AIA Southwest Michigan Update
July 31, 2023

In between our trips to the beach this summer, we have quite a lot of exciting things happening in the AIA Southwest Michigan Chapter, but we want to focus on three initiatives that help bridge the gap between architects and the public that our chapter is engaged in:

1. The 2023 Kalamazoo Project Pipeline Camp (July 27-29) allows our members in collaboration with the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) Detroit Chapter, to provide a free summer camp engage with young people who are both directly and indirectly interested in our profession and the AEC industry as a whole. Using the city of Kalamazoo as the classroom and connecting young people to real-world architects and planners, we foster the next generation of design professionals, civic leaders, and change makers. Project Pipeline serves a diverse population of students (aged 12-18), all of whom are underrepresented in the design field. Working with the youth in our region and building excitement and interest in what our profession does and why it's important to the public is an enormous opportunity for our members.

2. SAY IT LOUD Michigan is another joint effort, this time between AIA Southwest Michigan and AIA Grand Rapids. In honor of our chapters' Centennial Anniversaries (100 years!), AIA Grand Rapids and AIA Southwest Michigan are partnering together to bring the SAY IT LOUD exhibit to Michigan this Fall!

   The SAY IT LOUD exhibit is a global traveling activation that elevates the work and identities of local, diverse designers. The state-wide exhibit will feature projects by women and diverse design professionals, as well as interviews about their experiences in the architecture and design professions. The initiative shares, protects and celebrates the journey of the underrepresented to inspire the next generation. SAY IT LOUD founder, Pascale Sablan, FAIA, NOMA, LEED AP, is an Associate Principal at Adjaye Associates where she co-leads the New York studio and serves as the current 2023 President of the National Organization of Minority Architects' (NOMA).

   This will be a month-long celebration of our state's underrepresented designers and architects in conjunction with ArtPrize and will be hosted by

Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University (KCAD) at their Alluvium Gallery. Pascale will give a Keynote Lecture on Thursday, September 28th at KCAD's Boyer Hall in honor of the Exhibit. Detailed Keynote Event information will be released at a later date.

3. Our chapter is proud to announce the launch of our architecture app AIA SWM EXPLORE. Please check it out and download it if you are interesting in architecture in our community. From your phone's app store you can download and see the following description of our app:
Get to know your community using AIA SWM Explore! As part of the American Institute of Architects' initiative to bring architectural awareness to the community, AIA Southwest Michigan presents a guide to local architecture, right to your pocket!

Features:

- This smart app utilizes real time data from your device's GPS to connect you to information about the buildings closest to your location.
- With just a touch on the beautiful photography, or map, you are delivered building descriptions, stories, and technical information about the city around you.
- Filter the database to learn about contributions by specific architects, or design through the decades.
- Access the pre-designed walking and driving tours to focus your curiosity on specific neighborhoods, architectural styles or building types.

This app allows you to immerse yourself in the distinctive buildings that create our built environment.

Featuring 50+ previously jurored examples of significant modern architecture in and around the Kalamazoo area, the app intends to grow continuously to include the notable historic structures, landmarks, and award-winning designs that span our 9-county chapter area (and beyond!).

Intended as a field guide for residents, visitors, students, and design lovers, AIA Southwest Michigan hopes to inspire the love of architecture by offering an immersive educational experience.

It's an exciting time to be an AIA Southwest Michigan member, while we celebrate diversity, engage the next generation of professionals, and work to educate the public about what we do and why.

Jeremy Berg, AIA
AIA Southwest Michigan Director