

March 27, 2018

AIA Leadership,

Like numerous others in the profession, many of us within the Young Architects Forum (YAF) leadership have been contemplating when – not if – the profession's own #metoo moment would arrive.

During Grassroots '18 we received our answer in the form of a [NY Times article](#), providing details of multiple counts of alleged harassment and abuse by architect Richard Meier, FAIA, over the course of his career. The details in the article are appalling and have been a stark reminder that as a profession we have not collectively been more proactive on issues of harassment, bullying, abusive behavior and/or discrimination in the workplace. We believe more, and more diverse, voices will come forward throughout our profession, and we stand ready to help lead efforts to actively better our profession. That, after all, is a core reason we all believe - and serve - in the AIA.

We believe it is time to put the profession on notice, that such behavior is not tolerable, and that we must all act together to create a more equitable practice culture.

We believe transparency, discussion, and action is necessary to affect the significant and widespread changes necessary to the health of our profession. We think the AIA's communications on Friday 3/23: "Meeting the #MeToo moment" and "Ethics in practice for an equitable profession" stand as great first steps to move forward and applaud AIA Leadership for placing this issue at the forefront. Below we have outlined what we believe would be positive, and necessary, next steps towards this goal.

### **Creation of an Anti-Harassment and Abuse Task Force:**

With the impetus to act swiftly, we propose the creation of a Task Force to develop recommendations for advancing the culture of our profession as a safe, welcoming, respectful, and dignified space for everyone.

We offer to be leaders on this Task Force and propose that one of our members co-chair the effort with a designated member of the AIA Board of Directors. In addition to members from YAF and National Board, we suggest the Task Force include but not be limited to members from the following groups:

- AIA Strategic Council
- CACE
- AIA National Staff
- NAC
- AIAS

- AIA Equity and the Future of Architecture Committee
- AIA Equity by Design
- AIA Trust

We suggest that time be allowed for a presentation and discussion of initial recommendations at the September 2018 Board Meeting.

The following are example action items which we foresee the Task Force considering, though we expect to gather widespread input from AIA Members and leadership at all levels to inform the full scope of its efforts.

## **1. Building a Positive Culture from Day One**

We are committed to ensuring that architectural academic programs provide a clear understanding of what constitutes harassment, bullying, abusive behavior and/or discrimination. The Task Force would be charged to:

- Engage in a conversation with NAAB to ensure professional practice courses adequately include this education component in curriculum as a requirement of accreditation and make recommendations for where such education could be strengthened.
- Seek to partner with the AIAS for development of materials that educate on the creation and importance of respectful work cultures.
- Engage with ACSA to understand how we can best support and strengthen efforts to eliminate these behaviors in academic settings.

## **2. Support Victims & Provide Resources**

We are committed to developing a support mechanism for victims who do not have adequate work environment or human resources personnel to aid them.

As part of our efforts, the Task Force would be charged to determine how to meet these needs, either through an expanded benefit of the AIA Trust or through partnership with an existing third-party organization. Components that might be included in this could be:

- A center for victims to seek confidential counsel outside of their firm for guidance on steps to address harassment.
- Human resources access or resources to firms or members that allow outreach for those who have historically or are currently the victims of abuse.

- Resources for firms or members to create workplace documents and training for future prevention (including Harassment Education, Mitigation procedures, and staff training for Small and Medium sized firms)

### **3. Current and Future Allegations**

Given the current discussion centered on allegations concerning a prominent member of the profession, we believe the AIA must articulate the consequences of such actions.

The Task Force would be charged to work with the Board of Directors and the National Ethics Council to determine whether additional measures might be recommended to address the following:

- Amendments to the AIA Code of Ethics to specifically address sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace.
- Steps to rescind awards conferred upon the individual (not the firm).
- Steps to rescind Fellowship and/or membership.
- Steps to remove merchandise available for sale associated with the offender and/or set aside all future royalties of said items that continue to be sold into a fund to be donated to an organization that supports victims.

### **4. Message & Action at the National Level**

We advocate for a strong voice from all levels of leadership that permeates our membership and platforms so that our words and actions stand strongly in alignment for the greater good.

The Task Force would be charged to consider and recommend proactive steps that the AIA can take to ensure our membership upholds ourselves as model practitioners. Such considerations may include:

- The creation of a “declaration checkbox” for annual membership renewal, where members self-confirm that they have not within the last year or are not currently being disciplined for harassment.
- The creation of a declaration document for awards and fellowship applications that a member is not currently being, nor has previously been, disciplined for harassment.

## **Additional Actions**

In addition to the creation of the Task Force, we are proposing that we partner with AIA National to support, develop and promote an ongoing dialogue within the profession about these issues:

### **1. Create Impact at A'18**

We are committed to making sure that this issue has a presence at A'18.

Our groups plan to do this in the following ways:

- Promote the initial work of the Task Force through social media, print and other mediums.
- Provide a copy of this letter to all candidates for national office; we will also encourage candidates to discuss this issue in campaign speeches and materials as a continuation of our discussions we held with them during Grassroots '18.

Additionally, we ask that AIA National:

- Work with us to create a panel discussion during a \*general session\* at A'18 discussing how we move forward (inclusive panels, including but not limited to increased representation by women, minorities, LGBTQ+, etc.).
- Provide time for the Task Force leaders to address the membership and give an overview of active steps being taken to address these issues.
- Provide a space and time for an open forum to discuss these issues during A'18.

### **2. Message & Action at the Local Level**

We are committed to making sure that this issue permeates all levels of the Institute.

We have the following known areas where we plan to act and welcome partnership:

- We will advocate that all local components host a forum for discussion on how to end sexual harassment and abuse in our profession in 2018. We will look to work with several chapters to develop this programming and select the same week in the Fall of 2018 during which we hope all components will take part in the discussion.
- We recommend that all local components include programming which gives this issue both a presence and a forum for discussion.


Further, we recommend that such programming highlight the remarkable things that women and minority member groups are doing to break down the assumed barrier/stigma that these groups are only the sum of a victimized history.

As leaders of our profession, we understand that it is on us to create the change so desperately needed in our culture of school and work. We look forward to working with you to design a better future for us all.

Respectfully,



Lawrence J. Fabbri, AIA, 2018 YAF Chair



Lora Teagarden, AIA, 2019 YAF Chair

**Co-Signers:**

Evelyn Lee, AIA, 2017 YAF Chair

Abigail Brown, AIA, 2018-19 YAF Community Director

Yu-Ngok Lo, AIA, 2017-18 YAF Communications Director

Ryan McEnroe, AIA, 2017-18 YAF Knowledge Director

Stephen Parker, AIA, 2017-18 YAF Advocacy Director

A.J. Sustaita, AIA, 2018-19 YAF Public Relations Director

Nicholas Banks, AIA 2018-19 Texas Region YARD

Wayne Broadfield, AIA 2017-18 Middle Atlantic Region YARD

Nicholas Anthony Caravella, AIA

Graciela Carrillo, AIA, 2017-18 New York Region YARD

Katelyn Chapin, AIA, 2018-19 New England Region YARD

Matthew Guinta, AIA 2017-18 Michigan Region YARD

Juliane Hatfield, AIA 2018-19 South Atlantic Region YARD

Christian N. Jordan, AIA 2018-19 Pennsylvania YARD

Stacey Z. Keller, AIA, 2017-18 North Central Region YARD

Marie McCauley, AIA, 2018-19 Virginias Region YARD

Ian Merker, AIA, 2017-18 Northern California Region YARD

Melissa Morse, AIA, Northwest and Pacific Region YARD

Jessica O'Donnell, AIA, 2015-18 New Jersey Region YARD

Clarice E. Sollog, AIA, 2018-19 Florida-Caribbean Region YARD

Kate Thuesen, AIA 2017-18 Central States Region YARD

Matt Toddy, AIA, 2018-19 Ohio Valley Region YARD

Jennie Cannon West, AIA, 2017-18 Gulf States Region YARD