AIA Michigan

President's Message

February 1, 2024

Greetings Fellow AIA Members!

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the seasons that Michigan affords us. I found that enjoying outdoor activities especially in the wintertime helps me enjoy this time even more. For those who my not know me, I am Todd Drouillard, AIA and I practice as a business sector leader for HED and humbled to serve as your 2024 AIA Michigan President. My story of how I got involved in AIA is similar to most members. As a younger professional I started attending events then encouraged by a few mentors to join a committee then encouraged to run for Michigan/ Detroit Director. I have to say it's been a great experience that has allowed me to be a part of something greater than I could ever have imagined. As an active board member and now president I am amazed by the dedication and tenacity of our AIA Michigan staff, our board, each chapter/ section, and our committees to the betterment of our profession. As with most professional organizations many of our members ask, "what does AIA do for me" and "why does this organization exist?" One of my goals this year is to do my best to demystify AIA Michigan and hopefully clear up a few of these questions by highlighting the work by our committees, chapters, and sections.

This month I would like to highlight an important committee, Government Affairs or GAC. This committee fearlessly co-chaired by Jeff Ferweda, AIA and Jan Culberson, FAIA along with its other committee members including myself is dedicated to raise awareness and legislative issues facing the profession. Every year and/or legislative cycle our committee reviews upcoming legislation bills that could have an impact on our profession and we work with our local lobbyist in Lansing to work with our legislators to block and hopefully end its adoption into law. GAC works on behalf of the AIA Michigan board and all of our members and when we are not on the defense, we are pursuing support for our own AIA Michigan items such as Qualification Based Selection (QBS), Building Code Adoptions, and School Security. GAC also advances the awareness of Michigan licensing standards to our government officials and monitors complaints of unlicensed practice. Like most of our committees we operate better in numbers and are always looking for new members to join the committee who are passionate about the future of our profession. If that person is you, we would love to discuss the committee and if it's something you would like to join. Another way you can help is via another committed who help raise the necessary funds to keep our legislative actions moving forward. The APAC or Architects Political Action

Committee, like the GAC, is a completely non-partisan committee who raises funds to help get our voices heard in Lansing. Not to be confused with the AIA National APAC, our local committed ensures that all funds go directly to Michigan legislators only. Its completely non-partisan and we give only members who are passionate about supporting architects. I challenge every member to give anything possible to help APAC make its mark in Lansing. No amount is too small as it all helps. If every member in Michigan donated just $10 dollars a year, APAC would have the necessary funds to make a difference. Donating to APAC is easy, just click on the link and follow the prompts. https://aiamichigan.wildapricot.org/APAC

Another way you can help protect the sanctity of our profession is to attend Legislative Day. This year its back in person in Lansing. Save the date for March 13, 2024. It is really our most powerful message we send to our legislators to make sure our collective voices are heard. If you've never attended before, don't worry. The GAC and our lobbyists do a fantastic job of providing you with everything thing you need. There is a briefing a few days before the event and really everything including the meeting appointments are set up for you. Bring an emerging professional from your office, it will be a worthwhile learning experience.

Lastly, I wanted to thank you all again for taking the time to read this message. AIA Michigan is running strong with a full agenda of conferences, activities, and continuing education planned for 2024. Keep a lookout for our calendar of events with new updated programming, new program dates and the reintroduction of a statewide conference called ArchiFusion in November!

Warmest Wishes,
Todd Drouillard, AIA
2024 AIA Michigan President