



April 4, 2024

# Report

from the Strategic Council

**From:**

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**To:**

AIA Virginia  
Monthly Report - March

**Mission:** *The AIA Strategic Council advances the architectural profession by informing the AIA Board and other Institute bodies about important professional issues, opportunities, and threats. The Council has an outward and forward-focused vision with an emphasis on long-term goals and outcomes.*

**What Does the Strategic Council Do?** *To learn more about the role and activities of the Strategic Council, click [HERE](#).*

## From the Councilor

Greetings colleagues! I am pleased to submit my monthly report on the activities of your AIA Strategic Council. This report is intended to provide you information and offer you, our members, an opportunity to engage in the ongoing work that this body of volunteer leaders are making to improve our institute. It also seeks to provide you an opportunity to share your thoughts and suggestions for how I might better represent you. You may contact me directly (see the email address above) or visit the newly formatted AIA website to share your comments.

The Strategic Council members are each assigned to one of five working study groups. These are described in the Moderator's report below. Virginia is privileged to have two representatives. I am the elected representative for the Commonwealth, but I am also joined by Stephanie Leedom, AIA, an architect in Northern Virginia who works for the US State Department, who serves as the At-Large member. We both serve on the Equity Work Group, which Stephanie and I co-chair.

There are a number of important initiatives that are being undertaken by the Council, also described in Graciela's report below. You can contribute to that work by letting me know about the work that you are doing in these study areas that can influence decisions and thoughts about the direction of our profession and our future. With the growing awareness of the mental health crisis plaguing our nation, special attention is being given to the Wellness Study group. They are looking at the impacts of building and spatial design on human health (physical and mental), but also the ways that work environments influence health outcomes.

I also encourage you to make plans now to attend AIA '24 which will be held in Washington, DC from June 5-8. Those who were in San Francisco last year know that the AIA is doing a lot of work to make our conferences a great experience for sharing and gaining knowledge in the many areas that impact the future of our profession; most notably the influence of artificial intelligence and climate change. Add to this mix

the challenges of health and wellness and we have a myriad of opportunities and challenges that design professional are uniquely suited to address.

On another note, March was Women's History Month. It is a time to reflect on the efforts of millions of our fellow citizens whose work contributes to the greatness of our nation. Included in that number are scores of architects and design professionals whose creative brilliance have molded unique spaces and places into our built environment. I challenge our members to discover some of the laudable work of our members here in the Commonwealth that exemplifies the design excellence that we applaud. Learn the names of designers who are visionary leaders in our profession. Let's make every month a month to learn about the work of many communities across every spectrum of creation who collectively make our communities, our nation and our world a better place to live, work and experience. Happy Women's History Month.

## Council News

### FROM THE MODERATOR + VICE MODERATOR

Our first Council Assembly of 2024 was held on March 4th and gave the Council an opportunity to revisit the work done so far this year. During this Assembly, the study group co-chairs presented the current status of their topics and the goals they aim to achieve. We heard from the Best Practices Committee leaders and heard examples of Council communications, including a planned discussion with AIA Ohio component leaders being coordinated by Hallie Crouch and strategies for At-Large Councilors to share with their social media networks shared by Jessica O'Donnell. Thanks to all for the hard work to date.

A group of Councilors actively participated in the AIA Leadership Summit in Washington, DC, engaging in Capitol Hill meetings and attending lectures, dinners, and social events. A recap of Council activities and takeaways from the Summit is available [here](#).

As discussed during Governance Week, the Council is making efforts to diversify the study groups by welcoming members from the Young Architects Forum, with plans for the National Associates Committee to join soon. This strategic initiative aims to incorporate a spectrum of voices in each study group, establishing a pipeline from the younger professionals to the Council and ensuring the vision of the future includes the next generation.

Graciela Carrillo, AIA 2024 Moderator + Josh Flowers, FAIA 2024 Vice Moderator

*Special thanks to our Steering Committee members who help guide our work and inform our decision-making process: Brad Benjamin, AIA (Best Practices Committee Chair), Alyssa Murphy, AIA (Communications Chair), Bruce Herrington, AIA (Elections Chair).*

### INTEGRATION OF THE STRATEGIC COUNCIL & MEMBERSHIP GROUPS

#### YOUNG ARCHITECT'S FORUM:

The 2024/2025 liaison between the Strategic Council and the Young Architects Forum (representing all architects in their first 10-years of licensure) is Michigan Councilor Patty Boyle, AIA. In this role, Patty will advise and support YAF leadership and connect the Strategic Council. The 2024 YAF focus groups of Advocacy, Communications, Community, Knowledge, and Strategic Vision have themes of leadership development, ownership transition, and changing models of practice & compensation. This year, we are excited to have 10 YARs connecting their perspectives to the five SC work groups.

#### NATIONAL ASSOCIATES COMMITTEE (NAC):

The 2024 Associate Representative to the Council is Alyanna Subayno, Assoc. AIA. In this role, Alyanna will work to find common goals between the National Associates Committee and the Strategic Council and bridge the two groups together where possible. The 2024 NAC work groups: VALUE (EDI), Strategic

Partnerships, Knowledge, Climate Action, and Advocacy. With much overlap between the NAC and the Strategic Council's focus areas, several NAC members are excited to join the Council's work groups.

### **COLLEGE OF FELLOWS:**

The College of Fellows is AIA's highest membership honor, with only 3% of members achieving this distinction. The bar is justifiably high, and the jury deliberates for days on the hundreds of applicants. The 2024 Jury of Fellows concluded its review of the applications for Fellowship and recently announced the elevation of 96 members and two international architects to the College of Fellows. Two current Strategic Councilors were elevated this year, Abi Brown, FAIA (Washington DC Councilor), and Shannon Christensen, FAIA (Montana Councilor).

### **CHIEF ARCHITECT INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHTED AT AIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**

The genesis of the current Chief Architect initiative began in 2016 as a Strategic Council study group topic. The intention is to advocate mayors to include architects in cabinet-level positions as advisors. This year, AIA President Kimberly Dowdell has championed this initiative and wrote about it in her recent [President statement](#). The Chief Architect initiative is an important communication point for the Strategic Council because it encompasses many of our study group topics as areas where architects can advise mayors on issues like climate, public health, equity, value, and quality of life.

## **Institute News**

### **AIA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**

The 2024 AIA Leadership Summit, the premier advocacy and leadership training event for AIA chapter leaders, took place February 27th-March 1<sup>st</sup> in Washington, DC. In addition to the annual "Hill Day" when AIA members visit their representatives on Capitol Hill to advocate issues that support our profession, attendees also participated in education tracks focused on advocacy, membership, governance, and association management.

In a new initiative for 2024, the last session block of Friday morning was dedicated to three separate Leadership Retreats:

- AIA Component Leadership Retreat - Building Strong Foundations for Success was a deep dive on association best practices designed for collaboration, skill-building, and strategic visioning.
- AIA Volunteer Leaders Retreat ensured synergies between AIA Board of Directors, Board-level Committee Chairs, and volunteer leaders from the Strategic Council, NAC and YAF.
- Knowledge Community Leaders Retreat fostered dynamic dialogue between AIA Knowledge Community leaders and members of the Board Knowledge Committee.

### **NEW MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

The Member and Volunteer Engagement Priority Project is a series of initiatives that will position the organization to engage better, serve, and communicate with a broader set of AIA members. As a result of the work, AIA will be able to modernize our membership structure and operationalize new engagement, experience, and involvement strategies. This work will give AIA and its components a more robust understanding of our members at a deeper level, better activate current members, and recruit and serve more diverse members.

No change is proposed to the Architect, Honorary, or Fellow designations, however new categories include Internationally Licensed architects, Academic, Student, and Allied Membership, as well as Senior Associate designation that recognize Associate members after 10+ years of Associate membership.

New membership categories will be addressed in a Resolution and Bylaw change that will come up for a vote at the AIA Annual Meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup>. AIA Board Secretary Britt Lindberg, FAIA, will host a Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> to present all resolutions and amendments to the AIA Bylaws in preparation for the Annual Meeting. to review and discuss all proposed resolutions. Please [register here](#).

## Upcoming events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Link</b>
May 1, 2024	Town Hall Meeting – 2024 Resolutions	Zoom	<a href="#">Link</a>
June 6-8, 2024	Conference on Architecture & Design 2024	Washington DC	<a href="#">Link</a>

For more events, visit the AIA events page at: <https://www.aia.org/community/events>.

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### Feedback

*We value input! If you have questions or ideas for the Strategic Council, reach out to us at [StrategicCouncil@aia.org](mailto:StrategicCouncil@aia.org). To learn more about the work of the Strategic Council, please visit the [Strategic Council webpage at AIA.org](#).*

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