



The **National Associates Committee (NAC)** at NAC Annual Meeting at GCAD Headquarters, D.C. Feb 2026

WHAT IS THE NAC?

The **National Associates Committee (NAC)** is a member group of the American Institute of Architects. We are a unique committee representing a particular membership category within the Institute – **Associate AIA members**.

The **State/Territory Associate Representative (STAR)** are associate member volunteers from across the nation. They are responsible for **gathering information** about issues facing associate members they represent and **disseminating it** to local and state components.

The STAR serves as a communication link between Associates and the national organization. They are key to vertical communication and connecting Associate leaders at all levels of the Institute.

National Associates Committee

Check us out on the Community Hub:

<https://communityhub.aia.org/communities/community-home?communitykey=82cb23fc-5661-40ef-b9ec-019083735c83>

National Associates Committee

2026 Advisory Committee (AdCom)



Brett Wedding
CHAIR 2026



Katie Cherrier
VICE CHAIR



Saakshi Terway
ASSOC. DIRECTOR
TO AIA BOARD



Heli Shah
ASSOC. REP TO
STRAT. COUNCIL



Ayushi Toraskar
CLIMATE
ACTION



Abigail Korn
KNOWLEDGE



Asa Santa Cruz
STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIPS



Ricardo Maga
Rojas
ADVOCACY



Rachel Wiesbrock
VALUE



Jensen Zack
CACE LIAISON



Ali Alsaleh
STAFF LIAISON



Bill Hercules
COF LIAISON

Assoc. Director to the AIA Board

Saakshi serves as a conduit between the National Associates Committee (NAC) and the AIA Board of Directors, elevating the voices of Associate members at the national level. On the Board, she serves on the Finance and Audit Committee, which oversees the Institute's financial health, budgeting, and accountability, and is part of the EQFA Committee sub-group examining decolonizing AI in architecture, with a focus on its implications for equity and practice.

Assoc. Rep to Strategic Council

Heli's role is to serve as the voice of associate members and contribute to conversations that shape the future of the profession.

CACE Liaison

The CACE Liaison serves as a resource to the NAC, there to provide any connections to the CACE network that might be needed, and to share NAC opinions and priorities with CACE.

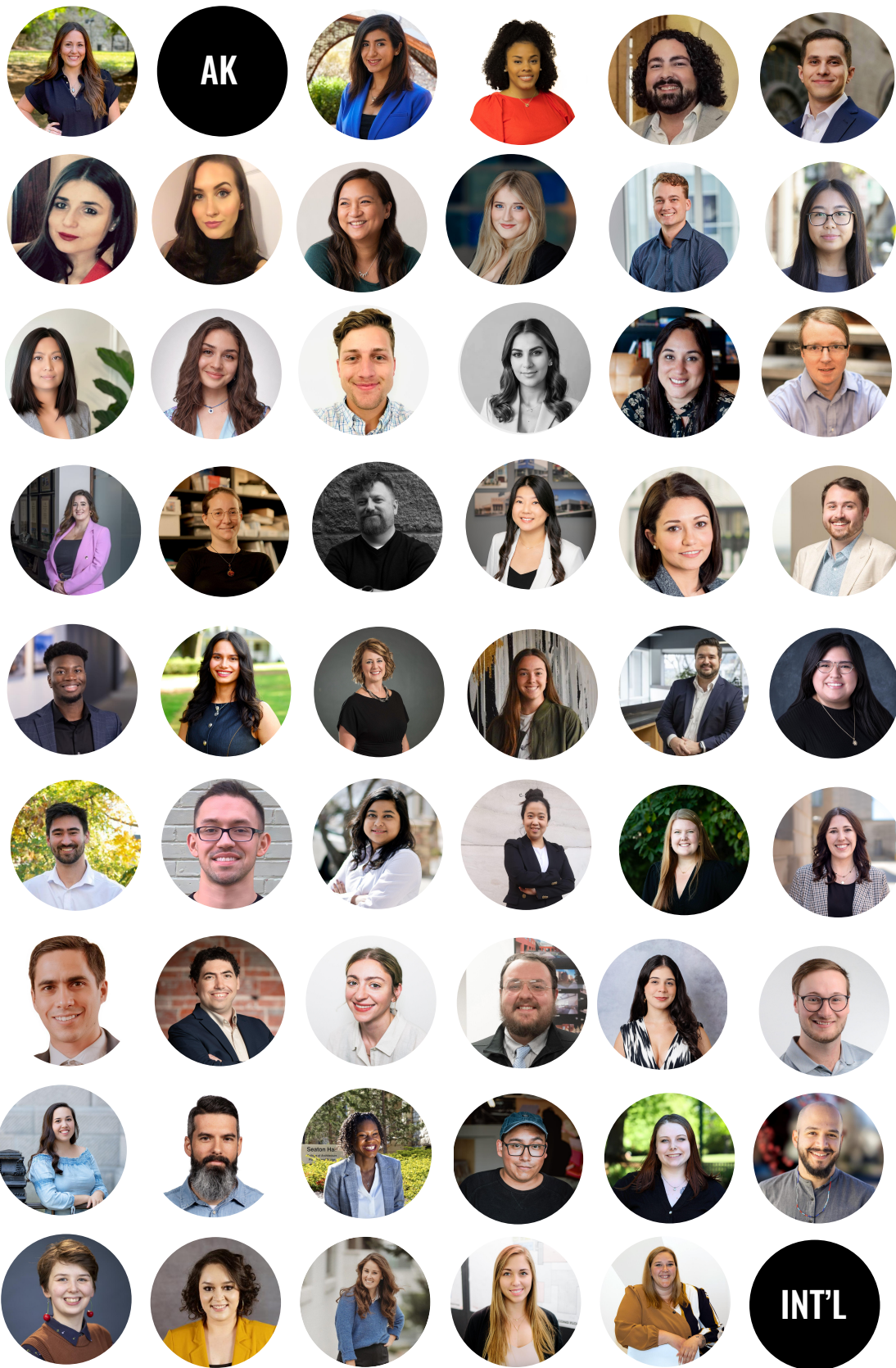
CoF Liaison

The College of Fellows Liaison serves as a resource to the NAC, building connection and mentorship between the CoF and the Associate membership group.

National Associates Committee

STARs (State/Territory Associate Representatives - Representing YOU!)

AL	MELISSA SHEFFIELD
AZ	SARA GHAEMI
AR	JUSTICE BARNES
CA	MICHAEL CINTRON
CO	MO ZAINA
CT	ERSA LLAKMANI
DE	CHRISTINE OLSHAN
DC	DANIELLE MCCORMICK
FL	ALYSSA SCHERGER
GA	CHRIS TRACY
HI	ERIN WONG
ID	BENIYA SHAKYA
IL	NESE ALTINTAS
IN	TYLER KENNEDY
IA	PALOMA CHAPMAN
KS	SAM BRAZELL
KY	AREIN NATOUR
LA	SAMANTHA JOHNSON
ME	BARCLAY FINCK
MD	CHAN PARK
MA	NIUSHA ARNDT
MI	JACOB SMITH
MN	NATHAN DAVIES
MS	ALEXA CASTILLO
MO	JESSICA STRUCKHOFF
MT	ERIN HASQUET
NE	COREY THIELE
NV	MICHELLE TAPIA
NH	HUNTER DAVIS
NJ	MIKE ROSADO
NM	IFREET RAHIMA
NY	E.J. SHIN
NC	ABIGAIL GILLIN
ND	WHITNEY BOURGOIS
OH	MANUEL GRANJA
OK	DONOVAN LINSEY
OR	EVON CALABRESE
PA	JAMES HEFT
PR	KIARA DE LEON RIVERA
RI	NOAH ELLINGWOOD
SC	YARELY SMITH
SD	JOSH BLOHOWIAK
TN	DEZHA MCKOY-OVERTON
TX	OSCAR OLVERA
UT	MADISON MERWINE
VT	BETO ANDRES SILVA
VA	AIDAN BROWN
WA	BLANCA CAZARES
WV	RACHEL COSTELLO
WI	BRITTANY PETERSON
WY	BRITNEY SULZEN
Int'l	AMEL ABDELLI



CHAIR UPDATE

Brett Wedding

Chair 2026

During Q3 our committee advertised for, interviewed and selected the incoming 2027 AdCom members!

We are so excited to introduce our newest AdCom members:

Vice Chair/Chair 27-28: Danielle McCormick <https://www.linkedin.com/in/daniellemccormick/>

Assoc. Rep to the Strategic Council: Jhoanny Marte

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jhoanny-marte-assoc-aia-wid-83740335/>

Strategic Partnerships At-Large Director: Jordan Luther

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jordan-luther-aia-assoc-aia-noma-8845aa193/>

Advocacy At-Large Director: Erska Llakmani

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/erska-llakmani-mba-march-noma-assoc-aia-leed-green-assoc-a43426a3/>

Thank you to everyone who applied for open positions, we are so grateful for the energy and passion these volunteers share in these roles. If you are ever interested in hearing more about future opportunities to get involved with the NAC, please reach out to our AIA National team member to get connected!

Email: kathleenmccormick@aia.org

Welcoming the NAC AdCom 2027



Katie Cherrier
Chair 2027



Danielle McCormick
Vice Chair 2027 | Chair 2028



Heli Shah
AIA Board 2026



Jhoanny Marte
Strategic Council 2026



Jensen Zack
CACE Liaison 2027



Lisa Lamkin, FAIA
CoF Rep 2027



Rachel Wiesbrock
At-Large Director 2026 | 2027
VALUE



Erska Llakmani
At-Large Director 2027 | 2028
Advocacy



Abby Korn
At-Large Director 2026 | 2027
Knowledge



Jordan Luther
At-Large Director 2027 | 2028
Strategic Partnerships



Ayushi Toraskar
At-Large Director 2026 | 2027
Climate Action



Kathleen McCormick
AIA Team Member

CHAIR UPDATE

Brett Wedding

Chair 2026

We also wrapped up Q3 with our full NAC Committee call, where we get together virtually once per quarter to share updates from our workgroups, share a presentation, and do a little collaborative learning and engaging. It's not quite the same as our Annual In-Person Meeting, but it is a great way to stay in touch throughout the busy year! This quarter we had the pleasure of some NAC alum visitors who shared a presentation on the Candidate Development Committee (CDC), lead by Jessica O'Donnell, Tannia Chavez and Jenn Truman!

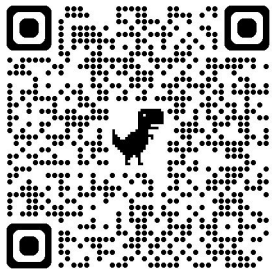
Social Media Update: The National Associates Committee is excited to share our recent launch of the [AIA National Associates Committee LinkedIn page](#)! This has been a long time coming, but we are officially launched and you can find us [here](#)!

FOLLOW US ON LINKEDIN!

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/aia-national-associates-committee/>

NAC's Social!

The National Associates Committee has gone live on **LinkedIn!**



Our Goals

Advocate and amplify the associate voice!

Provide key resources and support for the following groups of people:

- AIA Associates
- Recent Grads
- AIAS
- Students
- Emerging Professionals

What to Expect

It's more than just connecting..

- Stay updated on issues affecting Associates
- An insight into NAC's advocacy and initiatives
- A community space to ask questions and share wins
- Connections with peers and other Associates across the Country

Get Involved

We want to highlight you!

- Doing great work in your local chapter?
- Have an opportunity for other associates?
- ARE Support?
- Have you received an award?

Reach out to your local STAR (State and Territory Associate Representative) and we will get it shared!

Strategic Council Updates

Heli Shah, Associate AIA

Associate Representative to the Strategic Council

ARCHITECTURE WEEK 2027 GRANTS

With school back in session, this a great time to start planning for Architecture Week 2027, April 11–17.

[Chapter grants](#) are open, with a completion deadline of October 15. The new [ArchWeek Guidebook](#) includes tips, support, and lessons learned from past ArchWeek initiatives. Contact Devon Davis with questions.

AIA AI FIRM TOOLKIT

Wondering where your firm stands on AI? The [AIA AI Firm Toolkit](#) is a free, interactive resource developed by the AIA AI Task Force to help firms of every size adopt AI responsibly. Take the five-question maturity assessment, explore AI literacy resources, and download a sample firm AI policy — all at no cost.

STRATEGIC COUNCIL WORKGROUPS 2026

The **AIA Strategic Council** selects and determines its workgroups (or study groups) for the upcoming year through a collaborative governance process focused on alignment with the AIA Strategic Plan based on **Strategic Recommendations, Priority Alignment, Moderator Discretion, and Council Member Participation. The 2026 study groups included Practice, Neuroarchitecture, Value, Housing and Regenerative Design**

The Strategic Council has invited NAC members to serve in select workgroups in the past. If you would be interested in serving as a NAC liaison to the Strategic council, please email me at heli.shah964@gmail.com.



Heli Shah
Strategic Council
Representative 2026



Melissa Sheffield
Alabama STAR
Practice



Evon Calabrese
Oregon STAR
Neuroarchitecture



Christine Olshan
Delaware STAR
Value



Abigail Gillan
North Carolina STAR
Housing



Ifreet Rahima
New Mexico STAR
Regenerative Design

ADVOCACY

THE MISSION

PUBLIC AWARENESS. VALIDATION. EVOLUTION.

Advocacy on behalf of Associates, both mainstream, and alternative, at all levels of the AIA. Themes may include policy (local, state, and federal), architectural licensure, and connections with allied committees and organizations.

01 FRAMEWORK FOR ADVOCACY

Our workgroup has worked tirelessly to develop an outline on topics that include:

- Equity in the Built Environment
- Student & Emerging Professional Engagement
- Professional Wellness & Workplace Advocacy
- Local Chapter & Community Engagement
- Business Acumen & Leadership Development
- Conferences & Professional Opportunities
- Associate Recognition & Storytelling
- Technology & the Future of Practice



National
Associates
Committee

AIA Framework for Advocacy Playbook

02 ASSOCIATES RESOURCES GUIDE

As the Associate Advocacy Playbook continues to take shape, the work group has begun mapping resources that will support each advocacy topic. Current efforts include:

- Connecting resources to framework priorities
- Exploring opportunities for future content contributions

Summary

This guide is intended to help Associate members translate advocacy into everyday practice. Whether influencing a project, mentoring a student, engaging a local component, or leading change within a firm, every Associate has the ability to shape a stronger profession through intentional action.

2026 AIA NAC Advocacy Working Group

Ricardo J. Maga Rojas, AIA	Hunter Davis, Assoc. AIA
Mo Zaina, Assoc. AIA	Ifreet Rahima, Assoc. AIA
Ersa Liakmani, Assoc. AIA	Evon Calabrese, Assoc. AIA
Christine Olshan, Assoc. AIA	Noah Ellingwood, Assoc. AIA
Alexa Castillo, Assoc. AIA	Sam Brazell, AIA

AIA Framework for Advocacy Playbook

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ADVOCACY

Ricardo J. Maga Rojas, At-Large Director; magarojas.ricardo@gmail.com

STARs: Mo Zaina (Co-Deputy), Ersa Liakmani, Christine Olshan, Sam Brazell, Niuscha Arndt, Alexa Castillo, Hunter Davis, Ifreet Rahima (Co-Deputy), Evon Calabrese, Noah Ellingwood

VALUE

THE MISSION

Our mission is to empower the Associate voice through the justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion foundation that the Institute has laid. The collective voice of Associates in all stages of their careers is essential for designing a better future, highlighting the value of AIA engagement, and working to eliminate barriers to entry and advancement within the profession.

01 BRIDGING THE GAP

We are in the final stages before the highly anticipated release of 'Bridging the Gap.'

This document will ideally be used by any Early Professional after graduation and/or those in the early stages of their career to make the transition into the profession smoother and less daunting.

Our group has been working hard to curate the best resource for Associates to use in such an important stage of their career.

Some content to look forward to:

- AIA 101 & What Value Does it Bring
- AIA Resources
- How to Get Involved
- Traditional vs. Alternative Career Paths
- Mentorship Programs/Opportunities
- Glossary for AIA resources, acronyms, etc.

02 FOLLOW NAC SOCIALS

Make sure to follow the NAC [LinkedIn](#) and [Community Hub](#) for the release in the upcoming months!

Resource Snapshot

FREE AIA Membership for IBM - \$0
As a new graduate? Participate in AIA as an Associate Member for FREE and access all AIA Membership benefits for 18 months before renewing. If you are still a student you can pre-pay today!

AIA Career Center - \$0
Build your dream career. AIA Career Center is the place to apply and get job matches, use your job seeker account to research, find the right opportunity and get your experience and skills in front of your ideal employer.

AIA Compensation & Benefits Report - \$450
The profession most focused source for salary benefits and workplace practices. AIA collects and analyzes data from hundreds of firms to offer insights you need to make informed career decisions and evaluate your opportunities with confidence.

AIA Guides for Equitable Practice - \$0
Using real-world derived best practices, relevant research and other tools to help foster equitable, diverse, and inclusive firm cultures. These guides focus on 8 areas: Workplace culture, Compensation, Recruitment, etc.

EP Friendly Firm Award -
The Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Initiative is an award-based program aimed at celebrating architecture firms that create nurturing environments and professional development opportunities for emerging professionals in your communities. Ask your chapter(s) if they have a program!

Networking - Grants Available
Find your community, locally and internationally!

06 - Getting to Know AIA

Mentorship at AIA
Mentorship is a powerful driver of career success supporting professional growth and well-being while helping build a more diverse and inclusive workforce. AIA connects its members with strong mentorship programs that benefit individuals, organizations, and the profession as a whole.

Having a mentor can significantly accelerate personal and professional growth. As a mentor, you gain access to knowledge, skills, and guidance that support performance, decision-making, and career advancement.

Explore AIA opportunities to become a mentor and build your confidence, expand your professional network, and gain support for navigating your career.

A mentor will act as an experienced advisor providing career advice and helping you set goals and measurable objectives. They will support you to develop networks and contacts to help your career progress. Mentors can also help you gain your knowledge base helping you to fulfill your potential.

Connect with AIA's Mentorship Programs
Explore mentorship programs offered through AIA chapters, committees, and member groups, and connect directly to learn more and get involved.
<https://www.aia.org/career-growth/mentorship-mentor>

01 - Mentorship

What does it take to become an Architect?
The Road

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) is a nonprofit organization made up of the architectural licensing boards of 55 US states and territories. In the United States, architecture licenses are issued by individual state and territorial licensing boards; there is no national architecture license. Each of the 55 US jurisdictions establishes its own requirements, but most follow the same three-part process:

EDUCATION → EXPERIENCE → EXAMINATION

Before beginning, identify the jurisdiction where you plan to become licensed and review its specific requirements using NCARB's Licensing Requirements Tool (<https://www.ncarb.org/get-involved/licensing-requirements-tool>). Requirements can vary by state, particularly for alternative education and experience pathways.

Establish Your NCARB Record
Your NCARB Record is your official record of your education, experience, and examination history. You will use it throughout the licensure process to:
• Document your education and employment history
• Record your Architectural Experience Program (AXP) hours
• Establish eligibility and schedule the Architect Registration Examination (ARE)
• Transmit your completed record to a licensing jurisdiction

Tip: Establish your NCARB Record early. You can begin documenting experience while you are still in school, and keeping your record current helps prevent delays later.

02 - Career Paths

GETTING TO KNOW AIA

AIA is the leading professional organization for architects and design professionals around the world, representing over 100,000 members through advocacy, education, outreach and community.

AIA supports students, recent graduates, emerging professionals as they transition into licensed architects, also supporting unlicensed professionals as they transition through their careers.

National Associates Committee



AIA Mentor Opportunities

Connect With Your Local AIA Chapter

Nexus Mentorship Program

The Nexus Mentorship Program is affiliated with the College of Fellows and is designed to bring people together across the country in group sessions and 1:1 mentor pairings with AIA Fellows.

AIA Next to Lead

A leadership development training program designed for socially and ethnically diverse women in architecture who aspire to be AIA leaders.

AIA Align Mentorship Program

The Align Mentorship Program is a long-range initiative (three to five years, not one) that connects young architects with AIA Fellows.

National Associates Committee

Paths to Licensure

A practical guide to the architecture licensure process, covering education, professional experience, examinations, alternative pathways, and the steps needed to become a licensed architect.

National Associates Committee

VALUE

At-Large Director: Rachel Wiesbrock - wiesbrockrachel@gmail.com

Deputy: Mike Rosado (NJ)

STARs: Barclay Finck (ME), E.J. Shin (NY), Maddie Merwine (UT), Melissa Sheffield (AL), Michael Cintron (CA),

Michelle Tapia (NV), Nathan Davies (MN), Tyler Kennedy (IN), Whitney Bourgois (ND), Yarely Smith (SC)

KNOWLEDGE

THE MISSION

Our Mission is to advocate for a community of current and future associates by defining, collecting, and disseminating available resources and information to aid in personal and professional development.

01 BUILDING OUR SOCIAL STRATEGY

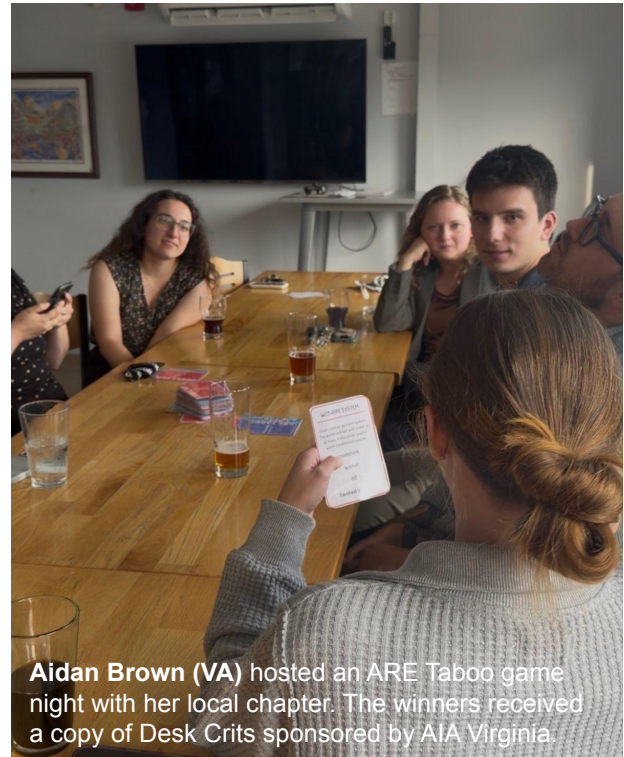
This quarter, most of our energy went into developing a strategic plan for the National Associates Committee's social media presence. With the NAC LinkedIn now live, we're asking the big question: what's actually the best way to get useful information in front of the associate AIA population? This is the behind-the-scenes work of making sure how we share content is just as strong as what we share.

02 SPOTLIGHTING OUR ASSOCIATES

We're also laying the groundwork to start highlighting achievements from associate members in each state, making sure the great work happening across the country doesn't go unnoticed, and giving our STARS a chance to see themselves reflected in what we share.

03 BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Behind the scenes, we built out a Miro board and workflow process to keep our content sharp, consistent, and on-brand every time we post. It's the kind of foundational work that sets us up to best provide information to all associate members and make sure their voice is heard.



Aidan Brown (VA) hosted an ARE Taboo game night with her local chapter. The winners received a copy of Desk Crits sponsored by AIA Virginia.



Alyssa Scherger (FL) Providing her annual update at the AIA Florida Convention

KNOWLEDGE

At-Large Director: Abigail Korn Abigailmaykorn@gmail.com

Deputy: Chan Park (MD)

STARS: Chris Tracy (GA), Beto Silva (VT), Aidan Brown (VA), Rachel Costello (WV), Donovan

Linsey (OK), Alyssa Scherger (FL), Abigail Gillin (NC), Erin Hasquet (MT)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

THE MISSION

Our goal is to connect more broadly with the Institute, by engaging with more Knowledge Communities, Strategic Council Sprints, and with opportunities available with AIA Staff. We aim to elevate more Associate voices across the Institute and forge strategic alignments to share common goals.

01 WHAT'S NAC'ing?

Completed 3 What's NAC'ing events this year: EP Grant Call, Call for Volunteers, and Demystifying the Associate. The presentations can be found in the Associate Community Hub.



02 EP GRANT

The NAC recommends that AIA build on the EP Grant Program's success by improving accessibility, expanding professional development and mentorship, and creating meaningful opportunities for grantees to remain engaged with AIA beyond the conference.



03 HONORS AWARDS

Expand awareness of and access to award opportunities that recognize the contributions of Associates, while incorporating Associate representation on award juries to ensure diverse perspectives and amplify the impact of Associate achievements across the profession.

04 NAC @ AIA26

NAC activated the AIA26 Expo Hall in collaboration with NextGen Lounge, EP Grantees, and AIA Social Media. We are looking forward to Philadelphia in May 2027!



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Asa D. Santa Cruz, At-Large Director; asa.santacruz@bdgllp.com

STARS: Danielle McCormick (Deputy), Justice Barnes, Sara Ghaemi, Nese Altintas, Paloma Chapman, Jacob Smith, Josh Blohowiak, Dezha McKoy-Overt, Oscar D. Overa, Blanca Cazares, Amel Adelli

CLIMATE ACTION

THE MISSION

The Climate Action Workgroup will focus on advancing the business case for climate action through practical tools, implementation strategies, and performance-based resources that strengthen everyday practice. By connecting associates with mentors, networks, clients, and contractors, and promoting practice-ready tools and established frameworks, the group aims to support professional growth.

01 LEAP CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT : A BEGINNER'S MANUAL FOR ASSOCIATES

The LEAP Climate Action Toolkit is envisioned as a practical beginner's manual that helps associates move from climate knowledge to action. It builds on AIA's existing guides, case studies, research, and frameworks, translating them into a clear and approachable step-by-step resource. Rather than introducing new technical content, the toolkit focuses on making existing knowledge easier to navigate, apply, and communicate in everyday practice.

02 THE FOUR PILLARS

The toolkit is organized around four pillars: **Leadership, Engagement, Advocacy, and Performance**. Leadership focuses on taking initiative, Engagement on identifying and involving the right people, Advocacy on communicating the value of climate action, and Performance on measuring outcomes. An important part of this pathway is also the ROI conversation, helping associates connect climate strategies to cost and long-term value. Together, these pillars provide a practical framework for moving from awareness to action while building confidence in communicating the value of climate-responsive design.

LEAP CLIMATE ACTION TOOLKIT : A BEGINNER'S MANUAL FOR ASSOCIATES

THE FOUR PILLARS



1 / LEADERSHIP

Solves '*where to start*' and '*what action can I take*'
(initiative without needing authority)



2 / ENGAGEMENT

Solves '*who do I need to involve*'



3 / ADVOCACY

Solves '*how do I make the business case*' and '*how do I communicate value to decision-makers*'



4 / PERFORMANCE

Solves '*how do I demonstrate progress or value*'



CLIMATE ACTION

Ayushi Toraskar, At-Large Director
toraskar.ayushi31@gmail.com

DEPUTY : James Heft

STARS: Erin Wong, Beniya Shakya, Samantha Johnson, Corey Thiele, Manuel Granja, Kiara M. De León Rivera, Brittany Peterson

MAKING MOVES

Offerings, Updates and Accomplishments!

Christine Olshan, Assoc. AIA DE STAR

Christine's local Delaware chapter has recently launched their **partnership with PrepARE** for emerging professionals to access support for licensure and are currently setting up a study group with several associate AIA members in DE. They are also providing free practice exams with the PrepARE to their local chapter members!

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.aiadelaware.org/associate-aia-members.html>



Corey Thiele, Assoc. AIA NE STAR

Big **congratulations to Corey**, who recently passed his final licensure exam and was recognized as the AIA Nebraska Associate Award winner! So well deserved!

Read all about it here:

<https://aiane.org/allied-affiliate-committee/associates-award/>



Danielle McCormick, Assoc. AIA DC STAR

Danielle has been selected as one of the **2026 Diversity in Preservation Scholar by the National Trust in Historic Preservation** - Through this scholarship, Danielle will be participating in the National Preservation Summit alongside a cohort of emerging preservation leaders from across the country. The program supports individuals whose work advances a more inclusive preservation movement and provides a unique opportunity to engage with national leaders, practitioners, and advocates shaping the future of the field.

To learn more, please visit: <https://savingplaces.org/dip-scholarship>



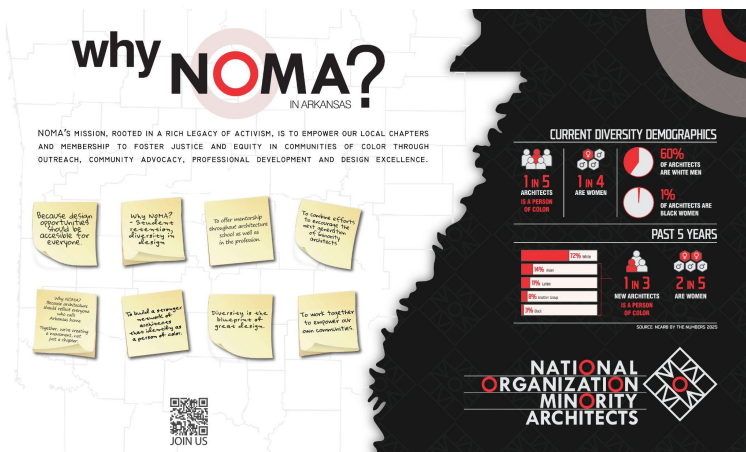
MAKING MOVES

Offerings, Updates and Accomplishments!

Justice Barnes, Assoc. AIA, NOMA AR STAR

Justice recently authored an article for the AIA YAF Q3 **Connections Building Community Before Buildings** publication. The piece highlights the ongoing work to establish NOMA Arkansas and is titled "Building Community Before Buildings."

Additionally, she lead the establishment of the **AIA Arkansas Black Spectacles chapter license**! Through this initiative, they've begun providing associates with additional study materials particularly those whose firms do not supply these resources helping support their progress toward licensure.



NOW PROVIDING

ARE PREP

ARE YOU STUDYING FOR THE ARE AND **PAYING FOR STUDY MATERIALS ON YOUR OWN?**

AIA Arkansas and the EPYA committee are pleased to provide Black Spectacles seats at no cost to you

SEATS ARE LIMITED AND ARE RESERVED FOR 2 MONTHS PER PERSON

SIGN UP

SIGN UP AND FIND MORE INFORMATION AT THE LINK BELOW

APPLICATION FORM

MAKING MOVES

Offerings, Updates and Accomplishments!

Brett Wedding, AIA

2026 Chair

Brett Wedding, AIA, recently received the 2026 AIA Ohio Emerging Professionals Award from AIA Columbus! Presented annually by AIA Ohio, the award recognizes an emerging architect who has demonstrated exceptional leadership, service, and commitment to advancing the profession. Congratulations!

Read all about it here:

<https://aiacolumbus.org/news/brett-wedding-aia-receives-2026-aia-ohio-emerging-professionals-award/>



Nathan Davies, Assoc. AIA, NOMA

MN STAR

Nathan recently received the AIA Minnesota 2026 Next Gen Award! His State shared that he “has impacted the profession early in his career through volunteer leadership. He served as president of the student chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMAS) at the University Minnesota and is now co-chair of the AIA Minnesota Next Gen Initiative and the AIA State/Territory Associate Representative on the AIA Minnesota board of directors. He is also an adjunct instructor at the University of Minnesota.” Congratulations, Nathan!

Read the full article here: <https://www.aia-mn.org/next-gen-26/>



MAKING MOVES

Offerings, Updates and Accomplishments!

Oscar Olvera, Assoc. AIA, NOMA TX STAR

Oscar is a TxA Emerging Professional Leader and this summer his committee is pleased to announce the winners of the TxA 2026 Studio Awards! 79 entries were reviewed and 9 were selected by the Jurors, selected from across the country. The winning designs will also be featured in the upcoming 2026 Awards issue of *Texas Architect*!

[Check out the awarded projects >](#)

If you're local, also check out the **TxA26 Annual Conference & Design Expo** which offers Emerging Professional-specific programming, crafted by the EP representatives in Texas!

For a full list of EP recommended sessions, visit the [schedule page](#) and choose the filter "Recommended by Emerging Professionals."



Blanca Cazares, Assoc. AIA WA STAR

Blanca has recently been accepted into the **Arquitina 2026 Cohort**, Congratulations! Arquitina was established in 2020 and is focused on raising the 1% of licensed Latina architects in the US.

Participants of each cohort are ARE candidates currently on their journey to licensure. Arquitinas receive exam support and critical mentorship to guide them along in their career. Each year there are 2 cohorts. 1 in the Spring and one in the Fall. Each one meets for virtual sessions over the course of 13 weeks.

Read more about it here: <https://www.arquitina.org/cohorts>

