



# PILLARS

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

**2019–2020 REVIEW**



**AIA**  
Kansas City



## 2019 PILLARS CLASS

Gretchen Blain, AIA - Generator Studio

Laura Burkhalter - SFS Architecture

Steven Clark - Centric Projects

Sophie Dardant, Assoc. AIA - Burns & McDonnell

Tabitha Darko, AIA - HOK

Matt Enstrom - Stand Structural Engineering

Josh Hartman, AIA - Hermanos Design

Kirsten Hastings, AIA - BRR Architecture

Ben Hollon - Lankford | Fendler + Associates

Daniel Johnson, Assoc. AIA - BNIM

Bryan Kelly - Wallace Saunders

Sarah Kempf, AIA - Piper-Wind Architects, Inc.

Philip Korthanke, AIA - Hollis + Miller

Dan Meyer - Apex Engineers

Nina Riva, Assoc. AIA - Populous

## ABOUT PILLARS

The Pillars Leadership Training Program of the American Institute of Architects Kansas City prepares a representative cross section of the chapter's emerging leaders and individuals from the building community for their role in shaping the future of both the architectural profession and the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. The training program includes active participation in programs and exposure to community leaders and issues. Each class spends their time exploring core issues that affect our profession and the region within which we practice. Through discussions with leaders and colleagues, dialogue among themselves, tours and research the group will be able to understand and present to the AIA as a whole how we can make a positive change within our community. The AIA Kansas City Pillars program is a nationally recognized program for its originality and depth and has inspired similar AIA leadership studies in other US cities. The program continues to raise the bar of what young professionals want out of their profession and how we as professionals can make an impact on our built environment.



*Roger Kube and Diane Herberger explaining their process for growing kale.*



*Brooke Salvaggio showing her no-till food plots at the end of the season.*

## OCTOBER

This October's session focused on food and farming. Appropriately, the session began with a group lunch in Waldo's Tower Park. Over sandwiches, Max Kaniger of Kanbe's Markets provided us with an in-depth look at food deserts in East Kansas City. He explained that the economics of traditional grocery stores do not work in areas where the population lacks personal cars for transportation. In East Kansas City, most residents buy their groceries on foot, so they are served by over 600 convenience stores.

Kanbe's Market partners with these stores to deliver fresh, healthy food to their customers. Most of the stores are small, family businesses without access to larger grocer distribution networks. Kanbe's provides each of the stores with a cooler, and stocks each cooler with fresh produce daily. Max explained how Kanbe's acquires produce through a variety of techniques--from donations to bartering with local businesses, helping eliminate food waste. Kanbe's also maintains the fresh supply of produce in each location they serve, helping to limit the individual businesses exposure to cost fluctuations and ensuring that their options are not over priced. We were surprised to learn Kanbe's only has three employees; this small team is making a big difference.

Following lunch, we headed south and east to Stony Crest Farm. Roger Kube greeted us with the history of the farm. The farm is located on a historic streetcar line and was originally home to the stockyard's first state agricultural inspector, veterinarian H.C. Babcock. Prior to the construction of the farm, the site was home to indigineous peoples, and eventually was the site of a civil war battle.

Roger and his spouse Diane Hershberger acquired Stony Crest with an eye toward gardening. Gardening quickly ramped up to a full-scale urban farming operation. Roger gave us a rare tour of the facilities, and provided the group with an in-depth explanation of urban farming techniques. We all enjoyed fresh kale, and marveled at the size of Roger's massive fig tree.

Next, Diane gave us an overview of the revitalization of the Marlborough neighborhood and her work with the Marlborough Community Coalition. Diane gave the group an overview of her background in civil engineering, including stops in Kansas City government and at Burns & McDonnell. She provided insight in the Coalition's efforts to create green spaces and encourage incremental development by working with the city and various stakeholders in the design

community. Ms. Hershberger also explained the Coalition's land trust, which works to provide affordable home ownership to families in need.

After Stony Crest, we ventured to Urbavore Urban Farm in East Kansas City. Brooke Salvaggio and her husband Dan Heryer own and operate the farm with their two boys. Brooke gave us a tour of the farm's livestock, vegetable, and fruit operations. The group particularly enjoyed meeting the pigs, which serve both to manage the crops in a no till situation and as high-end pork for sale at farmers' markets. Brooke explained the farm's filtration system that brings water from a pond that captures rainwater on the site to supply potable water to the house. The farm also utilizes solar panels that are tied back to the grid. The panels also function to create a shelter for cleaning & sorting harvested vegetables, some equipment protection, and even drying clothes from the elements. Next, Brooke gave a tour of the barn, an evolving structure. The barn currently consists of several rows of repurposed shipping containers. The containers are utilized to store harvested crops. One is refrigerated for storing pork. Prior to the introduction of this "frozen container," the farm was totally dependant on solar arrays, drawing net zero kilowat hours from the electrical grid.

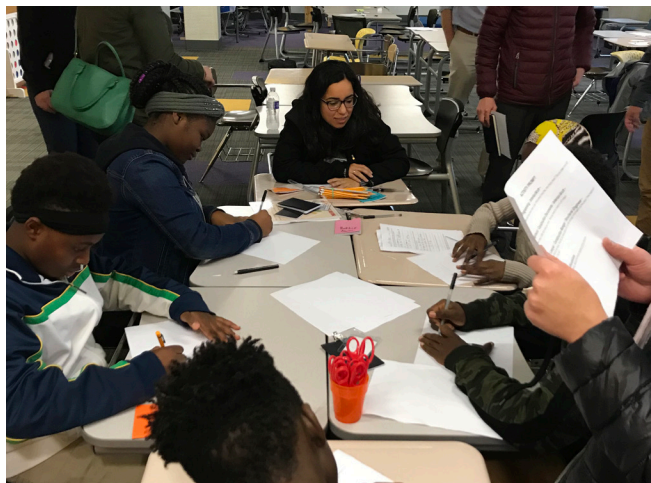
Finally, Brooke gave us a tour of the family home, which was designed by Kansas City architects in exchange for produce from the farm. Their home represents their chosen lifestyle, simple and efficient. Their two bedroom "hobbit home" as she refers to it, was built mostly out of repurposed materials. Brook and Dan went out of their way to make sure that they were taking materials which would have been thrown into landfills, and used them to make walls, beams, windows and flooring for their beautiful home. The house has no heat or air conditioning and relies on the green roof and the earth berm it's built into to insulate it in the summers and winters, with a wood burning stove to supplement heat as needed.

Before leaving the farm, Brooke gave our group some honest insight into the ups and downs of farm life. She talked about how managing a farm with two children has made each day a challenge, but filled them with love and fulfillment.

We concluded the day with cold beers at KC Bier Co and reflected on all we had learned.



*Pillars receiving a tour of the UYA Garth Brooks Press Box from Cle Ross.*



*Pillar Nina Riva, describing her typical workday to Global FC students.*

## NOVEMBER

November's Session was focused not just Education but specifically on Kansas City's unique education outlets that are driving leaders forward by providing nontraditional education outlets. This sentiment and mission was highlighted for the group at our first stop of the day where Cle Ross and Ashley Newman explained the programs offered by the Urban Youth Academy of Kansas City over some Arthur Bryant's BBQ. Cle and Ashley explained how the indoor field, four outdoor fields, and press box are open to kids throughout the city as long as they have the will to swing a bat. Mentoring begins with their after school program and continues onto the field where the support from the Royals bring the kids self confidence and pride. Cle's biggest need is for adult volunteers with a heart for mentorship, baseball skills are not a requirement.

Following lunch we toured the facility and saw how the four outdoor fields are set up to actually support up to 16 teams for practice at one time allowing the facility to support as many local kids as they can. We were also invited up into the new Garth Brooks (honorary Royals member) press box where the UYA is looking to start a new education program in sports broadcasting focused around the Garth Brooks Foundation's six principles: attitude, respect, courage, discipline, character, and love.

Next, we headed South to the Herndon Career Center, where we were greeted by Assistant Director Katie Zeiger. Herndon is supported by the Raytown Quality Schools, and also serves students from eleven high schools in the Center, Grandview, Hickman Mills, Independence, and Lee's Summit school districts. Ms. Zeiger and Herndon's counselor, Nate Zier, explained Herndon's focus on placing students in high-skill and high-demand positions following graduation. Herndon provides students with hands on learning in a wide range of fields, including construction technology, automotive collision and technology, advertising and graphic design, industrial engineering, culinary arts, EMT, law enforcement, and nursing.

We toured the campus and observed students working in field specific workshops. Instructors, all of whom were former professionals in the fields they were teaching, gave us a picture of what day to day classes looked like. We

were impressed by Herndon's tracking and placement metrics as well as the high degree of alumni success which the metrics demonstrated. We saw up close how Herndon serves a large population of students who might have otherwise had less success in more traditional classes with a focus on college preparation.

We headed to Northeast Middle School next. There we joined the directors, tutors, and children of Global FC for program education and a design and construction activity. We started in a classroom (with the throwback memory to tiny chairs and desks) with a presentation from Celeste Williams, Education Director, and John Parker, Director of Coaching, on Global FC's outreach to the refugee population through the global language of soccer. Similar to UYA, Global FC's mentorship is found through after school programs and into sports education to build a stronger community. John's request is for adult volunteers to be a cheering section for his kids games where their bleachers are usually empty except for their carpool assistants.

Once we had the program background and mission we had the honor of meeting several students during their after school tutoring. We led them in the design and construction process of building a cube from paper. While discussing our individual professions and the design and construction thought process with the kids we got to engage on a personal level hearing about the positions they each play on the soccer field and what they hope to be when they grow up. Learning about the refugee immigration/assignment process and then engaging with these children we got to see first hand how these kids are thriving with Global FC and building a great community together in the heart of KC.

We concluded the day with drinks and a slide at Rieger Distillery and reflected on all we had learned.



*The Lyric Opera of KC and the space they operate out of in the Crossroads*



*Jennifer Walker, a local artist, discusses the inspiration for her pieces*

## DECEMBER

The December session was focused on Arts and Culture in the Kansas City area and the various industries and art-forms that contribute to that growth. We began our day at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City where we were given a tour by Joe Bellinger, Chief Development Officer. Their location in the crossroads houses all of the operational aspects needed to deliver a polished opera show at the Kauffman Performing Arts Center. Aside from learning a bit about the history of the Opera company and how it emerged in Kansas City, we were also able to get a glimpse of the back-stage process including the intricacies that go into set and costume designs. Although Opera is a fine art that is not easily accessible or understood by a large amount of the population in our society, this Opera company is doing its best to also include contemporary plays that can relate to the culture of today.

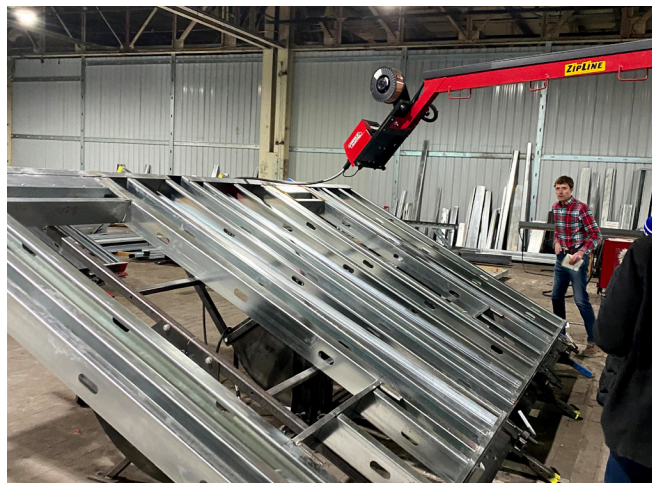
Next we visited Machine Head where the owner, Dick Jobe, gave us a run-down of the work that they do in their workshop and the artistry that goes into it. The projects that machine head takes on in Kansas City and around the country are geared towards helping artists realize 3-dimensional art pieces that require metal work. Through utilizing this skill-set, Dick and his employees have been engaged in various art pieces that enhance and beautify public spaces around the city. He expressed that this type of work brings immense meaning and fulfillment to him and enjoys that his installations are able to influence the human experience.

We then stopped by Hilliard Gallery in the crossroads and the curator of that space, Bob Swearingin, talked through the many ways we can advocate for artists, the importance of the creative work being done, and how it enriches our community. Jennifer Walker, a local artist with her work currently on display at the gallery, discussed the inspiration for her resin sculptures that are colorful, dimensional, abstractions reminiscent of captivating sunsets and thunderstorms. She sees her work tying back to nature and being able to psychologically and emotionally soothe people who engage with her pieces. During this stop, we were also able to understand the time and effort that goes into creating an art piece, how an artist can price and market their work, and other logistical aspects of the art business.

Our final meet-up was with Joe Munson who is an artist, sculptor, and fabricator. He creates carefully crafted pieces that span the spectrum of simple aesthetic beauty to immense functionality, but no matter what, all of his projects possess a level of craft, innovation, and complexity. We talked through several of his pieces and took a look at two of them that were installed at the Corrigan Station Building Development. One being a small translucent light-filled box on the rooftop containing bar functionalities, and the other kinetic wind-powered reflective gold wings installed on the parking garage that respond to wind activity. Overall, we learned how he, as an artist, makes a point to effectively coordinate with building developers and designers in order to properly integrate inspired artwork into particular spaces.



*Exterior of 3435 Main - KC's First Modular Apartment*



*Light Gauge Metal Panel Pre-Fabrication Shop [Panel Point]*

## JANUARY

Our January Pillars Session focused on Fabrication gave us the opportunity to better understand the pre-fabrication industry in Kansas City, see the pre-fab process first-hand, and learn what a move towards modular pre-fab construction could mean for our building industry.

Centric Construction is leading the way with Kansas City's first modular apartment building at 3435 Main Operated by Mac Properties. We stopped by their office to meet with the superintendent and project manager to gain insight about the process to achieve a modular building and all the unknown considerations along the way. A benefit of the pre-fab process was that construction of the pods in a factory, led to significantly less waste than would be expected in traditional construction. The modular design of the apartments and how the pieces would be assembled on-site were heavily dictated by the limitations in trailer size due to roadway laws. Overall, for a modular project to be run smoothly and come out with a profit, only minimal design and construction changes can be accommodated beyond the construction document phase.

The Pillars team then briefly stopped by the finished 3435 Main Apartment complex for a tour of the facilities; taking note of any indication of the modular nature of each apartment unit and how they were pieced together to create a seamless look during the erection phase.

We then visited Eric Anderson: the owner of Panel Point. His company is a local pre-fabrication shop making light-gauge

metal wall panels. Eric saw a need within the local building industry to supply a pre-fabricated product, thus the inspiration for his business. Very much a grass-roots workshop with in-house welders and engineers, Panel Point collaborates with contractors and designers to stream-line building facades into pre-fabricated, stackable, and shippable units. Because pre-fab shops like Panel Point are brought on-board early in the design process through delegated design, a more economical structure is usually achieved. The additional benefit of a pre-fab shop is that there is significantly less labor involved with penalization and modulation than compared to traditional construction crews on-site. (I.E.: A crew of 6 people in a shop vs a crew of 10-15 people on a construction site)

The group then went on-site to another local pre-fab construction site visit to the Beacon Hill Flats. This project will be a 125-unit apartment building as part of the on-going development along Troost and uses pre-fabricated panelized exterior wall components.

Overall, we learned that prefabrication (with appropriate design planning and understanding of constraints) can end up being a major financial benefit to a project. A well-delivered project can reap the benefits of reduced labor, reduced material waste, more efficient and quick on-site erection of building components, and of course provide a more environmentally sustainable alternative to traditional construction.



*ColdPoint Managers took us through the deep freeze of where they store frozen produce, meat & goods before getting shipped out on rail cars or semitrucks. It is so cold in the deep freeze that the workers are limited to thirty-minute shifts.*

## FEBRUARY & MARCH (COVID-19)

The Pillars class spent the month of February understanding transportation and how products and people move. The day was spent at the Logistics Park Kansas City Intermodal Facility in Edgerton, KS. We spent time in one of the distribution buildings, driving under the loading cranes, and with the ElevateEdgerton organization.

The first stop was at the ColdPoint cold food distribution warehouse. Coldpoint is a division of NorthPoint, which is the main developer for the Logistics park. The class was able to hear from the NorthPoint Development Team about the original plan for the Park and the master plan moving forward.

The second part of the day was spent with the BNSF, the transportation partner of the Park. The BNSF manages the rail lines and handle all of the craning and unloading of the shipping containers from the trains. We were lucky enough to drive under the giant cranes and see them working up close.

Our class was fortunate enough to meet up with the ElevateEdgerton! developing group to learn more about the impacts on the local community. We were able to hear how the town turned a controversial location decision into positive growth for the surrounding community.

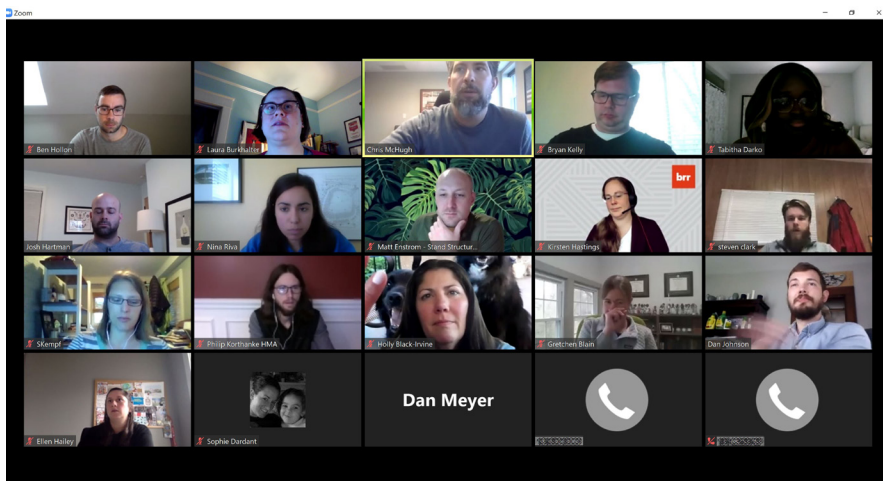
We finished our session at a local brewery with some tasty pints and good conversation about traveling stories.



*This is the view on the tracks & under the Intermodal cranes, where shipping containers get loaded/unloaded, scanned and logged before going to their next destination.*

Unfortunately, our March session on Transportation: How People Move was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. We were looking forward to hearing from the designers and team members involved in the history, development, and design of the airport and garage. The following is an overview of what we had planned to learn about in that session.

Our session was to begin after lunch at PLEXPOD Westport. Bob Berkebile was going to give us a history of the Kansas City Airport design. He was involved in the design of the current airport and has been an active voice for Kansas City for the new airport project. After learning about the past, we planned to travel out to the Aviation Department just outside KCI to hear about the current situation, specifically focused on parking. Katy Sell, the airport parking director, was to discuss the process the KCAD went through in determining the future parking needs of the airport. This panel was also to consist of Craig Scranton (BMIN) and Jade Liska (Aviation Department Director). Craig was going to discuss the design development of the Airport Garage and Jade was going to be providing his perspective from being involved in the entire Airport Project process. The panel discussion was to move from the Garage design to the Terminal Design with Kirtan Patel from SOM joining in. She was going to share SOM's experience as the design architect for the entire project with a focus on the terminal design. She was then planning on transitioning the discussion into how an airport of the future gets designed and what makes this design specific to Kansas City.



*Pillars learning about Chris McHugh's experience in medical marijuana law via Zoom.*

## APRIL

The April 2020 session topic was medical marijuana in the state of Missouri. Our intent was to hear from 3 different sides of the industry. We planned to hear from a lawyer and marijuana entrepreneur, a design professional involved with marijuana related facilities, and a retailer selling marijuana products. Ultimately our plans for the April session were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and we were only able to hear from two of our three speakers, and we had to abandon plans to go and hear from them in their offices or manufacturing facilities. This was, as far as I'm aware, the first ever video Pillars session.

First, we heard from Chris McHugh, and attorney with Joseph Hollander & Craft. Mr. McHugh shared with us his experiences with the laws in the state of Missouri regarding medical marijuana. His interpretation of the laws portrays the enforcement of the medical requirements for access to marijuana in a surprisingly liberal way. This was highlighted by the assertion that there is no such thing as literal medical marijuana, and the fact that a qualifying condition can be almost any condition that in the opinion of a doctor would be helped by the administration of marijuana.

Additionally Mr. McHugh shared some information about his own personal business venture within the world of legal marijuana which included information about the process they went through to become approved for licensure, and plans for the facility he and his partners intend to build in St. Joseph, MO.

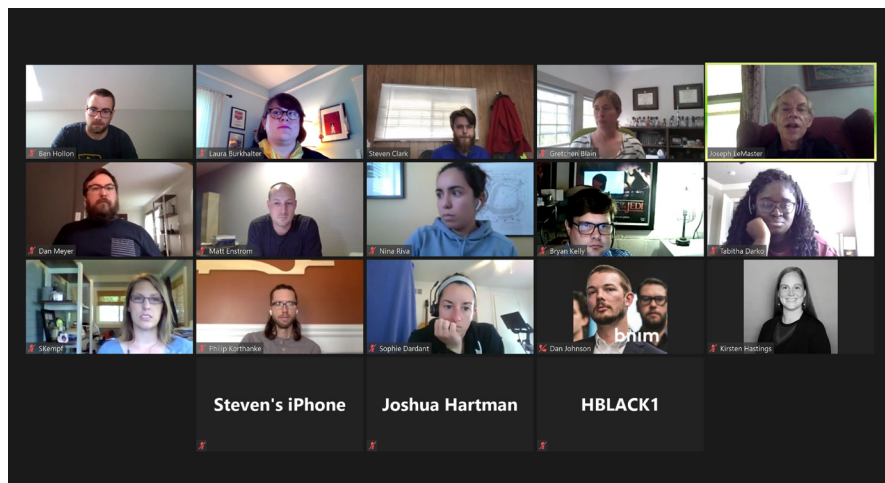
Second, we heard from Mike Valent, Director of Operations for the Roasterie. Mr. Valent shared with us the Roasterie's

experience in creating a CBD cold brew coffee that is sold in their shops, and other retail stores around the metro area. Mr. Valent discussed the challenges associated with creating a product that contained the active ingredient CBD, was shelf stable, and upheld the Roasterie's taste quality standards. He also shared with us the challenges of convincing some of their long-time customers that branching out into a marijuana related product line was a legitimate business venture and not a wild experiment.

Lastly, we finished with a Zoom happy hour.

While we weren't able to provide lunch, drinks, or participate in any of the interactive activities that all other Pillars sessions typically include, under the circumstances the session was as successful as it could have been.





*Pillars learning about Johnson County's COVID-19 response from Dr. Joseph LeMaster via Zoom.*

## MAY

Originally the May 2020 session was intended to be a capstone session involving several high-profile local politicians. In which we drew on our experiences from our class's previous sessions to inform the discussion with the politicians. However, once the COVID-19 pandemic began, it felt inappropriate to reach out to the metro's highest-ranking governmental officials to ask them to take precious time to speak to us. Similarly to April we had to pivot. Instead we chose to seek out other officials that might be able to inform us on our local governments' responses to the pandemic.

First, we head from Kansas City, MO City Councilman from the fourth district Eric Bunch. The Councilman shared with us his thoughts on how the City of Kansas City, MO has responded to COVID-19 from shutting down businesses to creating temporary policies to help those struggling with the economic impacts of the pandemic. Councilman Bunch remarked on the extraordinary coordination between municipalities on both sides of the state line to quickly respond to the pandemic. The group also discussed healthcare inequities in the community which have been exacerbated by the Coronavirus epidemic.

Second, we heard from US Army Corp of Engineers Construction Support Branch Chief Robert Schoen. Mr. Schoen described the design charrettes that his team at the USACE conducted to plan and select sites for temporary medical facilities to serve COVID-19 patients should our permanent health care facilities become overwhelmed. He described the evolution of their thinking regarding who these facilities would serve (COVID patients, or other patients

displaced by COVID precautions at hospitals), what qualities in an existing building make for a good temporary medical facility, and are these plans something that need to actually be executed at this time.

Finally, we head from Dr. Joseph LeMaster, Public Health Officer of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment. Dr. LeMaster discussed the initial flurry of activity leading up to the announcement of a stay at home order from a joint team of the big four metro governments at the early stages of the pandemic. He discussed his role in determining what's best for the health of our community and how it has been influence by economic politics. Dr. LeMaster also shared his thoughts on close calls in the past, and the possibility of future pandemics similar to the one we are in the midst of. Dr. LeMaster's presentation ended with a cathartic round of questions and answers that allowed Pillars to ask questions about both his role as a public figure, and how we should be behaving in our own personal lives to best protect our own health and that of our loved ones.

Like the April's session the May 2020 session was also disrupted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the advanced knowledge that the session would be conducted virtually it was a little more polished.