



**The American Institute of Architects**

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Hello all and Happy St. Patrick's Season to everyone in our AIA MI family:

As the saying goes – there is never a dull moment – and this may be true now more than ever! As I am sure is the case with many of you, COVID-19 has changed the way that we are working – not only in Michigan, but across the country itself. There is no doubt of some uncertainty in the times ahead, but in the words of the English writer Margaret Drabble, “When nothing is sure, anything is possible”. As designers, I hope we are all able to move forward with an optimistic point of view and look for places where this pandemic is able to allow us to innovate and bring us closer together as a people .... But not actually closer together – 6' apart please!

To this end, we have seen the AIA on a national, state and local level make the hard decisions to pivot from our normal schedule. Maybe one of the largest of these pivots was making the hard decision to postpone A'20. I am sorry to see this happen but understand the necessity of it in order to help keep our community – and the larger community – safe and healthy. With that said, please know that the work that the NAC has been doing around the 20th anniversary of the National Associates Committee continues in a digital format. Furthermore, our workgroup focusing on Innovation and Influence is working now more than ever to highlight the different means and methodologies of practice – some that we are maybe experience now for the first time.

On a state level, I would ask that you all please keep your eye out for a survey that will be sent out sometime next week. This survey will have a set of questions on it that will help us better serve you – our associates members – going forward. It should take no more than 10 minutes to fill out, so I ask that you please help me help you by taking care of this when it comes in. Also, we are currently looking for alumni from Michigan's architectural programs – University of Detroit Mercy, University of Michigan, Andrews and Kendall – who might be interested in returning to their alma mater to talk to the AIAS chapter on those campuses about the value of joining the AIA, and moreover, the value in taking advantage of the 18-month free membership offered following their graduation. If you are interested, please contact me directly!

In closing, I am wishing everyone the very best! I hope that you and yours stay safe and healthy – and that you are able to enjoy this time to the best of your ability. As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns that you might have. Wishing you all the very best this March.

Christopher Stefani, Associate AIA