



**The American Institute of Architects**

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Fellow AIA Members,

It is hard to believe Thanksgiving was last week. For many, holiday plans were in flux. This is our year. The impact on our firms is similar as we adjust, recalibrate, full speed ahead, wait, pause, adjust, recalibrate, and repeat. For the most part it has meant that things are moving slower. This has been a year-long exercise in patience. Some firms have been able to stay busy, others have had a difficult year and faced hard situations and made difficult decisions. The pandemic's impact has resulted in the reduction of 15,000 jobs in architecture firms nationwide this year. Next year looks like it could be a slow climb back to full employment. The good news on a Covid -19 vaccine is promising and could offer relief from the significant health and economic challenges that our society and economy continue to experience. The next three months should be telling.

AIA Michigan is hopeful that we can return to in person events during the second half of 2021. For now, we will continue with virtual events. The Healthcare Conference is set for April 22-23, 2020. Legislative Day, and the AIA National's Grassroots leadership conference also will be virtual conferences. Hopefully, AIA Michigan's Recognition & Honor Awards will be in person this summer. We will continue to pause when needed, recalibrate and move forward.

AIA Michigan's Executive committee held its annual retreat on November 11. Tactics and goals were discussed for 2021. One of the biggest concerns is staying meaningfully connected. The cultural and social equity that we have worked so hard at creating has been strained and eroded over the last eight months. Consistent, relevant communication and information is one of the valuable lessons we learned as we navigated the early days of the pandemic. Various forms of fatigue have been identified; zoom fatigue, pandemic fatigue, election fatigue. This next stretch of months will require more creativity and leadership from all of us as architects, and leaders. Over the next three months, I encourage you to reach out to your peers, share what is still difficult, share what is working. If you are doing something creative, supportive or just plain fun for your staff, coworkers, or family now or for the holidays then please share it! We as professional are expected to have the answer, sometimes even to know with certainty what is going to happen next. We do not know what is going to happen next. But we can support a process that allows us to explore options. Meaningful conversations lead to action.

If you are looking for some meaningful conversations and action, consider joining a committee at your local chapter or section component. Also consider joining AIA Michigan's JEDI (Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion) committee, the GAC (Government Affairs Committee), the COTE (Committee on the Environment), AIA Detroit or AIA Grand Rapids.

Hope you had a nice Thanksgiving and Stay Safe!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Hamann Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Norman Hamann Jr. AIA, NOMA