



AIA Year in Review

2020

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Message from the CEO



2020 was a year of challenge, transition, and achievement. Together, AIA members navigated a once-in-a-century global health crisis that reordered how we live, work, and learn. We persevered through one of the worst economic recessions in modern memory and, against the backdrop of a polarized nation, helped our communities respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'm proud of the way AIA members joined together to meet this moment.

We've reaffirmed our commitment to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in our organization, our profession, and the built environment—taking action to make this essential mission an organization-wide focus in the same way climate change is a fundamental priority.

Building on the pivotal decision in 2019 to pursue climate action with renewed urgency, 2020 was the year we released a landmark Climate Action Plan, updated the Framework for Design Excellence, and achieved new records under the 2030 Commitment.

As the challenges and uncertainty of 2020 continue into 2021, we've fundamentally changed the way we operate, for the better.

The shift, nearly overnight, to operating virtually has accelerated trends we knew were coming. In the process, it's made our profession and our organization even more collaborative, nimble, and green.

The adaptations we've implemented toward greater collaboration and agility only strengthen our capacity to turn policy aspirations into action.

The architect's duty to secure health, safety, and welfare has never been more urgent. Despite the historic challenges of 2020, architects are fulfilling that duty and providing leadership that demonstrates the power of design.

Robert Ivy, FAIA
EVP/Chief Executive Officer

SPECIAL SECTION

Architects & COVID-19

The architect's mission to secure public health, safety, and welfare took on new meaning in 2020, and AIA members mobilized to support our communities in new ways.



Healthcare Design Awards 2020 winner
Hampton County Health Clinic, Liollo Architecture, Hampton, SC, Photo credit: Richard Leo Johnson

AIA impact

Like countless firms, AIA transitioned to remote work in mid-March, shifted major meetings and events to virtual formats, and made the difficult decision to cancel important events like A'20. Events forced us to become a virtual network overnight.

Ensuring the safety of members, employees, partners, and the broader public while maintaining the same level of support and service to our members is our priority, and AIA adapted in a variety of ways to support the profession during a year of unprecedented challenges:

- lobbying for federal relief for businesses and developing resources to help members navigate relief options
- launching a new COVID-19 Resources for Architects [webpage](#) and newsletter
- initiating dues adjustments for members experiencing hardship
- hosting dedicated webinars that engaged thousands of students, recent graduates, emerging professionals, working professionals, and women architects



Firm Survey Report 2020

COVID-19 BUSINESS RESOURCES

Through the COVID-19 Business Taskforce, AIA generated resources for firm leaders—including [articles](#), [tips](#), and [live courses](#)—on exploring the business impacts of the recession and other 2020 challenges. We accelerated production of business resources to help firms thrive, including adding nearly 60 new best practices to aia.org/bestpractices.

AIA also offered complimentary access to economic tools like the Firm Survey, special construction forecast and market condition reports, monthly economic webinars, and over two dozen economic briefings for our members.

Components received a Virtual Firm Roundtable Toolkit to help enable peer-to-peer sharing. The Small Firm Exchange became a stronger advisory body for AIA, helping to ensure relevance of resources on business continuity, sustainability, and climate action to the small firm audience.

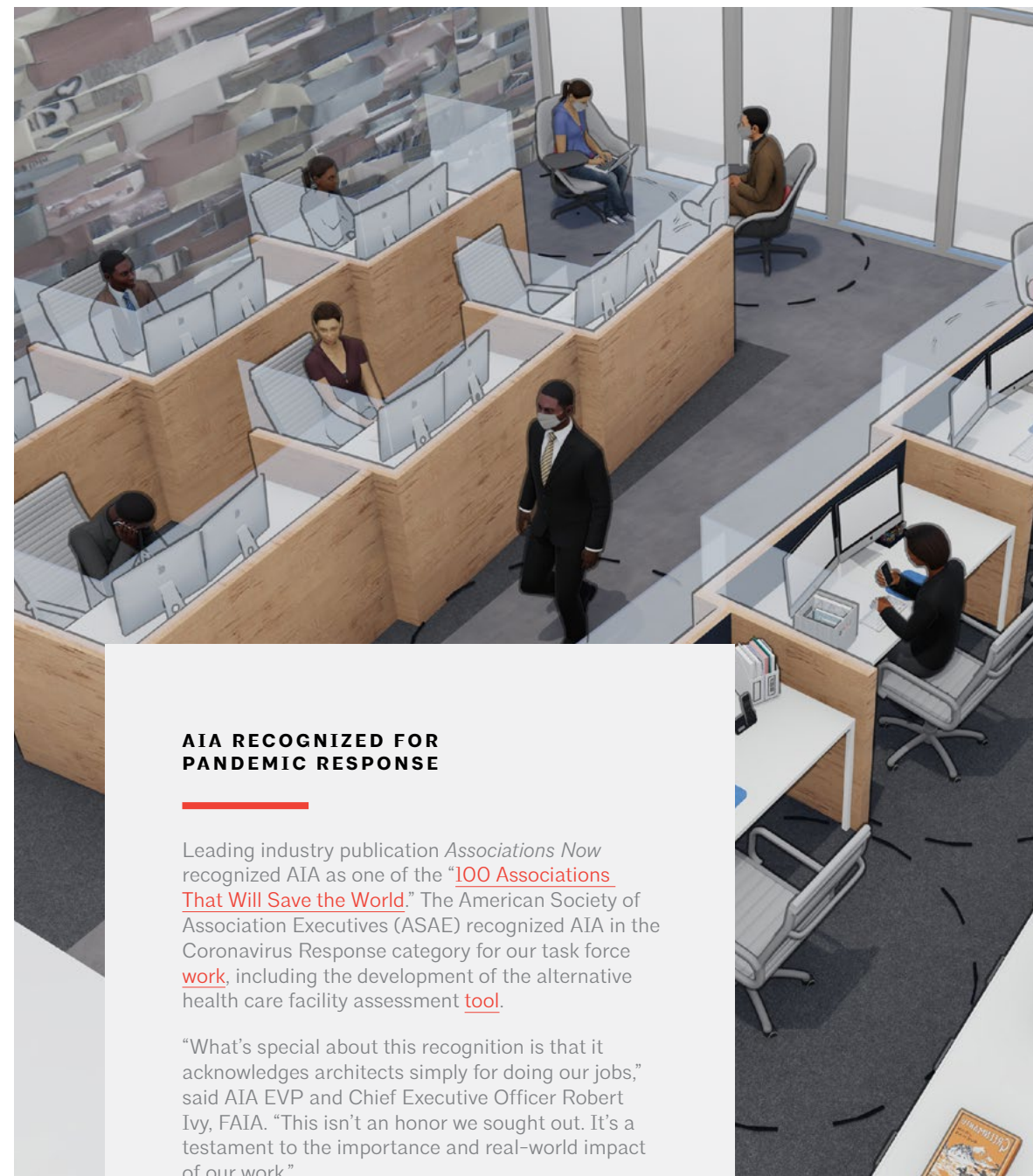
Architects in action

From the earliest days of the pandemic, architects have been active in COVID-19 efforts. Firms contributed resources and 3-D printing [technology](#) to produce protective masks, while special AIA task forces took action to coordinate with public officials on safely adapting existing buildings into health facilities—issuing expert guidance that was distributed by the State Department.

In a series of virtual charettes, AIA convened architects, public health experts, engineers, and facility managers for our Reopening America initiative. Drawing on the latest science and research, teams developed strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in buildings, issuing strategies for [office buildings](#), [schools](#), [retail stores](#), [senior living communities](#), [multifamily housing](#), and [polling places](#).

In addition to the reports, the team also created tools—including a [risk management plan for buildings](#), a [re-occupancy assessment tool](#) that was noted in the *New York Times*, and an [ArchMap](#)—that give building owners and design teams the processes and information they need to create safer buildings.

Re-opening America:
Strategies for Safer Offices
Rendering: Allied8



AIA RECOGNIZED FOR PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Leading industry publication *Associations Now* recognized AIA as one of the “[100 Associations That Will Save the World](#).” The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) recognized AIA in the Coronavirus Response category for our task force [work](#), including the development of the alternative health care facility assessment [tool](#).

“What’s special about this recognition is that it acknowledges architects simply for doing our jobs,” said AIA EVP and Chief Executive Officer Robert Ivy, FAIA. “This isn’t an honor we sought out. It’s a testament to the importance and real-world impact of our work.”

Optimizing the role of the architect

Architects have a leading role to play in solving society's most complex challenges and building a more healthy, sustainable, just, and equitable world. Through a number of campaigns and programs, AIA works to show architects in action—elevating the public's awareness of who architects really are, advocating collaborative solutions to policy makers and community allies, and shaping our communities.

COTE® Top Ten Award 2020 winner
Marine Education Center at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, LakelFlato Architects in collaboration with Unabridged Architecture, Ocean Springs, MS, Photo credit: Casey Dunn

COTE® Top Ten Award 2020 winner, Marine Education Center at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Lake|Flato Architects in collaboration with Unabridged Architecture, Ocean Springs, MS, Photo credit: Casey Dunn

Promoting sustainability & resilience

America's architects have a leading role to play in humanity's collective call to climate action—from reducing carbon emissions through building design and informed product selection to spurring energy efficient renovation and retrofits, from advocating public policy to supporting renewable energy use in buildings. AIA is marshaling its resources so that architects can embrace their critical role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Climate Action Plan

The publication of AIA's Climate Action Plan is a landmark event. Developed over the course of one year and based on input from the full spectrum of AIA's membership, the plan provides guidance to help architects achieve progress under three overarching goals: mitigating the sources of climate change, adapting to the impacts, and catalyzing action in the profession.

Framework for Design Excellence

Partnering with organizations to achieve AIA's climate goals will be critical, and so are AIA's education, resources, and practical tools.

The Framework for Design Excellence is one of these tools. The 10 principles build upon a legacy of sustainability spearheaded by the Committee on the Environment (COTE) and are designed to be accessible to every architect, every client, and every project. They were updated in 2020 to draw clearer connections to our intended impact: a zero-carbon, equitable, healthy, and resilient built environment.

2020 COTE® TOP TEN AWARDS: HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 firms received a COTE Top Ten award for the first time, while one firm notched three winning projects
- Reflecting a strong focus on carbon, winners included:
 - 4 renovation projects
 - The largest cross-laminated timber (CLT) academic building in the United States
- 50% of recipients submitted actual energy metrics
- 80% of recipient projects tracked recycled content
- 60% of recipient projects collected material ingredient disclosure documents

2030 Commitment

Despite pandemic setbacks and disruptions faced in 2020, a record-setting 311 firms contributed 2030 Commitment data—a figure we're working to top in 2021. Participants reported more than 23,000 projects across 107 countries. For scale, the total gross square footage (GSF) reported is nearly the size of New Mexico. Of the firms who submitted data, 27 met AIA's goal of reducing the energy demand of their entire portfolio by 70% or more. To streamline the reporting process, we updated our online project tracking tool, the Design Data Exchange.

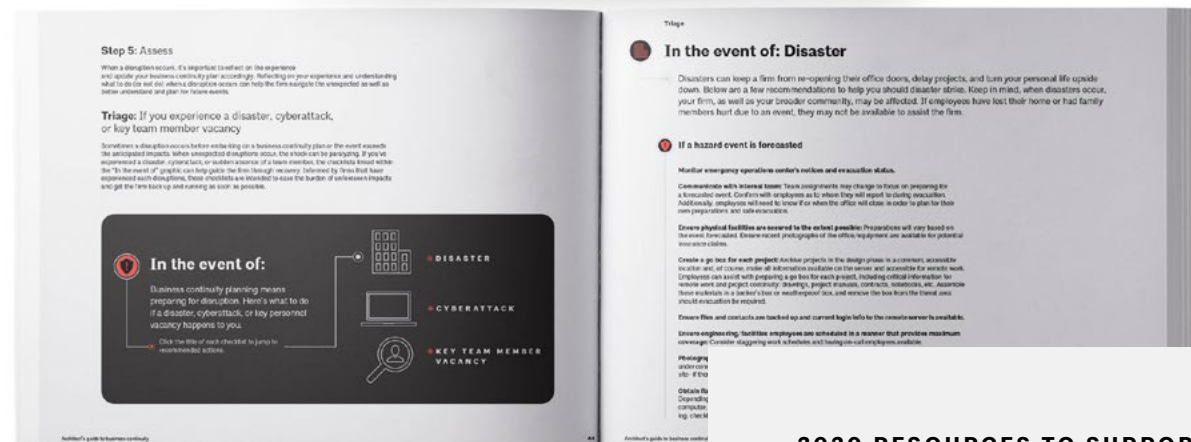
AIA Materials Pledge

The materials and products architects choose in their designs and buildings have an enormous impact on health, resilience, and the environment. The AIA Board of Directors adopted the AIA Materials Pledge as an aspirational definition of holistically sustainable materials that support human health, climate health, ecosystem health, social health, and equity in a circular economy.

Research investments

AIA's research investments also worked to advance the Climate Action Agenda in 2020. The Upjohn Research Grant program dedicated \$100,000 to four projects led by both architecture firms and academia. The projects include solutions like carbon-reducing materials, a framework and how-to guide for resettlement due to sea-level rise and climate change, adaptive building envelope design, and updates to a free embodied carbon calculator.

AIA also joined with ACSA (Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) to produce its first Intersections Research Conference in October. Featuring researchers from practice and academia, the conference focused on helping practitioners build toward a lower-carbon future.



Architect's Guide to Business Continuity 2020

2020 RESOURCES TO SUPPORT AIA MEMBERS

- The Architect's Guide to Business Continuity
- Tenant Energy Optimization Program (TEOP) for Architects: How Architects Can Drive High-Performance Projects
- Design for Adaptability, Deconstruction, and Reuse
- Updated Sustainable Project Documents

Advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, & belonging

Harnessing the passion of our members and the broader design community, AIA is committed to advancing racial and ethnic justice and equity in our organization, in our profession, and in our communities. With the development of a new Framework to Address Systemic Racial Injustice and Inequity in 2020, AIA marked a pivotal period of progress.

Expanding critical dialogue

Signifying AIA's commitment to pursue equity goals as a top priority, the AIA Board of Directors adopted a new Framework to Address Systemic Racial Injustice and Inequity. One of the framework's first objectives focused on expanded coordination with the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). NOMA colleagues generously agreed to share their experience and expertise in a series of joint meetings with the Board of Directors that covered a wide array of critical issues.

AIA, NOMA, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) are partnering to support a strong and thriving architectural profession. The organizations are creating new pathways for collaboration and ongoing discourse across academic, student, practitioner, regulatory, and accrediting specialties.

HBCU outreach and support

In light of the impact of COVID-19 and racial strife, AIA invited deans and program chairs of NAAB-accredited programs at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to share ideas on how AIA and its members might best support their needs. Based on their responses, AIA 2020 President Jane Frederick recommended that AIA provide gifts of \$24,000 each to the seven NAAB-accredited programs housed at HBCUs to support student scholarships, including \$2,000 each for special resource needs such as publications, software licensing, and educational resources.

Tools for members

AIA launched a [new initiative and resource page](#) to give our members the tools and information needed to fully participate in the profession's equity efforts. The Future Forward site includes educational materials, editorial features spotlighting the voices of AIA members, and workplace culture resources—including AIA's Guides to Equitable Practice, which were updated in 2020.

Evaluating recognition programs

AIA initiated a review of Honors & Awards programs as part of a holistic effort to become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive membership organization. An equity audit, to be completed in 2021, will inform the development of additional measures meant to eliminate barriers to inclusive nominee and awardee participation in these programs as well as the College of Fellows.

Justice through design

In consultation with the AIA National Ethics Council, the Board of Directors adopted new rules in the AIA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct to prohibit the design of spaces intended for execution, torture, and prolonged solitary confinement. The decision reflects AIA's ongoing effort to meaningfully address structural racism in the built environment and to uphold our professional values. The board also adopted a statement of position affirming that AIA and its members remain committed to working with their clients to promote criminal justice reform and rehabilitation, guided in part by positions taken by the International Red Cross, the United Nations, and other human rights organizations.

AIA Film Challenge 2020 People's Choice Award winner, A Beacon of Light in Times of Crisis. Photo credit: Jean-Marc Grambert

Blueprint for Better

Through Blueprint for Better, the largest design organization in the world is asking architects, design professionals, civic leaders, and the public in every community to join our efforts.

Campaign

Launched in October, the newly enhanced Blueprint for Better public awareness campaign focuses on architects fighting climate change and inequities in the built environment. Through an extensive digital ad campaign utilizing YouTube, Google, and social media platforms, Blueprint for Better educates audiences on buildings' carbon emissions, the connection between racial inequity and climate change, and the innovative design solutions architects are using to address the climate crisis. More than 600 people joined the campaign in its first three months, and the website has reached more than 80,000 visitors.



NEW LOGO EMBODIES COMMITMENT TO PROGRESS

To signal a big change, you have to change something big. As an organization, AIA is evolving to reflect new, 21st century challenges. To achieve maximum influence and impact, AIA's updated visual identity signals that evolution and reinforces our commitment to achieving meaningful change in the built environment.



AIA Film Challenge

In its sixth year, the AIA Film Challenge 2020 was a record-breaking success. The competition adapted its format to meet social distancing requirements. Calling for 60- to 90-second Mini Documentaries, the challenge sought to highlight architects working with civic leaders and their communities to design a healthy, sustainable, just world. The top prize was awarded to filmmaker John Gordon and architecture firm OMNIPLAN for Dallas Holocaust & Human Rights Museum. The Film Challenge Award Ceremony was picked up by [Yahoo News](#) and [Business Insider](#), whose combined unique visitors per month (UVPm) is just over 63 million.

Partnerships

Through AIA's partnerships with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Mayors Innovation Project, and National League of Cities, architects have continued to engage with civic leaders, positioning themselves as thought leaders at a time when our cities and communities need innovative solutions.

FILM CHALLENGE BY THE NUMBERS

148

films submitted—a new record

45%

increase in submissions over 2019

70,000+

votes cast for the People's Choice Award

Advocacy

AIA and our component partners are advancing the profession's policy agenda through a growing bipartisan coalition in Washington, DC, and statehouses across the country—focusing in 2020 on sustainability and equity priorities, plus the pandemic's unique challenges.

COVID-19 relief legislation

Throughout 2020, AIA's federal team worked diligently to advance the priorities of the profession and to support our members through the COVID-19 crisis. Our extensive efforts to lobby for economic relief for firms and components drove more than 3,600 member letters to Congress advocating for additional federal funding for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Meeting directly with congressional staff, and working closely with allies, AIA lobbied for months to improve the PPP in three key ways, obtaining provisions to: secure a second round of funding for applicants who did not receive a loan in the first round; make 501(c)(6) organizations eligible; and ensure that forgiven PPP loans do not increase any firm's tax liability. Additionally, AIA provided multiple webinars and other informational resources to help members as they navigated complicated federal COVID-19 relief legislation and agency guidance.

Federal Policy Platform

In a pivotal election year, AIA created its first-ever federal policy architects' platform. The 2020 Policy Platform coordinates our federal agenda and reflects our values, organizing AIA's federal policy objectives into three focus areas: future economy, climate action, and healthy & equitable communities. Shared with both presidential candidates' campaigns and all 535 members of Congress, the Policy Platform serves as a roadmap for our engagement with the new Biden administration and the 117th Congress.

Climate policy

AIA continues to make headway toward a zero-carbon future, pushing back on multiple harmful deregulations and advocating policy priorities in testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Many of AIA's policy requests were included in the final report of the House's Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, which is expected to serve as a blueprint for Congress and the Biden administration.



Design mandate

AIA advocated throughout the year against a proposed Trump administration executive order to mandate classical design architectural style preferences for federal buildings. AIA efforts included 11,000 member letters sent to the White House and outreach to congressional oversight committees, which sent a formal letter of inquiry to the General Services Administration (GSA). When the outgoing administration ultimately adopted an executive order more limited in scope than previously indicated, AIA's efforts turned to the incoming Biden administration. We worked closely with leaders in Congress to develop a letter from 10 Democratic members of the House

of Representatives, sent to President Biden the night before his inauguration, calling on his administration to revoke the executive order. AIA also sent our own letters to lobby Biden administration officials during the transition and in the first weeks of the administration until the order was revoked.

Disaster assistance

The scope and frequency of natural disasters continues to demonstrate the urgency of the climate crisis. AIA is committed to providing the resources our members, components, and their communities need to help respond to natural disasters.

Earthquake and pandemic response

The year kicked off with a devastating set of earthquakes in Puerto Rico. AIA mobilized training for 100 professionals that enabled AIA Puerto Rico to mount several weeks of post-disaster assessments throughout the island, which was still reeling from recent hurricanes.

By April, a very different type of disaster—the COVID-19 pandemic—sent AIA’s Disaster Assistance Committee into overdrive. The committee convened AIA member leaders starting early in the pandemic. Under the leadership of President Jane Frederick, FAIA, these efforts grew into four task forces that developed numerous COVID-19 resources for members.

To ensure the safety of volunteers who might be called to respond to a disaster during a pandemic, the Disaster Assistance Committee published advisories and a dedicated webpage of technical resources for building design and operations during a pandemic.

Disaster assistance initiatives and policies

In addition to pandemic-focused efforts, the committee’s traditional work continued undiminished.

AIA’s Disaster Assistance Safety Assessment Program (SAP) training continues to expand, adapting to a virtual training format for the duration of the pandemic. Compared to previous years, an equal if not greater number of members will be certified to volunteer post-disaster.

Post-disaster building safety assessments, and the architects who serve on these teams, were formally acknowledged in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS). AIA’s multiyear effort ensured the inclusion of two key provisions:

- including architects in NIMS Resource Typing Definition for Building Safety Assessment Team
- defining building safety assessments to go beyond structural integrity and include livability



National Institute of Standards and Technology and FEMA convened a committee of experts, including AIA, to assess and recommend options for improving seismic safety standards for functional recovery, or the ability to reoccupy a building after a disaster. The report delivered to Congress will inform options for building design and construction for hazard events beyond earthquakes.

Puerto Rico post-disaster assessments
Photo credit: Rachel Minnery

Freetown, Sierra Leone
Photo by Random Institute on Unsplash

Communities by Design

Architects are central to maintaining thriving communities and finding real-world solutions.

2020 impacts

In this new virtual world, our value as a resource organization increased. Communities by Design received over 250 requests in 2020 for resources, advice, technical assistance, and information—fielding requests from 18 countries as well as a number of partner organizations, members, and firms.

Design assistance project in Freetown

In 2020, Communities by Design began work in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Freetown represents the first design assistance project on the African continent. The built environment in the city is largely defined by informal settlement, and vulnerabilities are dramatic. Africa is generally accepted as a key region where both global climate change and equity challenges must be met if we are to achieve a sustainable planet.

Communities by Design work recognized

It's this kind of work for which Communities by Design received a "Power of A" award from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) in June. The award recognized the program for its breadth of impact, encompassing direct work in over a dozen countries across five continents, including communities in 47 U.S. states. It also highlighted that the program has directly influenced the adaptation of its democratic methodologies in processes all over the world and has profoundly impacted how our profession approaches communities.

In October, Communities by Design was profiled as a successful model in *Sustainable Cities in American Democracy: From Postwar Urbanism to a Civic Green New Deal*, a book focused on the emergence of the sustainability movement and its connection to democratic practices. The book credited our model with influencing federal agency programs.



Foster community

Architects have solutions to society's most challenging problems. By supporting an active and thriving community of architects, advancing resources and information that enhance architects' leadership, and highlighting how architects are driving positive change, AIA is working to promote the power of design.



COTE® Top Ten Award 2020 winner
Environmental Nature Center and Preschool, LPA, Inc., Newport Beach, CA. Photo credit: Cris Costea

Membership

The strength of our membership enhances AIA’s ability to positively influence policy and the public’s perception of the profession.

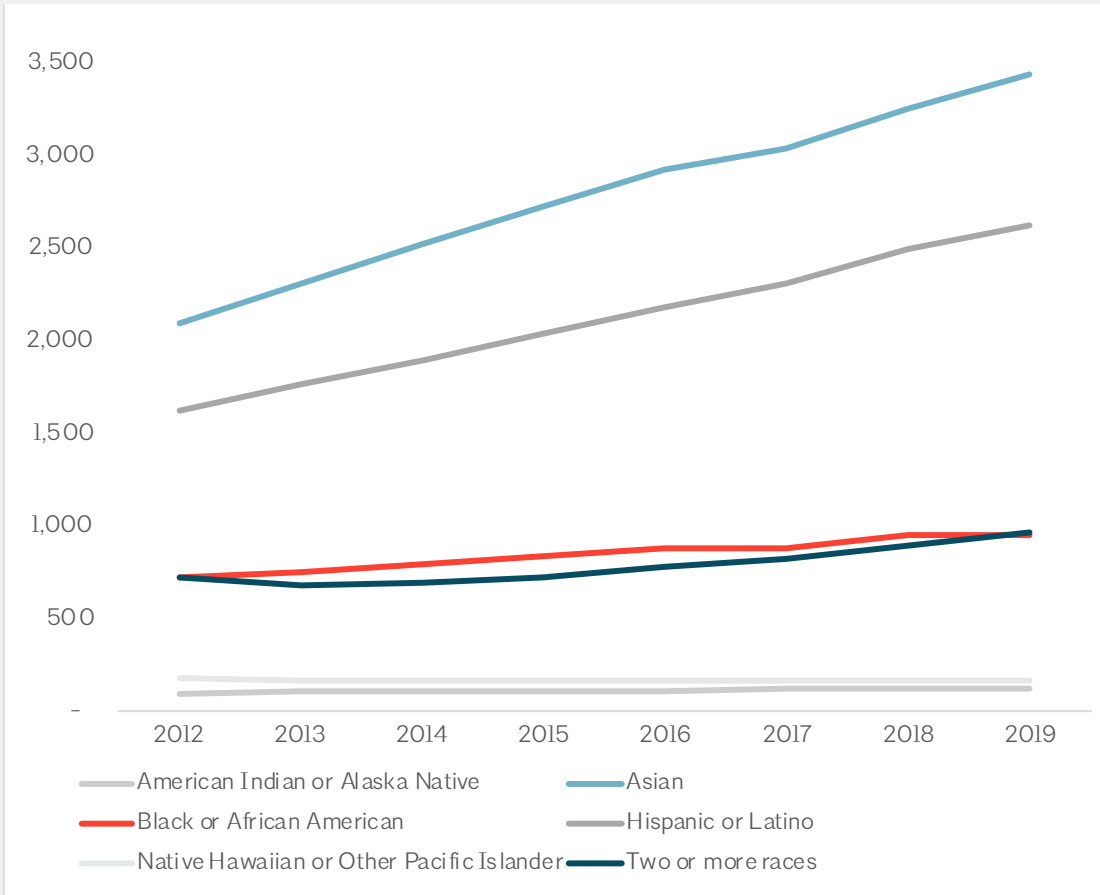
AIA’s more than 94,000 members prove every day why architects are central to solving many of the greatest challenges we face at the community, national, and global levels. AIA membership was more valuable than ever this past year in supporting architects with programs, products, and services amid the pandemic, and AIA’s strong voice continues to be an effective advocate for the profession.

In support of AIA’s focus on transparency, inclusion, and belonging, we released an expanded, public version of our annual demographics report. Data show that incoming architecture professionals are more racially and ethnically diverse than the profession today. In 2019 women made up 24.4% of all members (up from 17.1% in 2012), and individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups made up 16% of members (11.7% in 2012). Obviously, this progress is too slow, and we pledge to continue to promote a more diverse and inclusive profession and membership.

Components

Connecting, engaging, and leading—AIA components are a hub of collaboration and action throughout the nation and across the globe. Bringing members together looked very different in 2020. To understand the impact to components, the AIA Board of Directors created a Component COVID-19 Task Force to evaluate components’ capabilities to withstand the economic instability in 2020 and provided nearly \$200,000 in emergency funding to components experiencing financial distress. We continue to support the component network through more than \$4 million in direct financial support, and the Component Relations team developed tools and best practices to help components address their changing needs, including budgeting and forecasting, virtual technology, and identification of non-dues revenue sources.

> RACE AND/OR ETHNICITY: BREAKDOWN OF NON-EMERITUS ARCHITECT MEMBERS



AIA Conference on Architecture

AIA's premier event was one of many 2020 activities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prioritizing member safety, AIA navigated this complex year and developed virtual programming to serve member needs.

A'20 cancelled

Due to the risks and challenges of COVID-19, AIA made the difficult decision to first postpone and then cancel the A'20 conference originally scheduled for Los Angeles in May 2020.

At the time of cancellation and only three months from kick-off, the conference was fully planned with nearly 5,000 paid attendees registered and more than 500 sponsors and exhibiting companies booked.

The staff team swiftly refunded all paid registrants, closed all venue and hotel contracts without penalty, and submitted a successful cancellation insurance claim.

Virtual conference: Architecture in Turbulent Times

Although not a replacement for the cancelled A'20 conference, AIA alternately offered a low-cost virtual event called "Architecture in Turbulent Times." The team developed an engaging program focused on equity, the environment, health, and the economy. The virtual event was designed to meet member needs for education, community, and information that help architects change their practice and the architecture profession for the better.



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE: SPOTLIGHT ON EQUITY

The simultaneous crises of climate change, COVID-19, inequity, and an economic downturn exposed structural failings that architecture and society cannot fail to address. AIA's virtual event, "Architecture in Turbulent Times," explored the intersection of these critical issues while offering several thought-provoking sessions focused on equity.

Sessions like "The State of Equity in Architecture" and "Removing Obstacles & Creating Opportunities for Black Architects" spotlighted AIA members' personal experiences while exploring how race affects practice.

"The Ethics & Economics of EDI" made the business case—and professional case—for applying EDI principles to firm culture using AIA's Guides for Equitable Practice.

"Healthy Places, Healthy People: Building Equitable, Inclusive Places" and "A Benchmark for Urban Equity" are just two of the sessions that presented research and case studies demonstrating how architects, designers, planners, and local residents can build equity into communities.



Members attend Grassroots in New Orleans.

Grassroots Leadership Conference

Unity of purpose and a commitment to lead immediate and effective climate action marked this powerful event, attended by more than 700 component leaders from around the U.S. and the world.

Community collaboration

AIA's renewed focus on climate change—and the role of architects working collaboratively to create sustainable, resilient, and inclusive communities—were front and center at the annual Grassroots Conference held in February in New Orleans.

For the fourth year in a row, mayors and elected officials took center stage—with Kathy Ehley, mayor of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin; Quinton Lucas, mayor of Kansas City, Missouri; and Wade Nomura, mayor of Carpinteria, California—discussing the challenges extreme weather events pose to each of their cities and exploring how such events can have unexpected consequences on already vulnerable populations. They each expressed a deep appreciation for architects and a renewed interest in working with them in their community to advance shared goals, including environmental stewardship, access to affordable housing, and smart equitable growth of their communities.

Climate: Telling the story

Breakout panels led by members of the Strategic Council focused on storytelling, with members sharing their experiences and exploring strategies to position architects at the center of the public discussion to drive climate action.

Keynote address: Purposeful design

In the closing keynote session, former Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett shared lessons from his city's revitalization. Numerous attendees lined up for signed copies of his book, *The Next American City*, which chronicles his city's transformation through purposeful design and civic investment.



Honors & Awards

Each year AIA recognizes a juried selection of the firms, practitioners, and projects that best showcase architects as thought leaders in their communities and demonstrate how architecture can elevate the human experience. Through nearly 30 programs, AIA Honors & Awards highlights best practices and recognizes exemplary projects, engages and supports members in the diverse practice of the profession, and opens opportunities to collaborate among peers and colleagues in the built environment.

Advancing the values and vision of AIA

Recognizing that climate action requires a holistic approach, AIA adopted the Framework for Design Excellence as guidelines and requirements to assess project performance. Starting in 2020, all new calls for Honors & Awards submissions introduced the framework as a factor during project evaluation, which will guide evaluation for the 2021 cycle. Further, the equity audit initiated in 2020 will guide the development of measures to eliminate barriers to inclusive nominee and awardee participation in these programs as well as the College of Fellows.

New City/Conjunctive Points
Photo credit: Tom Bonner

2020 RECOGNITION BY THE NUMBERS

1200+

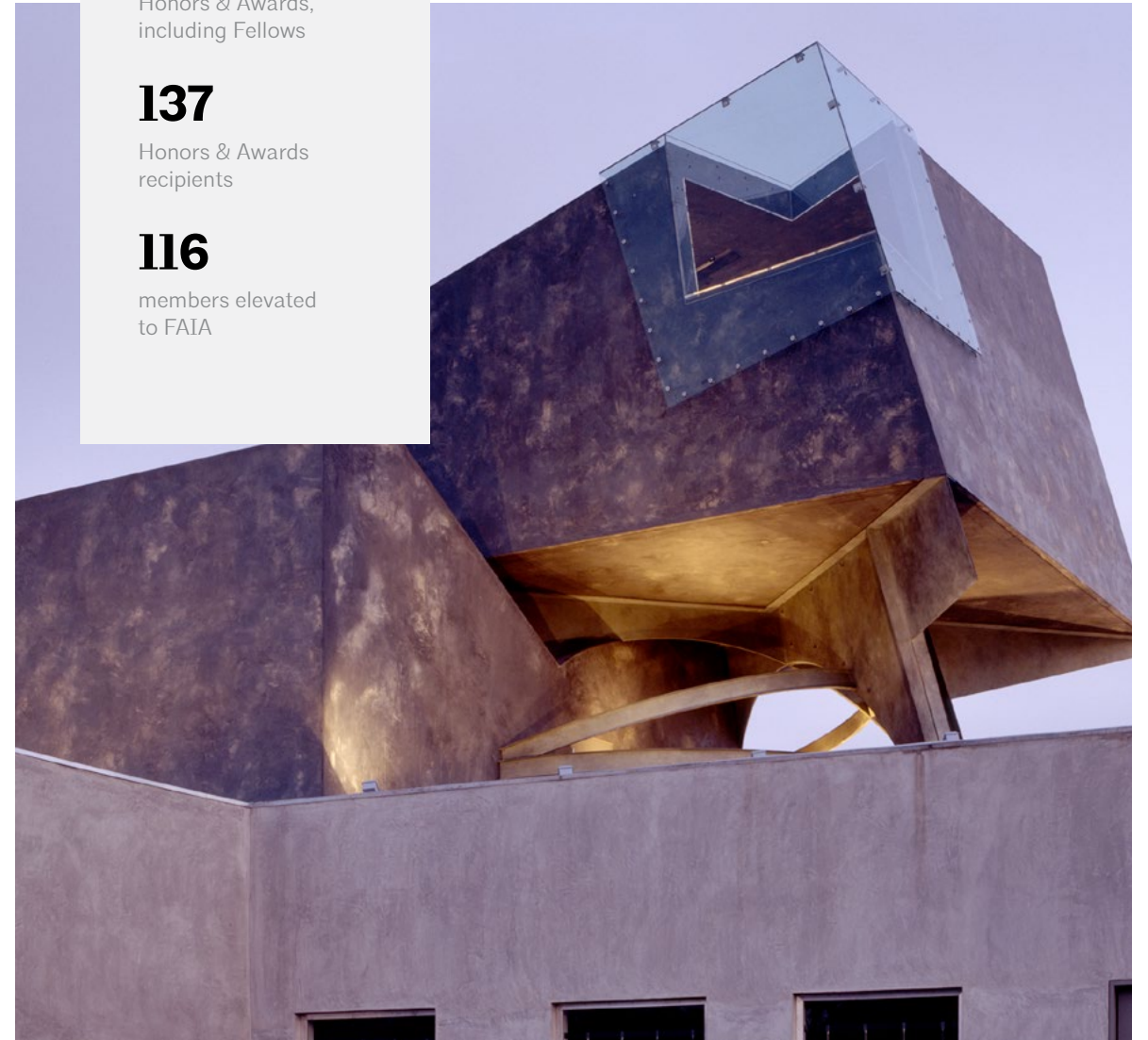
submissions for
Honors & Awards,
including Fellows

137

Honors & Awards
recipients

116

members elevated
to FAIA





Marlon Blackwell, FAIA
Photo credit: Mark Jackson

Gold Medal

The 2020 AIA Gold Medal was awarded to Marlon Blackwell, FAIA. The Gold Medal honors an individual whose significant body of work has had a lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture. Blackwell was recognized for his important body of transcendent work originating in the hills of Northwest Arkansas.

His firm, Marlon Blackwell Architects, prioritizes projects that serve the common good and has been widely recognized with more than 120 national and 14 international design awards. In addition to his exemplary architecture, Blackwell's influence and achievements as a teacher parallel the successes of his practice.

Through his work, which Billie Tsien, FAIA, described as "truthful architecture—simple, powerful, and steadfast," Blackwell has influenced an entire generation of architects. His inventive work has long demonstrated his willingness to challenge our culture to create a practice of boundless creativity.



Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA
Photo credit: Noah Pylvainen, Perkins and Will

Whitney M. Young Jr. Award

Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA, received the 2020 Whitney M. Young Jr. Award, which honors architects and organizations that champion progressive change and social responsibility.

Bullock was inspired to become an architect in order to positively affect the lives of African Americans and other people of color. She was the first African American and first woman to assume the role of managing director at Perkins and Will. Additionally, she has served as the firm's director of global diversity since 2013. In that position, she has been charged with broadening the firm's culture of inclusion and is helping reshape society by confronting issues of equity through meaningful work.

A compelling role model, Bullock also champions diversity throughout the entire profession as the first female African American president of the International Interior Design Association and through speaking engagements and committee roles for AIA and other allied organizations. Bullock has been an important voice on AIA's Equity in Architecture Commission and its Diversity Council—driving the implementation of critical program and policy changes.



Architecture Research Office Staff
Photo credit: Architect Research Office

Architecture Firm Award

Architecture Research Office (ARO) received the 2020 AIA Architecture Firm Award, the highest honor AIA bestows on an architecture practice. The award recognizes a firm that has consistently produced distinguished architecture for at least 10 years.

Founded in 1993, the firm's portfolio includes a broad range of work that has been widely celebrated and recognized. ARO operates with an atmosphere of collaboration and shared ideas, and its studio environment reflects that commitment. It is not uncommon to find the firm's young designers participating in client meetings while project directors are leading design, delivery, and operational initiatives. Since its founding, more than 25 former employees have moved on to establish their own practices, and ARO continues to provide mentorship to these young firms.



New City/Conjunctive Points
Photo credit: Tom Bonner

Twenty-five Year Award

AIA recognized Conjunctive Points—The New City, designed by Eric Owen Moss Architects, with its Twenty-five Year Award. The recognition highlights a project that has set a precedent for the last 25–35 years and continues to set standards of excellence for its architectural design and significance.

Initiated in 1986 within the Hayden Tract, a former industrial site bounding Central Los Angeles and Culver City, Conjunctive Points—The New City began as simple additions and subtractions to an existing collection of warehouses. With architect Eric Owen Moss designing or renovating one eclectic building at a time, the project set contemporary standards for adaptive reuse, launched the concept of creative office space, and positioned architecture as a method to uncover new social and civic opportunities.

Knowledge Communities

Engaged and passionate member volunteers are the lifeblood of AIA Knowledge Communities, which have more than 600 active volunteers engaged at the leadership, sub-committee, and planning levels.

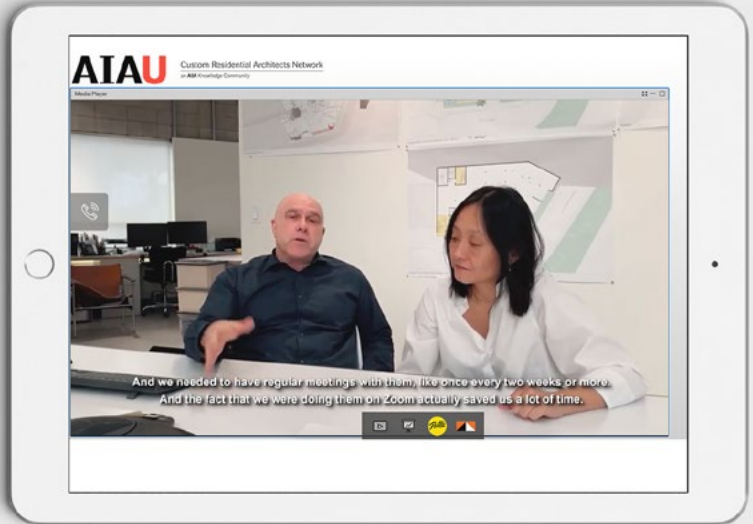
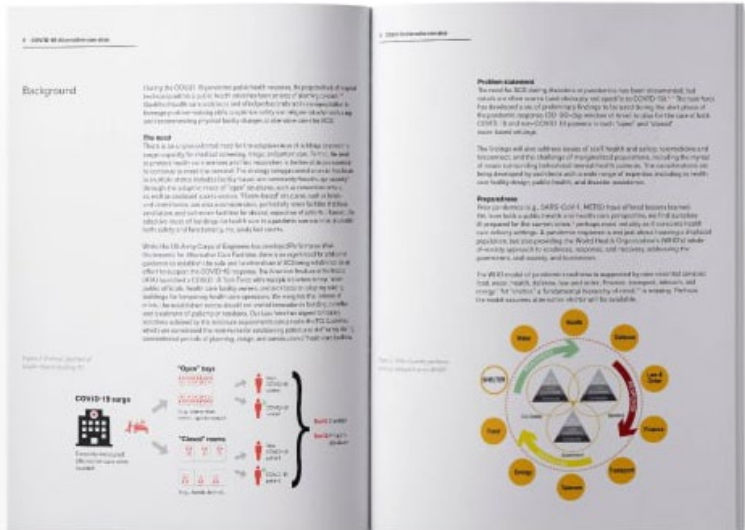
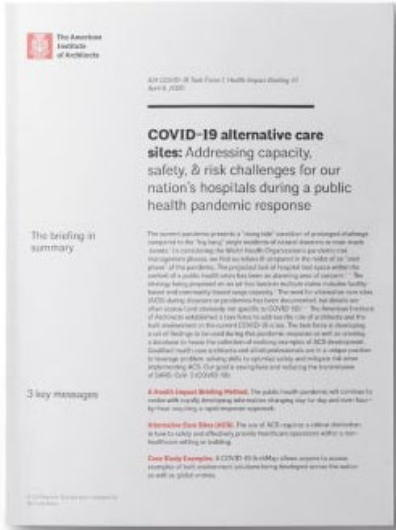
2020 adaptations

Almost half of the 21 Knowledge Communities actively engaged with AIA's response to COVID-19 through task force work, virtual design charrettes, live courses, the creation of new resources, and coordination with allied industry organizations.

Knowledge Communities quickly pivoted to find new and interesting ways to deliver content and methods for members to access new information. Even with only four face-to-face events, Knowledge Communities reported more than 10,000 CES credit hours for 2020 through countless live courses, several virtual conferences/partner events, and additional topical resources provided via web and email.

Knowledge Communities discussion forums were a vital platform for members to engage with each other virtually. With limited face-to-face conference and events, the forums allowed members to learn from one another—sharing best practices, resources, and valuable wisdom.

Top: COVID-19 alternative care sites: Addressing capacity, safety, & risk challenges for our nation's hospitals during a public health pandemic response
 Bottom left: Members attend the Historic Resources Committee 2020 Taliesin Colloquium
 Bottom right: "The COVID Practice" part of the CRAN Seminar Series



Leadership events & initiatives

AIA is focused on providing the knowledge and resources members need to be leaders in our communities—launching new leadership programs, and updating existing ones, in 2020 to inspire and empower.

AIA Leadership Academy

AIA's new flagship professional development program, AIA Leadership Academy, is a three-year program designed for select architects who are ready for the next level of accomplished leadership in their firm, industry, and community. The 2020–2022 cohort of 18 experienced architects will be coached in the critical business and leadership skills necessary to lead the practice of architecture forward.

Women's Leadership Summit Virtual Series

AIA piloted the Women's Leadership Summit (WLS) Virtual Series, which attracted more than 250 attendees for live webinars on a range of critical topics:

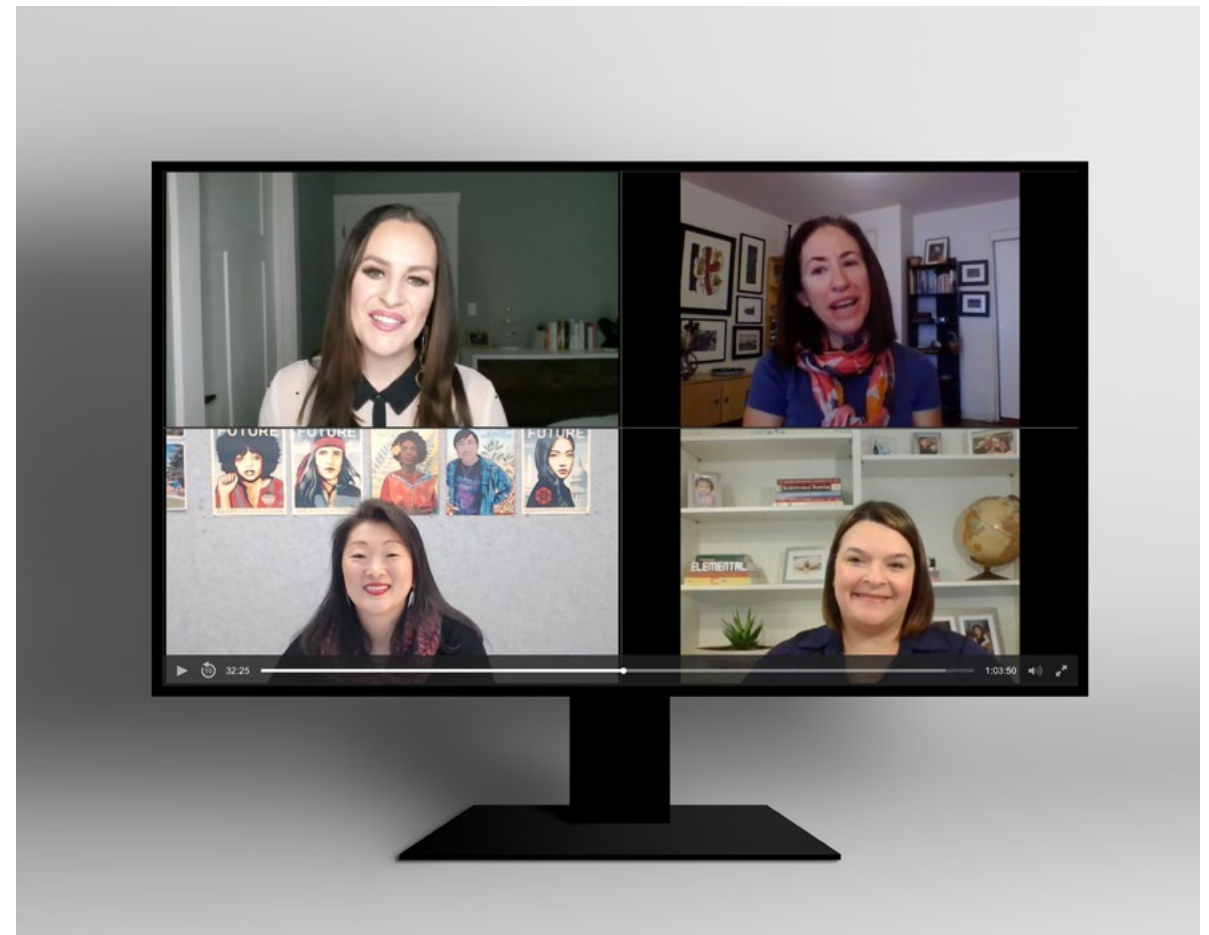
- Build Your Foundation NOW: Transforming a Setback into Your Greatest Comeback
- Leadership in Uncertainty: An Honest Conversation on Challenges & Change
- Negotiate with Confidence—Even in a Downturn!

Next to Lead

We further laid the groundwork in 2020 for Next to Lead, a new program to promote ethnically diverse women into leadership positions within AIA. Initiated by Resolution 18-3, and launching its application process in 2021, Next to Lead will provide leadership and experiential education, mentoring, and experiences for selected AIA members.

Forefront

Relaunched as Forefront in October, the acclaimed program formerly known as Leadership Institute brought together 150+ members with the best and brightest ideas on leadership. Forefront created a virtual platform focused on the fundamentals of leadership and educational outcomes designed to empower design professionals to enhance the built environment more effectively through applied leadership tactics.



Courtney Stanley, Barbara Spandorf, FAIA, LEED AP, Jennifer Workman, AIA, Grace Kim, AIA, help women architects learn successful tactics for overcoming professional and personal challenges in the Power Moves Series: Leadership in Uncertainty: An Honest Conversation on Challenges and Change.

Education & career development

Supporting and inspiring the next generation of architects is critical to AIA’s vision to drive positive change through the power of design. AIA dedicated special programming toward helping students and emerging professionals through a challenging year while working to support diversity at all levels of the professional pipeline.

Emerging professionals

Graduating seniors faced cancelled college graduation ceremonies, curtailed networking opportunities, and economic headwinds. AIA responded on a number of fronts:

- Extended complimentary access to the digital test preparation tool ArchiPrep for path to licensure candidates—targeting emerging professionals and displaced workers. Approximately 1,500 people accessed ArchiPrep during the complimentary period.
- Delivered webinars and other virtual content focused on mentoring, career preparedness, weathering economic shifts, and career uncertainty.
 - Enhanced the new graduate campaign with two webinars that engaged over 600 attendees.
 - Created articles for ARCHITECT Magazine with focused content for emerging professionals.

- Encouraged new graduates in a pilot social media campaign on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. The #ArchGrad20 campaign was AIA’s first video-focused campaign and garnered almost 95,000 views.

K-12

AIA rolled out pandemic-tailored resources in 2020—issuing updated lesson guides and other tools for educators, parents, guardians, and students—all designed to help students learn critical thinking skills, nurture their creativity, and gain exposure to the profession while gaining a richer understanding of their potential to shape the world around them.

Build the Block—a role-playing, digital game for middle and high school students that demonstrates the positive impact architects and the field of architecture can make on communities—is now web-based and available to components to incorporate into their local K-12 initiatives.



AIA K-12 Architecture Problem-Based Lesson Guides

Higher education

In addition to outreach and support to HBCUs detailed previously, AIA partnered with ACSA to host a climate-focused Intersections Symposium designed to strengthen the intersection between academia and design practice. The virtual event attracted 1,141 registrations on AIAU with more than 500 attending each session. Free for members and students, sessions addressed issues related to climate, policy, equity, and materials.

Architects Foundation

Building the diverse and inclusive profession necessary to reflect our values and realize the profession’s full potential starts with investing in architecture’s next generation. The Architects Foundation leads philanthropic efforts to attract, inspire, and invest in the next-generation design community.

Scholarship programs

The Architects Foundation manages seven scholarship programs and two grant programs for emerging architects and leaders and historic preservationists. In 2020, the foundation welcomed 26 new scholars while continuing to support an existing cohort of 29 Diversity Advancement Scholars with multiyear awards. It is working to pilot a student debt-relief program and an Intern + Firm Match program to connect architecture firms with our Diversity Scholars.

Additionally, AIA provided over \$100,000 in matching scholarship funding to components through the Component Matching Scholarship grant. The grant provided matching funds up to \$1,000 to 97 components that provided scholarships to NAAB-accredited schools and up to \$500 for scholarships to community colleges or technical schools with architecture programs. 2020 was the first time AIA has supported component scholarships for community colleges or technical schools.

2020 developments

The foundation partnered with several groups on special initiatives (Society’s Cage, Architects for Black Lives) and fundraising campaigns, resulting in a record year for donations (more than \$500,000). The Architects Foundation expanded scholarship and grant programs in 2020, including creating a new Diversity Advancement Scholarship for students attending HBCUs and a new Architect Registration Exam (ARE) scholarships funded by the AIA Large Firm Roundtable (LFRT).

A RECORD YEAR FOR DONATIONS

177%+

increase in donations

\$20K

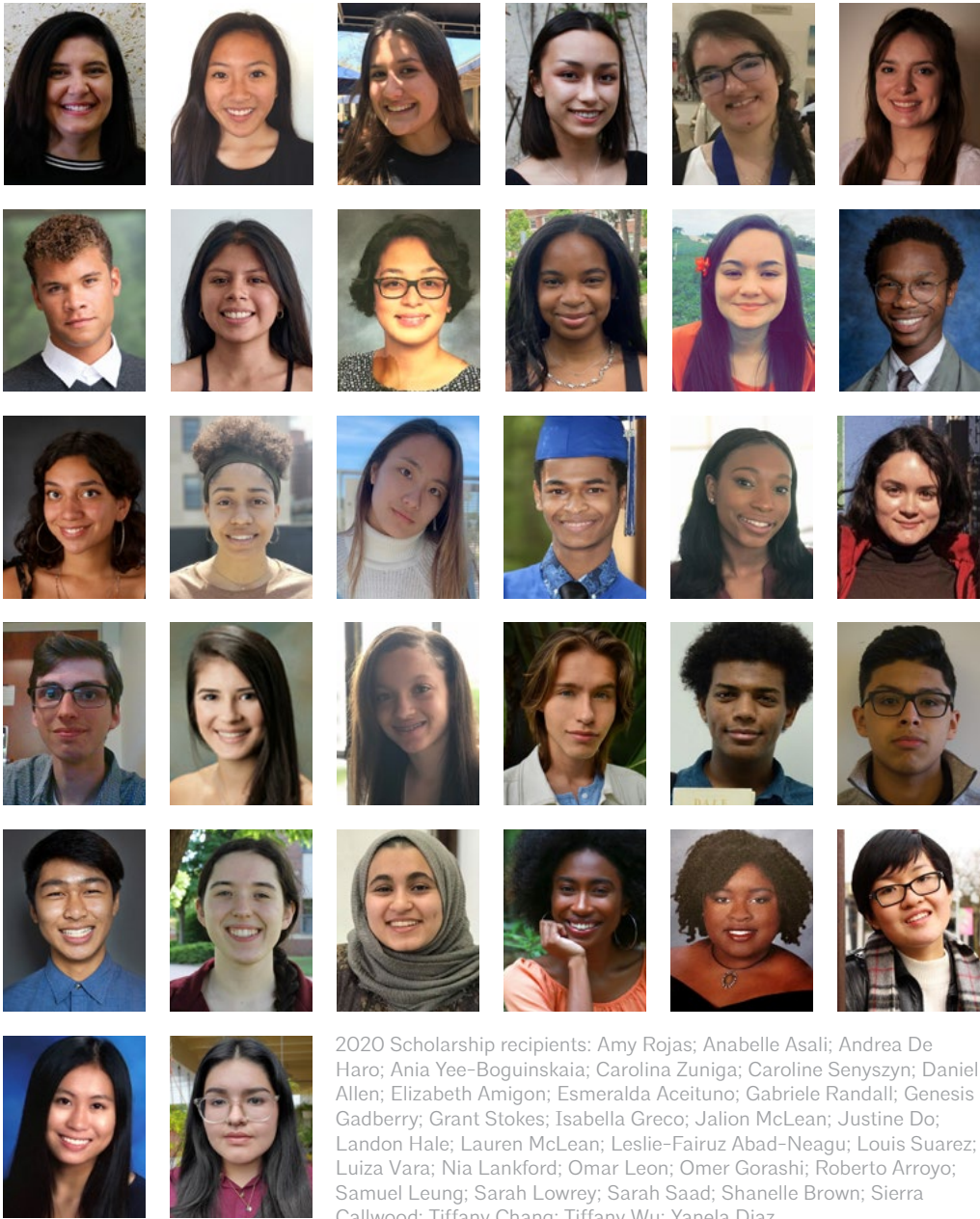
contributed through November’s Giving Tuesday campaign

\$350K

in pledges, including \$200,000 for the HBCU Diversity Advancement Scholarship program, doubling the number of scholars AIA can support in 2021

\$90K

contributed by AIA Large Firm Roundtable to support ARE scholarships



2020 Scholarship recipients: Amy Rojas; Anabelle Asali; Andrea De Haro; Ania Yee-Boguinskaia; Carolina Zuniga; Caroline Senyszyn; Daniel Allen; Elizabeth Amigon; Esmeralda Aceituno; Gabriele Randall; Genesis Gadberry; Grant Stokes; Isabella Greco; Jalion McLean; Justine Do; Landon Hale; Lauren McLean; Leslie-Fairuz Abad-Neagu; Louis Suarez; Luiza Vara; Nia Lankford; Omar Leon; Omer Gorashi; Roberto Arroyo; Samuel Leung; Sarah Lowrey; Sarah Saad; Shanelle Brown; Sierra Callwood; Tiffany Chang; Tiffany Wu; Yanela Diaz

Financials

In an extraordinary year, AIA's varied revenue streams added stability to AIA's finances, enhancing the ability to weather economic challenges without compromising member services and programs that advance our mission.

The American Institute of Architects headquarters, Washington D.C.
Photo credit: Stacy Moses

Non-dues revenue

AIA Contract Documents

AIA Contract Documents (ACD) has been the gold standard of legal documents and a thought leader within the construction industry for more than 130 years. ACD met the challenges of 2020 by ramping up virtual content—developing almost 150 virtual education sessions related to content and product training that reached more than 7,400 attendees.

To elevate the value and benefit of the ACD program to AIA members, the architecture profession, and the AEC industry, AIA announced a new strategic partnership with True Wind Capital, a long-term private investor focused on the technology industry. While AIA will continue to play a significant role in the future and direction of ACD, this partnership will enable strategic, long-term growth for the ACD program as AIA focuses on its mission-based priorities.

AIA continuing education

AIA's continuing education services, which provide high-quality learning programs that meet AIA membership requirements and registration requirements in nearly every licensing jurisdiction, quickly adapted to the pandemic. Many of the more than 3,000 providers shifted from in-person to online learning programs. By August, course submissions had returned to levels consistent with prior years. The continuing education program is a significant contributor to AIA's revenue stream and remained strong in 2020. Fifteen percent of AIAU's catalog was made available at no cost to members in April, leading to a dramatic increase in AIAU orders that continued through the remainder of the year, tripling 2019 orders. Even with the additional free courses, AIAU revenue increased by almost 20% in 2020.

MasterSpec®

MasterSpec, a product of AIA's continued strategic partnership with Deltek (the exclusive developer of MasterSpec), continued in 2020 with ongoing updates to reference specification content and plans for technological innovation that will change how architects, engineers, and specifiers think about the specification process.

During 2020, Deltek partnered with ConstructConnect to extend the reach of Product MasterSpec within the building products industry. This new relationship will offer a deeper layer of specification content to MasterSpec users and strengthen the royalty revenue supplied to AIA.

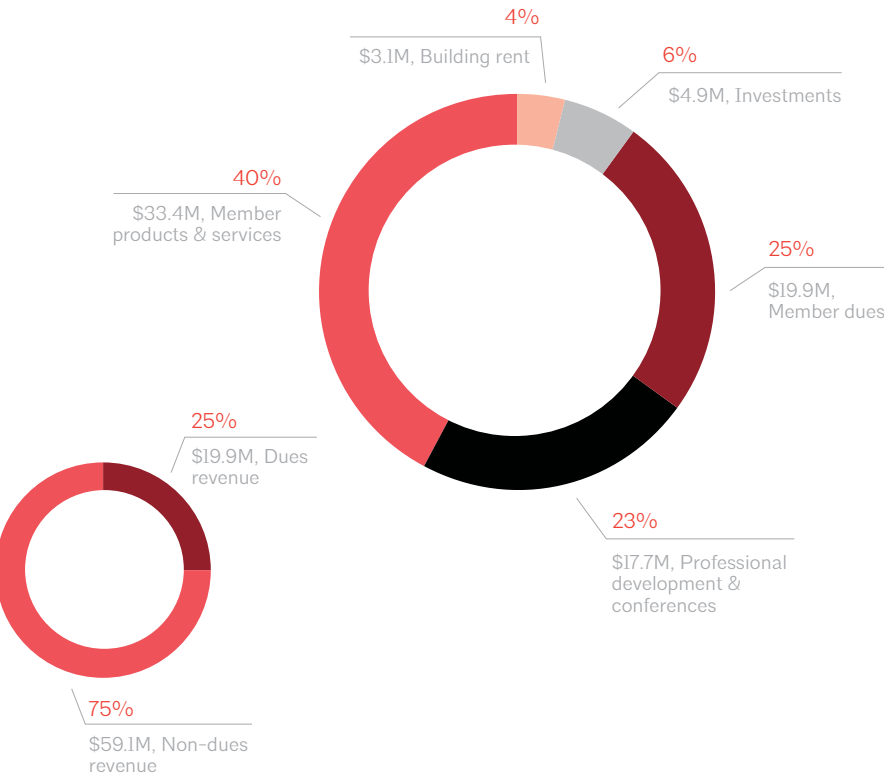
AIA and Deltek also focused the MasterSpec review committees on updating reference specification content to reflect AIA priorities on sustainability. Further, Deltek expanded its specification writing team to develop new sections within MasterSpec to enhance its value to the AEC community.

ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

The financial information displayed reflects the ongoing stand-alone financial operations of the American Institute of Architects. AIA managed itself astutely during the economic recession caused by the pandemic. Despite lower overall revenues, the Institute remained strong—with total revenue from membership dues and continuing education activities ending 2020 at the same level as 2019. Other revenue sources did decrease, especially revenues from in-person events. The Institute successfully negotiated an insurance settlement after it cancelled the 2020 annual conference, which bolstered its revenue. AIA finished the year with \$13M less revenue than was budgeted, but the Institute was careful with its expenses and decreased its spending by \$14 million. The Institute announced a strategic partnership with True Wind Capital to invest in AIA’s Contract Documents business. This partnership enhances AIA’s ability to focus on its mission-based priorities where it can have the greatest impact. AIA can now benefit from a long-term financial endowment, housed in a subsidiary of the Institute, that will support AIA’s priorities in future years.

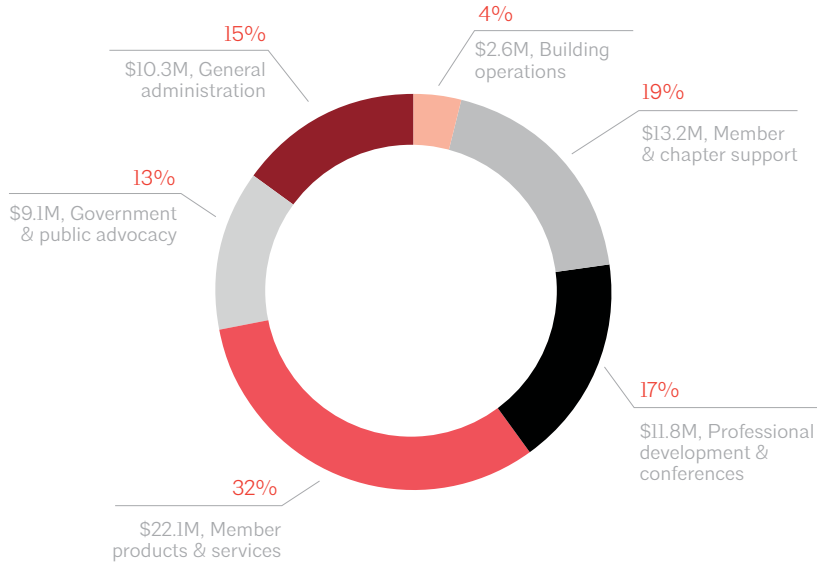
Revenue

2020 revenue total: \$79M including \$4.9M of investment income



Expenses

2020 expenses total: \$69.1M



Letter from the President

It’s time for a new normal. As a profession that literally builds the future, it is up to all of us to ensure that new normal is more healthy, equitable, sustainable, and resilient for everyone, everywhere.

In 2019, we voted to do that by marshaling all our resources toward tackling climate change. In 2020, we pledged to pursue racial equity—in our association, in our profession, and in the communities we build—with the same urgency.

I couldn’t be prouder of the way AIA members have answered this year’s challenges with leadership and action—supporting our communities and demonstrating the value of design in addressing public challenges.

Through our Reopening America initiative, AIA members developed design strategies to help communities, businesses, and schools safely navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

We took new strides to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in our profession and in our communities.

Despite 2020’s challenges, our urgent climate work continued—and achieved important milestones. We released a new Climate Action Plan and achieved the 2030 Commitment’s best year ever.

Through our Blueprint for Better campaign and other outreach, we’re inviting the public, civic leaders, and allies to join us. It’s all visually represented with a new logo and backed by a visionary strategic plan that underlines AIA’s commitment and maps out a path to progress.

This is the kind of meaningful work that prompted the American Society of Association Executives to name AIA among its “100 Associations That Will Save the World.”

The world certainly changed in 2020. And it’s safe to say some of those changes will be lasting. Will these changes be for the better? It’s up to all of us to ensure they are. As a profession, we’ve never been more focused and equipped to do our part.



Jane Frederick, FAIA
2020 AIA President

