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# **AIA Kansas City Year in Review 2025**

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# Letter from the Executive Director

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## Keeping Our Eye on the Ball

Get ready for a lot of soccer metaphors this year! As we get ready to welcome the world to Kansas City this summer, it's time to check the scoreboard from 2025 and see what our team of members, staff, and stakeholders accomplished!

Our team roster of AIA Kansas City membership set another record in 2025: 1,291 members! That makes four consecutive years of membership growth. Back to back to back to back!

Member engagement was a big focus for 2025, and I think you will see that clearly in the pages that follow.

Opportunities found us throughout 2025, adding to the dynamism of our chapter. Seeing several of our Member Firms featured on the *America ByDesign* television series was just one thrilling example, with more episodes rolling out in 2026!

We had some real MVPs this year, including volunteers who launched our first-ever Architecture Week programming; task forces that helped reinvigorate BIG NIGHT and underscored the importance of MBE/WBE programs; and advocates who made our voices heard on legislative issues in Jefferson City and KCMO.

We celebrated 20 years of Pillars Leadership Program and 20 years of Women in Design – trailblazing programs that are a league above the rest!

As we wrap up 2025, we're not just celebrating a strong season – we're setting our sights on a championship run. Thanks to the passion, teamwork, and dedication of our members, AIA Kansas City finished the year playing at a champion's level. Now it's time to take the field again, build on that momentum, and keep pushing for even greater impact in the year ahead.



## Mission

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In continuous operation since 1890, AIA Kansas City supports its members, advances the value of the architecture profession, and improves the quality of the built environment



## AIA KANSAS CITY BY THE NUMBERS

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AIA Kansas City is part of the national network of over 200 AIA chapters representing over 100,000+ architects.

**1,291**

AIA Kansas City **members**  
strong

**28**

members became  
**registered** architects

**68**

**events** hosted

**4,498**

**registrations** for all  
AIA Kansas City events

**42**

**education credits** were  
provided

**81**

AIA Kansas City  
**Member Firms**

**158**

**Cornerstone Partners,  
Professional Affiliates, and  
event sponsors** supported  
AIA Kansas City



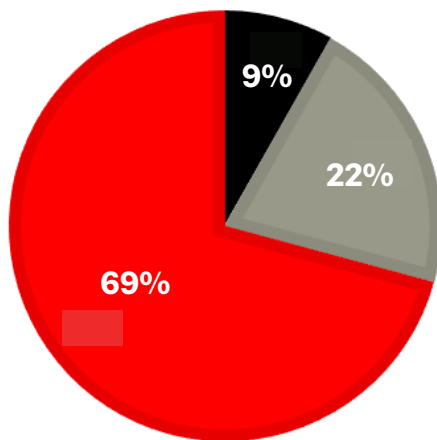


# Membership

AIA Kansas City's top priority is supporting our members. We serve to a diverse range of career stages, areas of interest, and individual needs through our comprehensive member benefits and services.

**1,291 Members**

■ AIA Emeritus Members   ■ AIA Associate Members   ■ AIA Architect Members



## MEMBERSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

# 15th

largest local chapter in the world

# 18.9%

membership increase since 2015

# 1.9%

individual membership increase from last year



# Strategic Plan

## Strategic Priorities for AIA Kansas City through 2033

### VISION

AIA Kansas City will be the recognized leader of a diverse membership of architects who improve our communities and our collective future.

#### GOALS

Educate AIA Kansas City members

#### GOALS

Strengthen career development continuum

#### GOALS

Provide best practice resources to local firms

#### GOALS

Elevate the role of the architect through public facing partnerships

#### STRATEGY METRICS

Diversify array of CEU sessions

#### STRATEGY METRICS

Consider and incorporate overall membership feedback

#### STRATEGY METRICS

Increase the unique participation of member firms.

#### STRATEGY METRICS

Increase # of members actively serving on civic and political commissions and agencies

#### MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIES

1. Shape national AIA priorities to influence educational needs in KC region
2. Develop a member feedback mechanism to guide continuing education priorities

#### MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIES

1. Create educational partnerships to influence leadership development at early career stages
2. Create structured mentoring program for top/down and bottom/up relationships

#### MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIES

1. Expand topics of best practices available to member firms

#### MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIES

1. Collaborate with the Center to help KC Design Week become the premier design event regionally to attract outside attendees
2. Develop plan to increase influence of members in the metro region

### MISSION

In continuous operation since 1890, AIA Kansas City supports its members, advances the value of the architecture profession, and improves the quality of the built environment.





# Recognizing Excellence

## DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

In 2025, AIA Kansas City recognized design achievements by its Member Firms at the annual Design Excellence Awards. This year's jury Brad Cloepfil, AIA, Heidi Beebe, AIA, and Chris Brown, AIA, all of Portland reviewed a competitive field of 105 submissions and selected 21 projects for awards. New in 2025, the Public Recognition Award invited community leaders Mary Esselman and Jessica May to participate in the selection process, strengthening the connection between design excellence and public engagement. Award recipients were honored at a special celebration on October 23 at The Abbott.

### PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Collegiate House

Architect: Focal Design Studio  
Owner: Casey and Jaclyn Steiner

### ARCHITECTURE XLARGE: HONOR

Lee's Summit High School Addition and Renovation

Architect: Multistudio  
Owner: Lee's Summit R-7 School District

### ARCHITECTURE LARGE: MERIT

Washburn Rural North Middle School

Architect: Multistudio  
Owner: Auburn-Washburn USD 437

### ARCHITECTURE MEDIUM: MERIT

Forest Hill Village Apartments

Architect: DRAW Architecture + Urban Design  
Owner: Synergy Services

### ARCHITECTURE SMALL: MERIT

Lee's Summit Robotics

Architect: Multistudio  
Owner: Lee's Summit R-7 School District

### ARCHITECTURE XSMALL: MERIT

Theatre in the Park Gateway

Architects: Dake Wells Architecture  
Owner: Johnson County Parks and Recreation District

### ARCHITECTURE XLARGE: CITATION

Osborne Legacy Complex

Architect: Populous, BVH  
Owner: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

### ARCHITECTURE LARGE: CITATION

Dr. EJ and Margaret O'Brien Hall

Architect: BNIM, Workshop Architects  
Owner: Marquette University

### ARCHITECTURE SMALL: CITATION

White River Farm

Architect: El Dorado, Merritt Chase  
Owner: Thick Time LLC

### ARCHITECTURE MEDIUM: CITATION

Reconciliation Services

Architect: BNIM  
Owner: Reconciliation Services

### INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: MERIT

Patterson Family Foundation

Architect: Multistudio  
Owner: Patterson Family Foundation

### INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE: CITATION

TD Lounge

Architects: Populous  
Owner: Toronto Blue Jays

### DIVINE DETAIL: CITATION

I3R

Architect: Hufft, HGA Architects  
Owner: University of Arkansas

### DIVINE DETAIL: CITATION

Intuit Dome

Architect: AECOM  
Owner: Intuit Dome

### DIVINE DETAIL: CITATION

EquipmentShare Technology and Development Center

Architect: Hufft  
Owner: EquipmentShare

### CONCEPT: HONOR

Float

Architect: Populous  
Owner: Montreal Olympic Park

### CONCEPT: CITATION

Autonomous Vehicles and The Future of Urban Planning

Architect: HOK  
Owner: HOK

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION

InterUrban ArtHouse

Architect: El Dorado  
Owner: InterUrban ArtHouse

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Lenexa Justice Center

Architect: Finkle Williams Architecture, Roth Sheppard Architects, TCA Architecture and Planning  
Owner: City of Lenexa, KS

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Reconciliation Services

Architect: BNIM  
Owner: Reconciliation Services

### PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Zhou B Art Center

Architect: BNIM  
Owner: Zhou B Art Center



# Recognizing Excellence

## AIA KANSAS CITY BOARD AWARDS

In 2025, AIA Kansas City recognized individuals whose leadership, compassion, agility, and relevance made a lasting impact on our community. The Board Award recipients were honored at the Holiday Party on December 9 at JE Dunn Construction for their significant impact on our community.



### GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Trudy Faulkner, AIA



### FIRM AWARD

International Architects Atelier



### EMERGING PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Megan Strayer, AIA



### CHAPTER VOLUNTEER AWARD

Nathan Dysko, Associate AIA



### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Laura Pastine, AIA



### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

City of Fountains Foundation



### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Vernon Reed, FAIA



# Committees & Programs



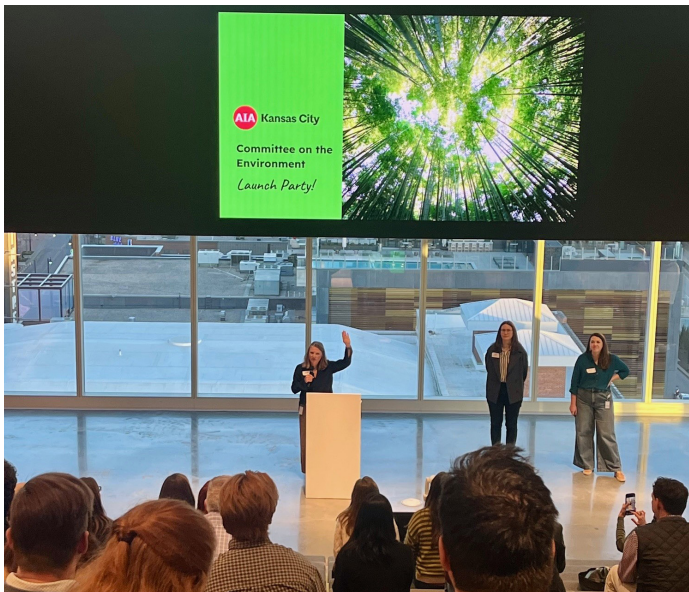
## ADVOCACY

The Advocacy Committee hosted its 6th annual City Hall Day in the fall, engaging 12 elected officials in 3 municipalities in both Kansas and Missouri to discuss key issues and advance the profession's interests.



## ARE SUCCESS TEAM

This is the 12th year of this program. These teams are supportive small groups of Associates who commit to taking all sections of the ARE in 12 months. The 2025 team had 10 participants and held 10 study sessions.



## COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

COTE IS BACK! This committee relaunched in Kansas City in 2025, hosting events on Mission 2030, Kansas City, Missouri's Energy Codes, and a special launch event in November with speaker, Dan Rockhill.



## DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Awards Committee put on a highly attended awards event, awarding 21 projects in October. In addition, they helped coordinate a juror lecture with UMKC and a "How To" submission session. This event offered tips on making projects stand out to the jury and featured information on the Common App.



# Committees & Programs



## EDUCATION OUTREACH

This group participated in Design Career Days, Future Stages, KU Gear Up STEAM Fest, and other school visits. Additionally, this committee planned student design information nights, school visits, and Architecture Week Proclamations with four municipalities in conjunction with AIA National's Architecture Week.



## EQUITY IN ARCHITECTURE

Equity in Architecture hosted a series of engaging events this year, including committee meetings and panel discussions titled "Work Visa Future Diversity" and "The Rise and Fall of DEI". The committee continued to refine its vision and shape its future direction.





# Committees & Programs



## PIERS MENTORING PROGRAM

This cross-generational program uses a team approach to connect members to create impactful and lasting relationships. This year there were 67 participants making up 9 groups and coordinating 36 mentoring events.



## PILLARS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Pillars graduated 16 emerging leaders in 2025. Additionally, 16 participants were selected for the 20th class for the 2025-2026 Pillars session. To date, the program has proudly graduated a total of 292 participants, continuing to foster the development of future leaders.



## WOMEN IN DESIGN

WiD celebrated 20 years in 2025 with an anniversary event celebrating the past, present, and future of the committee. It also continued to offer mentorship to students interested in design through the 17th annual Day of Shadowing event. They also hosted two beginner's golf workshops and co-hosted the Trolley Tour with CREW KC.



## YOUNG ARCHITECTS FORUM

YAF hosted several programs to engage and support our early-career members, including 6 happy hours and a hands-on workshop with the ironworkers. Additionally, they designed, assembled, and delivered over 60 New Grad care packages.



# Signature Programs

AIA Kansas City offers signature programs that bring members together to learn, connect, and engage with peers. These well-attended events strengthen our community and foster meaningful connections.



## **SUPER BIG NIGHT**

135 registered | committee showcase  
newly installed board | connections made



## **DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

21 projects awarded | Portland-based jury  
345 registered | fun NEW after party



## **HOLIDAY PARTY**

212 registered | 7 Board Awards given  
celebrated a successful year



## **COCKTAILS & CONVERSATIONS**

100+ registrations at each event | 6 locations  
tours of firms and new projects



# Additional Initiatives

AIA Kansas City collaborates and partners with other organizations and AIA at state and national levels.

## AIA NATIONAL

- Attended the AIA Leadership Summit in February and attended AIA25 in June
- Attended Big Sibs annual summit in Portland and virtual monthly meetings
- Members attended the Women's Leadership Summit
- Galen Lif, AIA served as the AIA Missouri representative to the Strategic Council
- Participated in AIA National Architecture Week by visiting area schools with activities about design, hosting a student information session with design professions, and four Architecture Week proclamations.

## AIA MISSOURI

- AIA Kansas City has six representatives on the AIA Missouri Board
- Attended the AIA Missouri Grassroots Advocacy Conference in March
- Attended the State Celebrate event in November

## LICENSURE

- AIA Kansas City provides resources and programming to help members achieve licensure. Congratulations to those licensed in 2025:

Emily Almloff, AIA  
Zevi Aronstein, AIA  
Jacob Bandy, AIA  
Rayan Cheikh, AIA  
Scott Coryell, AIA  
Grace DeYoung-Daniels, AIA  
Eric Downing, AIA  
Liz Fraka, AIA  
Justin Grim, AIA

Bethany Hayes, AIA  
Bryan Helman, AIA  
Matthew Hollingsworth, AIA  
Tyler Irwin, AIA  
Tyler Konda, AIA  
Taylor Massey, AIA  
Caitlin Nell, AIA  
Chad Philhour, AIA  
Daniel Renner, AIA

Jada Rezac, AIA  
Matthew Schuepbach, AIA  
Leigha Sledge, AIA  
Kris Snodgrass, AIA  
Megan Strayer, AIA  
Keegan Thompson, AIA  
David Wagner, AIA  
Melissa Watson, AIA  
Erin Wheeler, AIA  
Emily Zahner, AIA

## Five in 2025



Five in 2025 was designed to help members find new ways to engage their membership and connect with other architects across the metro. All members had to do was complete five tasks on the bingo card, and turn it in for a chance to win a prize at the Holiday Party.

Thanks to those members who found five new ways to get involved with AIA in 2025.

## AIA Missouri Distinguished Service Award



### Galen Lif, AIA

AIA Missouri awarded Galen Lif, AIA, the 2025 Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his decades of service at the local, state, and national levels of AIA. His enduring commitment to the profession, his leadership within the AIA, and his meaningful impact on public policy and practice make him highly deserving of this honor.



# Additional Initiatives

## CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

- Hosted KC Design Week 2025. The 9-day event featured 25 events with 1,176 registrations.
- Coordinated multiple programs including an intern scavenger hunt, presentation prep workshop, and Trivengo.
- Hosted an Executive Summit with leadership from all of the CfAD's organizations.
- CfAD planned Design Careers Day in conjunction with KC STEM Alliance and ASCE Kansas City. This event is aimed at high school students, and provides insights into design careers.

## KANSAS CITY ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION

- Since 1991, Kansas City Architectural Foundation has given 250 scholarships totalling \$659,350 to 162 unique individuals.
- In 2025, 15 scholarships were awarded, totaling \$52,000. Scholarship amounts ranged from \$1,000 to \$8,000.
- 10 AIA Kansas City members serve on KCAF's Board of Directors.
- Additionally, 14 individuals and Member Firms and 15 Fellows made contributions to scholarships in 2025.

## OTHER KEY HAPPENINGS

- **AIA Kansas City Celebrated 135 Years!**
- Released 12 more interview videos in the Legends & Leaders Series
- Hosted a Leadership Breakfast for local officials, firm principals, and Cornerstone Partners
- Continued our collaboration with *America ByDesign* to bring projects by AIA Kansas City Member Firms to the national spotlight. Projects from Kansas City started showing on CBS and online this November.
- Co-hosted a Legendary Development event with DBIA Kansas City
- Hosted a chapter event on the State of Housing in August
- Representatives attended the KU Career Fair
- Hosted a Fellows Luncheon

## Architect Impact Partnership



AIA Kansas City and ARKANCE were proud to strengthen the architectural community through the exclusive Architect Impact Partnership in 2025. This collaboration provided valuable resources, networking opportunities, and educational support to local architects and firms.

This year, Arkance not only continued their Design Excellence After Party Sponsorship, they also hosted the BIG BIM BBQ event in June that kicked-off the formation of the Revit User Group. They also supported the YAF New Grad Care Packages, and signed on as the Leadership Breakfast Sponsor.

**Thanks, Arkance!**

## LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST



## KCAF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS





# 2025 Cornerstone Partners

Our Cornerstone Partners allow AIA Kansas City to present high-quality programming, grow our advocacy reach, and continue expanding our impact in the metro area. AIA Kansas City appreciates their continued support.

*\* Cornerstone Partners with 10+ years of loyalty*

*\*\* Cornerstone Partners with 20+ years of loyalty*

## **GOLD LEVEL II \$7,500**

Arkance \*

JE Dunn Construction \*\*

McCownGordon Construction \*\*

## **SILVER LEVEL II \$5,000**

Centric \*

Dialectic Engineering \*

Lockton \*\*

Stand Structural Engineering

## **BRONZE LEVEL II \$2,500**

A.L. Huber General Contractors \*\*

Apex Engineers \*

Bob D. Campbell & Co. \*\*

BSE Structural Engineers

Coreslab Structures

Garver

Henderson Engineers \*\*

Holmes Murphy \*

INTRUST Bank

Lankford | Fendler + associates \*

Leigh + O'Kane

Martin/Martin Consulting Engineers

Pearce Construction \*

Seiler Instrument Company \*

SMACNA - Kansas City \*\*

Smith & Boucher \*

Terracon

The Builders' Association \*

Thornton Tomasetti \*

Turner Construction \*

Wallace Design Collective \*

Walter P Moore \*\*

## **RED RIBBON LEVEL II \$1,000**

BHC \*

BOK Financial

Building Controls and Services

C&O Sales

Convergence Lighting

Custom Engineering \*

Drexel Technologies \*

Haren Companies

Hoss & Brown Engineers \*

House of Rocks \*

IMA, Inc. \*

Kaw Valley Engineering, Inc. \*

Kissick Construction \*

LiveRoof Midwest \*

Minick Materials

Monarch Build

New Horizons Enterprises \*

Olsson \*

PKMR Engineers

PMA Engineering \*

Ryan

Schlagel Associates \*

Straub Construction \*



# 2025 Board of Directors

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## **PRESIDENT**

Ashley Hand, AIA  
Mid-America Regional Council

## **PRESIDENT-ELECT**

Evan Fox, AIA  
JE Dunn Construction

## **PAST PRESIDENT**

Dominique Davison, AIA  
DRAW Architecture + Urban  
Design

## **SECRETARY**

Erin Flaherty, AIA  
GastingerWalker&

## **TREASURER**

Diamond Bronson, AIA  
HFG Architecture

## **DIRECTOR (2025)**

Tony McGrail, AIA  
Spur Design

## **DIRECTOR (2026)**

Kwame Smith, AIA  
SFS Architecture

## **DIRECTOR (2027)**

Matt Turner, AIA  
Yaeger Architecture

## **EMERGING PROFESSIONAL DIRECTOR (2025)**

Michelle Newcome, AIA  
Pluribus

## **EMERGING PROFESSIONAL DIRECTOR (2026)**

Greyson Rubin, AIA  
Populous

## **PUBLIC DIRECTOR**

Wendy Doyle  
UnitedWE

## **PUBLIC DIRECTOR**

John Kelly  
Unified Government of  
Wyandotte County and  
Kansas City, KS



# Staff

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## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dawn Taylor

## **DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Tiffany Shepherd, CAE

## **COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR**

Kristen DaMetz

## **DIRECTOR OF MEMBER RELATIONS**

Amy Tonyes

