect pro-architect candidates at the federal level. In addition, ArchiPAC helps AIA's advocacy efforts by gaining the attention of candidates who affect decisions on design, practice and economic factors and work to pass legislation and regulations that support architects.

ArchiPAC amplifies your voice and multiplies your political effectiveness ensuring that Congress hears what we have to say.

ArchiPAC's Goals

Contribute to candidates for federal office who have the power to influence policy decisions that strengthen and advance the architecture profession, including candidates who:

- Have a demonstrated understanding of the profession's concerns
- Have a historic record of voting on issues supported by AIA
- Hold key leadership positions
- Sit on a committee that has jurisdiction over issues being advocated for by AIA
- Have a positive working relationship with AIA and its members
- Make contributions to candidates from both political parties to reinforce AIA's bipartisan legislative agenda.
- Increase fundraising and PAC activity to elevate the stature of the architecture profession in policy decisions that affect the building and construction industry.
- Partner and share resources with AIA state component PACs to increase their capacity and effectiveness.
- At the state level 35 states have components have PACs that are working to support strong pro-architect candidates.

04

Creating a Citizen Architect Committee

4.1

Citizen Architect Committee

There are many AIA members serving as Citizen Architects across nationwide. Component Citizen Architect programs can better support these members and those interested in becoming more involved. At the same time, these programs can engage members who have not been as involved with component events. Civic engagement is a win-win for the profession and the wider community. We encourage AIA components to support our Citizen Architects.

Creating a Citizen Architect program

The first step when considering the development of a Citizen Architect program is to decide on the intent of the program given the available time and limited resources of your local and state component. As such, Citizen Architect programs can focus primarily on encouraging the leadership development of members, who are, or would like to become, Citizen Architects so that they are better equipped to participate in local issues. As an alternative, the program could also serve as a support system for Citizen Architects to learn from each other and share best practices. When there is a clear sense of how much a component is willing or able to commit, the group can more easily define the structure.

Components can also consider incorporating the involvement of students and emerging professionals in the creation of Citizen Architect Committees. Developing a collaborative approach among these groups can help foster the importance of civic engagement from the start of one's architectural career as well as strengthen component membership.

There are two tracks that a Citizen Architect program can take. Active committees meet frequently, both virtually and in person, have a clearly defined structure and are very engaged with local issues that affect the built environment and the architectural community. Committees that serve more of a networking or

honoring function meet less often and serve to facilitate conversation among civically engaged local architects perhaps through conference sessions or an occasional component event. This committee type may provide ceremonial certificates to Citizen Architects so that they are identified and recognized for their service to the profession.

Examples of AIA components that currently implement both committee types can be found later in this section.

Identifying Citizen Architects

Another crucial step that a component should take in creating a Citizen Architect Committee is to identify the architects who are elected, appointed officials, or otherwise civically engaged, within the jurisdiction. Past presidents of the components and leadership of local components are often good individuals to start with. These members recognize the value of leadership and are excellent advocates for the profession. Targeting architects in public roles can bring in individuals who may not have been involved with the AIA in the past, but are actively involved within the community.

Development of a Citizen Architect survey

Identifying AIA's Citizen Architects is an important part of the process. Prior to 2015, Citizen Architects were tracked and regularly identified by component executives in the biennial survey of components. Currently, the process requires members to self-identify through a web form. At the national level AIA has identified 250 Citizen Architects since 2016 and maintains a directory. However, the best way to ensure we know who our Citizen Architects are is to recognize them where they live. Developing a component survey to measure the level of civic engagement within the local membership is a great way to ensure that we are promoting positive civic activity. If you collect that data, please email it to CCL at ccl@aia.org.

A sample template you can use as a reference adapted from the AIA Nebraska Citizen Architect / Civic Engagement Survey:

Primary Goal

Defining our audience and the depth of our member's value for civic engagement and leadership.

The AIA Nebraska board of directors recognizes the value of a civically engaged membership and would like to assist those architects currently engaged in this capacity and enhance the ability for architects that would like to become more engaged.

- Are you an appointed member of a county, city, or other local government board or commission?
- Have you been elected to a county board, city council, state legislature, statewide elective office, or other elected office?
- Are you currently seeking office, or planning on seeking office within the next year?
- Tell us more about your civic engagement activities.

Getting started

Once leadership identifies Citizen Architects and targets members who would like to participate on the committee, it is important to convene a gathering in order for these individuals to meet one another. Some ideas for initial implementation include hosting a reception, planning a 'lunch and learn' event or gathering at a community event. The inaugural gathering should be an opportunity for leadership to propose the intent of the committee as well as a time for the Citizen Architects in attendance to determine which committee type (active or networking and honoring) they are best able to commit to.

Schedule meetings

Regular conference calls and/or evening meetings can help sustain the committee. The level of frequency will be determined by the committee type decided on for your component.

Look for community opportunities

Leadership should take concerted efforts to identify opportunities for Citizen Architects to get involved in the local community. Committee leaders should not merely wait until Citizen Architects are already serving in a position to assist them; leadership should be proactive in helping civically engaged architects acquire leadership positions, where possible.

An example of this is the success of AIA Southwestern Wisconsin in securing the nomination of at least three component members to Madison's Urban Design Commission in 2009. The committee can also choose

to send out vacancy opportunities, as they become aware of them, through weekly/bi-weekly/monthly emails or newsletters if this is administratively possible.

Stay current on local issues

Staying current on local issues will assist members who want to get more involved but may not know how or where to begin. Developing and maintaining relationships with local boards, commissions and elected officials is helpful. In this way, leadership will be better able to identify issues affecting the architectural profession within their communities.

Engage in election issues/advocacy

In becoming more aware of the issues affecting the community, active committees may choose to advocate for a particular standpoint. The committee will have to be strategic in ensuring that the position is one that other community stakeholders will be able to rally behind. Additionally, it is important that the public policy stances of the Citizen Architect Committee are in keeping with AIA policy positions. Committees should be mindful that challenges may arise if local architects support both sides of the issue. Given this, it will be important for committees to find constructive ways to mitigate these concerns.

Organize to advocate for the profession

Hosting networking events or community meetings will help Citizen Architects become more visible to other local leaders and community members. By taking this approach, committees will also help elevate the profession and allow others to realize the importance of architects in shaping healthy, livable communities and it goes hand in hand with increasing the visibility of the profession while also positioning members for leadership opportunities. Regarding election-related activities or communications, component leadership should be mindful to review component by-laws in order to determine if election advocacy is permitted within the component.

Tell us about your committee

Do you have a Citizen Architect program that you would like to share? Are you interested in starting a local Citizen Architect committee? Let us know by contacting the CCL at ccl@aia.org.

4.2

Component programs

Across the AIA, Components are critical in the development and knowledge management of Citizen Architects programs and champions. Each program is significantly influenced by the local needs of the region, culture, and member demand. Additionally, they provide a geographic perspective empowering collegium engagement.

As described in Section 4, there are two tracks that a Citizen Architect program can take.

- **Active committees:** meet frequently and have a clearly defined structure. They are very engaged with local issues that affect the built environment and the architectural community.
- **Networking committees:** serve more of an honoring function to facilitate conversation among civically engaged local architects, perhaps through conference sessions or an occasional event.

Whether you are looking to make a difference in your local community or advance your career across the spectrum of government, state and local components have the resources you need to make the impact you desire. The CCL is researching and documenting examples of these efforts to help inspire architects and emerging professionals of all experience levels. The following are just a few samples of ideas on building local programming:

AIA California Council

The AIA California Council is seeking individuals who are civically involved by professional capacity, and influence and shape community design policies and public policies that benefit their communities. The goals of the AIACC Citizen Architect program are to make significant efforts to identify opportunities for the Citizen Architect to get involved in their community, acquire leadership positions locally and statewide, announce vacant opportunities, finding or creating

networking and collaboration opportunities that will insert our citizen architects to the forefront, and create a forum to learn about each other and assist with carrying out their public duties.

Below is a short list, but is not limited to, the types of Citizen Architects who would be invited to participate in the network:

- Local elected (Mayor, City Council, school board etc)
- Appointed officials
- State legislators
- Architectural design review board members
- Historic preservation commissioners
- Planning commissioners
- Other local governments and appointed boards/commissions
- Architect leaders in public roles that affect the built environment and architectural community, who are civically engrained and will benefit from a network that will empower, elevate, or progress their potential on shaping their communities or intend to run for political office.

AIA Eastern Ohio

AIA Eastern Ohio maintains a public page on their website that notes specific public positions held by members of their component, "Architects are know specifically for their abilities to design and work with others in the construction industry to improve the built environment. Lesser know to the public is the ability of architects to participate in public sector committees and organizations to help provide direction on issues related to design and construction. The following members of chapter participate as Citizen Architects within local communities.

As of December 1, 2014 the following public positions were held by AIA Eastern Ohio member architects:

- John DeFrance AIA, City of Youngstown, Design Review Board Trustee, Belmont Park Cemetery
- Rodney Lamberson AIA, Design Review Committee, Wick Neighbors and Vice Chair, Opera Western Reserve Board of Trustees

- Kim Phillips, AIA Warren Redevelopment and Planning, City of Warren – Board of Appeals, and City of Warren – Planning Commission
- Tim Thomas AIA, Secretary, Compass Family and Community Services
- Bruce Sekanick FAIA OAA, City of Warren – Board of Residential Appeals, and Catholic Diocese of Youngstown – Art and Architecture Committee

AIA Eastern Pennsylvania

In past years, AIA Eastern Pennsylvania has honored Citizen Architects at its annual President’s Night Dinner. The recipients were presented with a certificate recognizing their service. From their promotional material for the program, “Thank you for joining us this evening as we celebrate another successful year within our chapter and we pay tribute to the notable design achievements of our fellow chapter members. We also recognize our Citizen Architects who continue to give tirelessly of their time to serve their local communities.”

AIA Florida

The AIA Florida executive committee and board of directors made a commitment to the Citizen Architect program and included it in their 2010 strategic plan. In addition to developing several key programs focused on this initiative within the state, they also developed a recognition effort:

“In an effort to reposition architects and those who practice architecture, AIA Florida is actively seeking to identify and recognize those members who in their daily lives are playing an important part in shaping the world through their leadership. In shaping the way our communities will deal with life in the 21st century our leadership as architects, thinkers and does will be required more than ever.

AIA Florida recognizes those who have contributed to their communities through service on not-for-profit boards, governmental office or boards, design charrettes or any other effort that demonstrates the leadership of the architect as a citizen in the community.”

Another successful program of AIA Florida includes the Breakfast of Champions Program. According to AIA Past President and AIA Florida member Mickey

Jacob, FAIA, “The Breakfast of Champions Program is a great example of Citizen Architects in action. The program provides opportunity for architects to get involved in the political process, build relationships with elected representatives and advocate effectively for the profession. It continues to grow as a means to elevate architects as influential and respected leaders in our communities.”

AIA Illinois

AIA Illinois was one of the first state components in the country to convene emerging leaders for a professional development opportunity, starting in 2004. The program has grown to be a successful cornerstone event of their chapter. AIA Illinois has also held numerous programs aimed at supporting advocacy efforts around legislative priorities. They maintain a running list of active legislation on their website that educates members. A few sample bills include:

“OPPOSE HB 2611: 15% Masonry in Vertical Construction Sponsor: Rep. Dan Brady

The Vertical Construction Masonry Composition Act would set a standard that vertical commercial construction must contain at least 15% masonry components. AIA Illinois does not support any legislation that removes the designer from making decisions based on existing codes and standards or that forces the alteration of designs based on favoritism of one area of product. This bill is currently being held in the House.

SUPPORT SB 1863: P3s (Public Private Partnerships) Sponsor: Sen. Heather Steans

SB 1863 would encourage new investment in several infrastructure areas including public buildings, transportation assets, and other public assets that are in dire need of improvements. The Illinois Chamber is working with organizations from across disciplines to expand the use of agreements between private investors and public agents as a tool for new investment.

UPDATE as of 4.15.15: This bill stalled. Sen. Steans passed SB 313 out of committee as a shell bill this week. Amendment 1, including language to expand the use of alternative finance and procurement as a way to invest in infrastructure, was posted. AIA Illinois intends

to work with the sponsor to ensure design services are protected, as our stance continues to be that Design Bid Build is still the best form of procuring projects, and alternative financing, as proposed, diverts improperly from the state’s procurement laws.”

AIA Iowa

AIA Iowa conducts a recognition program that acknowledges Citizen Architects in order to encourage all AIA Iowa members to actively engage in their communities. In order to be recognized as a Citizen Architect, participants must:

1. Be an AIA Iowa architect, associate or allied member.
2. Serve as an appointed or elected member of a government committee, council or body at the local, county, regional, or state level; OR serve as a volunteer or in a leadership position for a non-profit organization that seeks to benefit people in need or communities as a whole.
3. In this role, advocate for one or more of AIA Iowa’s core principles of Quality Design, Sustainability, and Livable Communities.

AIA Los Angeles

AIA Los Angeles formed an active Citizen Architect Committee in 2010. The following is an example of an email that the chapter sent to its members to elicit participation in the creation of the committee:

“City Planning Commission President Bill Roschen cordially invites you to attend a brainstorming session on Tuesday, May 18 (6pm) to discuss the idea of forming an AIA/ILA committee on ‘Civic Engagement’.

As an AIA member who is actively serving the city, Roschen has recommended to informally meet and further discuss the proposal in more depth.

Mission (draft): To inspire/encourage more architects to become civic leaders in their neighborhood and city and provide guidance, especially to emerging professionals on how to become more effectively engaged in their communities. This committee will not deal with advocacy issues, but will focus on providing leadership resources to those currently serving and suggest pathways to follow to those with the interest in serving.”

AIA Pasadena and Foothill

As an example of an active local Citizen Architect committee, Pasadena and Foothill continues to meet regularly. The purpose of the AIA Pasadena and Foothill’s Citizen Architect Committee is to engage Citizen Architects serving within their community while also building upon their resources. AIA Pasadena and Foothill have held events such as panel discussions titled, “The Community and Its Identity” and “The Citizen Architect”. This committee has also been instrumental in the development of a construction study and economic impact study.

AIA Virginia

Leadership in AIA Virginia created the appointment to public board, commission, and the first Citizen Architect Program in 2005. This influential program has served as a model for AIA components across the country. AIA Virginia created a matrix to track local positions throughout the state that were held by architect, as well as when their terms expired. Additionally, the matrix identified positions that would benefit from the skill sets of architects, such as planning and zoning boards, building codes and architectural review boards all in the purposes of encouraging architects to pursue those opportunities. The matrix had 91 Citizen Architects in 2006, and that number grew to 154 over time.

For more information about these programs, we encourage you to visit each component’s website and contact them directly.

05

Suggested resources

5.1

Suggested readings

Books

arcCA 02.2: Citizen Architect, Timothy Culvahouse. x. 2002.

Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things, William McDonough and Michael Braungart. North Point Press. 2002.

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AIA References

- AIA Handbook of Professional Practice
- AIA Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct
- AIA Disaster Assistance Handbook

Articles

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“Architects called to design and lead at Grassroots 2017,” Steve Cimino. aia.org, March 13, 2017.

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“Citizen Architects Leading Through Active Engagement,” Hillary Barlow, AIA. AIA YAF Connection 14.02, April 13, 2016.

“The Citizen Architect,” AIA Georgia, July 19, 2016.

“The Social Responsibility of Architects,” Helena L. Jubany. Design Intelligence, June 29, 2011.

“Why Local Government Need an Architect At the Table,” Brian Libby. ARCHITECT, the Journal of the American Institute of Architects, May 25, 2016.

Movie

Citizen Architect: Samuel Mockbee and the Spirit of the Rural Studio, directed by Sam Wainwright Douglas, 2010: citizenarchitectfilm.com

At AIA.org

[AIA Center for Civic Leadership](#)
[AIA Leadership Institute](#)
[AIA Advocacy](#)
[AIA Disaster Assistance Program](#)

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