

The American Institute of Architects

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Well, I feel confident in saying we survived 2018! With this year ending, I'd like to take some time to reflect. I've had the privilege to serve all of you Associate Members on the AIA Michigan board for the last two years as your Associate Director, and on the National Associates Committee as your Regional Associate Director. In that time, we've made several forward strides.

In partnership with many of you at the local level, we've been able to support many on our emerging professionals towards licensure, including my recently-licensed self. Thank you to those of you who joined us for one of ARE Presentation sessions or one of our study hours drop in sessions. Thank you to all the Associate leadership at the local levels that worked with us to bring this information to you. I'm proud of the work we've all done to bring ourselves closer to licensure, and to becoming the successful next generation of this profession.

At the National level, we've had big conversations around two very important topics for Emerging Professionals – Mentorship and Advocacy. With my first year on the National Associates Committee served on the Mentorship workgroup, we reached out to several successful mentors in the program to collect their thoughts, ideas, and stories, and work to package that information to be shared with all of you. I know personally that mentorship has played a huge role in moving me forward professionally and would encourage all of you to make sure you have several mentors you can reach out to for guidance for different aspects of your career growth. This past year I've spent working with the Advocacy workgroup, where we've made strides around promoting social impact design. As a part of the A'18 Conference on Architecture, we had a great group of experts leading an engaging roundtable on the pathways into social impact design. We also shared at A'18 a guide to Social Impact Design related sessions, so you could all structure your conference agenda around the topic. Keep your eyes peeled in early 2019, as these yearlong efforts will conclude with an AIA National Article around the Pathways to Social Impact Design, with a byline shared by yours truly.

As my term concludes, I want to thank all of you that have shown me support in this role over the past two years. To those of you on the AIA Michigan Board, it's been a pleasure serving with you. This role means very little without the engagement of the membership body. I hope that you all will get even more engaged as my successor, Chris Stefani takes over the reins. I wish Chris the best of luck, and lots of fun, in his two-year term. As for me, this isn't "goodbye," but a "see you around." And know that I'm still happy to connect with all things related to this profession, so feel free to reach out.

With that,

I wish you all a Happy Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, Las Posadas, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Best,

Sami Szeszulski, AIA