

Dear AIA Virginia Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic interest in the Young Architect Representative (YAR) position. As an AIA member licensed for 7 years and actively involved in the local architectural community, I am deeply committed to supporting emerging professionals and believe my experience and passion align perfectly with the responsibilities of this role.

My qualifications are well-suited to the demands of the YAR role. As the founder of MC3 Group, a multi-disciplinary firm, I bring a unique blend of architectural design, construction, and entrepreneurial experience. This background has instilled in me a strong foundation in project management, design documentation, team oversight, and construction administration, all skills directly transferable to managing the diverse responsibilities of the YAR. My firm's focus on innovative design and problem-solving, coupled with our commitment to collaborative processes, reflects my dedication to high-quality deliverables and effective coordination, which are central to the YAR's duties. My experience also includes continuous research and development to stay at the forefront of industry trends, which would be invaluable in supporting local Young Architects Forum's (YAF) objectives.

I am particularly drawn to this opportunity to deepen my involvement in the professional community, engage more closely with my peers at both local and national levels, and ultimately contribute to improving the quality of our industry and how it is perceived. I am passionate about empowering young architects and guiding them through the challenging career path they face out of school. I am actively engaged in the development of each of my employees, prioritizing time for mentorship to support both soft and hard skills. Our company encourages continued education and prides itself on our employee retention rate, with only one employee having left to pursue his license and with a plan to return following completion of his program. My journey in establishing and growing MC3 has equipped me with firsthand insights into the entrepreneurial aspect of architecture, and I am eager to share this knowledge to help EPs gain control and opportunity in their careers. The YAR position offers an ideal platform to support and uplift the next generation of architectural leaders.

I understand the role and responsibilities the Young Architect Representative serves in the structure of AIA Virginia. Furthermore, I am keen to identify and encourage young architects for nominations for awards, positions, and committees, and to explore opportunities to represent YAF within the broader AIA National community.

Thank you for considering my application. I am confident that my dedication, experience, and vision align perfectly with the goals of the Young Architect Representative position, and I am eager to contribute to AIA Virginia and the Young Architects Forum.

Sincerely,



John McKenna, AIA, NCARB



July 28, 2025

AIA Virginia Nominating Committee
P.O. Box 2626
Chesterfield, Va. 23832

RE: **John McKenna – Letter of Recommendation**

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend John McKenna be appointed for the role of Young Architect Representative by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

I originally met John at the Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Design Career Fair in Blacksburg Virginia while on a recruiting trip for my former firm PGN Architects (now Michael Graves Architecture). I was impressed with John's resume and communication skills, and we offered him a role which he accepted. Over the next few years John and I worked on a variety of complex multifamily and mixed-use projects in the District of Columbia on which he demonstrated his growing design and technical abilities. Eventually we both moved on from PGN but remained close friends and confidants. I have watched with great enthusiasm as John worked towards and completed his licensure and then started his own design build firm MC3 Design. As a young firm leader, he is diligently working to grow his client base and business which includes mentoring and encouraging the professional growth of his junior staff.

John has always shown a commitment to mentorship and advocacy for young members of our profession and would provide enthusiastic dedication to the role of Young Architect Representative.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Stevison', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Matthew C. Stevison , AIA
Va. License - 0401018797
Senior Associate, Project Manager
mattstevison@fgmarchitects.com

To whom it may concern,

It is with pleasure and confidence that I recommend John McKenna for the Young Architect Representative (YAR) position. As his partner at MC3 Group, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand John's exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment to the architectural profession, particularly his passion for nurturing the next generation of architects.

John's journey as an architect, culminating in the founding of MC3 Group, showcases a rare blend of design acumen, practical construction knowledge, and an entrepreneurial spirit. He has consistently demonstrated the ability to manage complex projects from inception through completion, meticulously handling design, documentation, and construction administration. His skill in coordinating diverse project facets, coupled with his commitment to clear and honest communication with clients, vendors, and team members, is truly exemplary. These qualities are not just professional assets; they reflect his genuine desire to connect, collaborate, and contribute meaningfully to any endeavor he undertakes.

What truly sets John apart is his dedication to empowering emerging professionals. He believes deeply in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among young architects, helping them navigate the challenging landscape of our profession and encouraging them to seize opportunities they might not initially recognize. This isn't just a theoretical interest for John; it's a core tenet of how he approaches his work and leadership. Our staff has been entirely composed of recent graduates and I am proud to say that we have retained all of our employees over the past three years since hiring, with the exception of one employee who we encouraged and assisted with his desire to return to school to pursue his M.Arc degree and obtain his license. John's desire to become a YAR is a natural extension of this ambition, offering a platform to actively support and guide those in the early stages of their careers.

I understand the commitment and responsibilities that the YAR role entails, including regular calls, meetings, and active participation in various forums. John possesses the vision, dedication, and practical experience to be an outstanding representative. He is not just seeking a title; he is seeking an opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of emerging professionals and the future of our industry. I wholeheartedly endorse his application.

Sincerely,



Maya Chehab
Partner
MC3 Group

MC3 DESIGN, LLC

1308 Vincent Pl, McLean, Virginia 22102
phone: (202) 599-7779 email: admin@mc3group.com

John McKenna

McLean, VA | 202-599-7779 | jmckenna@mc3group.com | [LinkedIn](#)

Professional Summary

Founding Partner and Principal Architect with extensive experience expanding into high-end custom residential design. Proven expertise in architectural leadership, project management, and establishing design departments, ensuring successful project delivery from conceptualization through construction.

Work Experience

Principal Architect | MC3 Group | McLean, VA | September 2020 – Present

- Founder, owner, and operator of MC3 Design and MC3 Build, overseeing all aspects of business development and project execution.
- Scaled company revenue from startup to \$5M within five years of founding, achieving a 100% increase YoY over the past 3 years through strategic partnerships with local builders, engineers, and architects.
- Spearhead architectural design, from zoning compliance to structural calculations, ensuring project integrity and client satisfaction.
- Lead client engagement from initial concept through project completion, emphasizing a transparent and client-centric design-build process.
- Cultivate relationships with local businesses, prioritizing quality and community-focused collaborations.
- Champion emerging architectural talent by actively recruiting, mentoring, and advocating for new and young architects throughout their professional development and continuing education.

Principal Architect | GeoEnv Engineers | Fairfax, VA | March 2021 – January 2022

- **Established and structured a new architectural department** within an existing engineering firm, improving design component organization.
- **Developed and implemented project schedules and departmental goals**, enhancing team efficiency and output.
- **Streamlined communication protocols** between architectural and engineering teams, fostering collaborative workflows.

Studio Director | Commonwealth Restorations | Arlington, VA | Oct 2018 – Aug 2021

- **Led the expansion of the architectural department** for a residential design-build firm.
- **Managed client material selections** for diverse projects, ensuring alignment with design specifications and client preferences.
- **Directed client coordination meetings** for additions, renovations, and new construction, facilitating smooth project progression.

Project Architect | SK+I Architecture | Bethesda, MD | November 2016 – October 2018

Staff Architect | Michael Graves Architecture (PGN Architects) | Washington, DC | June 2015 – November 2016

Education

Bachelor of Architecture | Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | Blacksburg, VA | May 2015

Masters of Science in Real Estate Development | Anticipated graduation 2028

Organizations, Affiliations, and Recognition

American Institute of Architects - AIA Virginia
NCARB Certified - Licensed and practicing in DC, VA, MD, NY, NJ, PA, FL
National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)
Home Builders Association of Virginia (HBAV)
National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA)

Local Engagement

Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA)
NVBIA - Future Leaders of the Building Industry Committee
AIA Northern Virginia

Recognition

Best of Houzz - Best of Service, 2025
BuildZoom - Best Architects in Mclean, 2025
Arlington Magazine - Kitchen and Bath Showcase
iGuide Panelist - "How Top Firms Are Using Tech To Move Faster"