



AIA
Michigan

The American Institute of Architects

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Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

The weather is beautiful today. It's actually difficult right now to comprehend what havoc things which are invisible to the naked eye are bringing to our world.

Our firm Diekema Hamann has, like many of you, transitioned from our physical offices a week ago to an almost 100% virtual environment. Having three offices has prepared us and allowed us to work remotely for years but not everyone at the same time. AIA Michigan and our chapters are now required to respond and adapt in much the same way.

I want to thank everyone at AIA Michigan for the quick response we were required to make last week as we were heading into arguably the busiest week of the AIA Michigan year. Thank you to Cathy Mosley and Evelyn Dougherty, the Healthcare conference committee, and the Government advocacy committee lead by Chuck Bultman, AIA and Jan Culbertson, AIA. Making this decision with all of the hours of preparation and costs we have and may incur was very difficult but the right thing to do. Thanks to Chuck as we already have a new date set for this year's Legislative Day, June 2, 2020. We are still working on seeing if it is feasible to postpone and not cancel the Healthcare conference. We may be required to take this challenge as an opportunity to consider piloting more online opportunities. We had discussed this as a tactic to support educational opportunities as part of our Strategic Plan. Some programs may now need to be provided throughout the state by AIA Michigan and other programs by our chapters if the pandemic requires us to practice social distancing for a prolonged period of time. For the next three weeks, most if not all, AIA events have been cancelled or postponed. Please check the AIA website for confirmation. We will be conducting the AIA Michigan board meeting in April remotely.

The following is a memo I shared with my work colleagues this morning. I believe it is relevant to all of us who are part of the AIA Michigan community... a strong, vibrant supportive collection of architects in creative and caring firms.

My thoughts and prayers are with all of you. May you navigate this challenge well, as we are all concerned for our relatives, friends and communities.

Sincerely,

Norman Hamann Jr. AIA

"If according to the times and needs you should be obliged to make fresh rules and change current things, do it with prudence and good advice" St. Angela Merici

March 17, 2020



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Yesterday was the first day our firm, or more specifically the buildings our firm work and live in, were closed, for a week or two or perhaps longer. Our firm, our people, *our spirit* is still open. We will continue to do good work, to create, and support each other and the people we serve. It is important that we do not let ourselves get so distracted with what is happening that we lose what is special and amazing about life even in this challenging time. We have control over how we want to react to these events. We are taking these steps because we trust that the right people have some idea about these things and that they are people who really care a lot about all people. We may have some difficult days ahead, these may include curfews and lockdowns but knowing we are going through this together, we will do the best we can to support and help each other. If required, we may need to adjust again and for additional time.

I encourage you to limit the amount of news you are monitoring. I heard a good recommendation on how to go about this. First thing in the morning, check a national and local news source and then don't check any other news the rest of the day. You can have updates sent to you but only check those once a day. Another good recommendation is to plan your day for more action; more action than perhaps you were previously doing in your life. Be good to yourself and go for more walks with someone you care about. Check in more on your parents or siblings. See how you can volunteer to help your church or civic organization. This is an opportunity for me to take some action and to finally learn more about communication technology that I have been avoiding namely Webex and Teams; tools I must now depend on to stay connected with you and our clients, consultants and construction partners. I probably will not ever be comfortable with these, but I will learn them better.

Thank you to everyone for working to make this remote environment feasible. Thanks also for maintaining a great attitude as we try to maintain project deadlines and personal lives.

We will be communicating daily to see what is working and not working so well. Thank you to everyone as we adjust to what is hopefully a temporary way of life.

Norm, on behalf of the partners of Diekema Hamann