

AIA Grand Rapids Update

March 31, 2023

My name is Eric Biller, and I have the privilege of serving on the AIA Michigan Board as the Grand Rapids Director. Spring is here and I am sure you all share my eagerness to get back to warm weather and enjoy yard care season, baseball games, and barbeques! Although given how busy we all seem to be with projects, I hope we can find time for it all! I also hope we can all find time to take advantage of the numerous opportunities the AIA affords us.

Over the past 5+ years I have experienced almost every type of AIA event at both the State and Local (Grand Rapids) level, as well as several AIA National events. I can attest to the quality of programming provided at all levels of the AIA, and I believe it is very important to stay connected to the broader Architectural community and take ownership of our great profession. AIA has programs for everyone, and I encourage all of you to get involved and attend/serve/lead where you feel called. This could be your local honor awards gala or golf outing, a committee such as government affairs or COTE (Committee on the Environment) or pursuing an open chapter board position. I will always remember being tapped by a friend at work who said, 'Eric, you should get involved on the board at AIA Grand Rapids'. While the idea was a bit intimidating to me at first, I said 'Yes' and I do not regret it. It led me beyond the walls of my firm to lead and experience the architecture community of West Michigan and eventually the State of Michigan. I continue to be inspired and impressed by the great people leading our profession in our State and local chapters.

The mission of AIA Grand Rapids is to unite and amplify the voices of the architectural profession to empower and inspire our members and communities.

At our local Grand Rapids Chapter level, we are in the process of finalizing our strategic plan for the coming years. Our board worked together with a consultant and identified 4 primary goals: Amplify, Inspire, Unite and Lead. We then built strategies around these four goals.

While not until Fall, our honor awards committee has already begun planning this years' event which will correspond with our chapter's Centennial Anniversary. This celebration of our work and our community makes for a wonderful evening and is increasing in attendance each year. Another can't miss event is our annual golf outing, from which we raise money for student and member leadership scholarship(s) and grant(s). In working with the Michigan Architectural Foundation (MAF), AIA Grand Rapids recently formed and built an endowment fund to increase our scholarship granting potential for generations to come. We are committed to the future of our profession and are always looking for opportunities and initiatives to support, promote and sponsor that align with our strategic plan goals.

Please be sure to visit our AIA Grand Rapids website to see all our chapters' upcoming events - <https://www.aia.org/grandrapids>. We hope to see you soon.

Thank You and please have a safe and enjoyable spring break!