



# PILLARS

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

**2016–2017 REVIEW**



**AIA**  
Kansas City



## 2016 PILLARS CLASS

Zack Arndt, AIA - Hufft Projects

Valerie Baehr - PMA Engineering

Laura Beth Cochran, AIA - DLR Group

Brooke Craig, AIA - Populous

James Evrard, AIA - Hoefer Wysocki Architecture

Jeremy Hoefer - Trane

Jacob Laha, AIA - DLR Group

Tim McDonnell - SKS Studio

Tony McGrail, AIA - HOK

Randi Mixdorf, AIA - SFS Architecture

Amanda Moore, AIA - STRATA Architecture Inc

Mark Neibling, AIA - BNIM

Chase Pitner, Associate AIA - HNTB

Kyle Rogler, AIA - BEK Inc

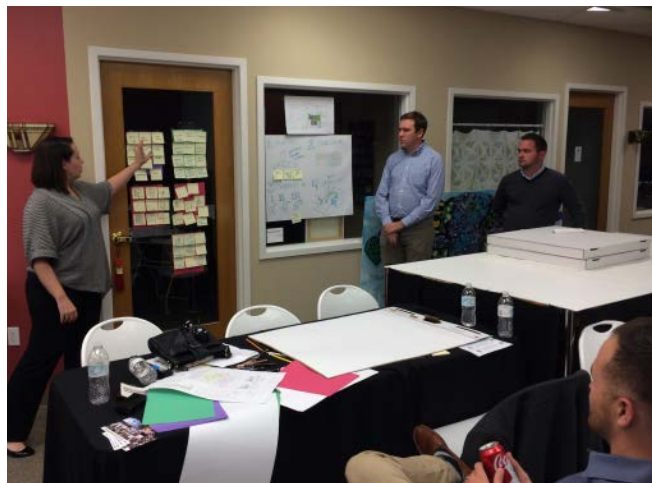
Emily Tilgner - Lankford | Fendler + Associates

Matt Turley - Hoss & Brown Engineers



## 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.



## OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

Over the past two months, the Pillars class explored 'Bottom-Up' Development in Kansas City. The October and November sessions focused on learning about user created spaces that originate organically from direct need. To better understand this development in KC, the class engaged with thought-leaders and innovators in the East Bottoms, Downtown Kansas City, Downtown Mission, and Downtown Overland Park.

In October, the class took a historical tour of the East Bottoms and Heim Buildings and engaged in a panel discussion with Jamie Jeffries (Owner of Local Pig + Urban Provisions Properties), Pam Nigro (Property Owner in East Bottoms), Frank Hicks (Knuckleheads), and Savannah Northcraft (Urban Provisions). The class then traveled to Johnson Drive in Downtown Mission to meet with local business owners, including Kevin Fullerton of Springboard Collective and Jason Domingues and Brendan O'Shaughnessy of Bonfire, to learn about the Mission Forward movement.

In November, the class focused on 'Bottom-Up' Development facilitated through Art, with time spent at the InterUrban Arthouse in Downtown Overland Park, Studios Inc., and the Torn Label Brewing Company in Downtown Kansas City.

While at InterUrban, Nicole Emanuel presented about the history and development of Downtown OP and InterUrban and led the class on a building tour of InterUrban's new facility, currently under renovation, in a repurposed post-office. The class then engaged in a design thinking exercise with the arthouse, led by Scott Pashia (past Pillar), to explore ideas and design challenges for their new facility. Next, the class traveled to Studios Inc. and Torn Label Brewing Company for an introduction and tour of their facilities, led by Colby Smith and Rafi Chaudry. While there, the group visited with local artists and discussed partnerships as a means of creative development.

Following discovery in these sessions, the class found that the "Bottom-up" approach builds consensus by first engaging those who are most directly affected by the issues/projects at hand. Bottom-up development in Kansas City seems to encompass an approach in which progress is made by fostering small group partnerships that can then employ the collected group, at each stage of the development process, to support the growth of new and expanded partnerships.



## DECEMBER & JANUARY

Over the past two months, the Pillars class explored 'Top-Down' Development in Kansas City. The December and January sessions centered on local development guided by government initiatives and how they impact development in the city. The class focused on Kansas City's East Side through discussions regarding development along the 63rd Street Corridor and the use of the Kansas City Neighborhood Academy as a catalyst for development in the Wendell Phillips neighborhood.

In December the class heard from McClain Bryant, the Mayor's Director of Policy, to understand the driving forces behind the policies enacted in Kansas City. McClain discussed the past and present policies relating to development in Kansas City's East Side and how private developers can utilize this policy. The class then engaged in a panel discussion with Butch Rigby (developer and owner of Screenland Theaters) and John Hoffman (developer with UC-B Properties) to better understand how they use city initiatives and their driving force behind developing along the 63rd Street Corridor.

In January the class learned about the Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI) and how it's a catalyst for future growth and development in the urban core through promoting health, safety, education and prosperity for generations to come. UNI works with 10 neighborhoods between 18th Street to 52nd

Street and from Troost to Highway 71. A panel discussion with Dianne Cleaver (Chief Executive Officer at UNI) and Deborah Craig (Community Impact Manager at UNI) allowed insight into the vast range of initiatives set forth by UNI, with the Kansas City Neighborhood Academy (KCNA) as a main catalyst.

The class was given a brief tour of KCNA, and then had a discussion with Dr. Robin Henderson (Founding Principal of KCNA). Dr. Henderson gave insight for how KCNA differs from other schools in Kansas City, and how its STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) program is engaging students at levels not previously seen in the Wendell Phillips neighborhood. In tandem with the school's current literature curriculum of reading *Three Billy Goats Gruff*, the group engaged with students to build structures out of spaghetti and marshmallows. This design thinking exercise allowed for one-on-one interaction with students while bringing their literature curriculum to life.

These sessions provided the opportunity to engage and explore the positive impact 'Top-Down' Development provides to communities within the broader context of Kansas City. It became evident that policy and initiatives put forth from the Mayor's office provides momentum in various forms for private developers, advocacy groups, and institutes to enter into and thrive in various underutilized areas of our city.





## FEBRUARY & MARCH

### Nile Valley Aquaponics - Tour & Design Charrette

In February, the Pillars class met at Nile Valley Aquaponics on the east side of Kansas City, MO to kickoff the sessions focused on “Community Voice”. First on the agenda was a tour led by Dre Taylor, the founder of Nile Valley and one-man show who oversees the operation, maintenance, outreach, education and community involvement of the vertical farming facility. The class got to learn about the four-tier aquaponic garden system within the greenhouse and see the community garden that provides free, fresh produce to the surrounding neighborhood. This small garden has instilled a huge sense of community pride, which is evident in the way the residents keep watch over it. Following the tour, the class participated in a design charrette with Mr. Taylor to develop aquaponic and vertical farm prototypes as well as envision the future greenhouse facility needed to sustain and further the growth of the Nile Valley project. The charrette invigorated both the Pillars class and Mr. Taylor to continue this type community growth throughout Kansas City.

### Kansas City, KS Healthy Campus Master Plan - Panel Discussion

For the second half of the session, the class (and Dre Taylor) ventured west to Kansas City, KS to listen to a panel of professionals speak about the Healthy Campus Master Plan for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and KCK. The panel consisted of Graham Smith, Planner at Gould Evans who designed the Master Plan, Stephen Samuels, Executive Director of LISC (Local Initiative Support Organization), Peter Ho, Vice President at CRBE, a developer involved in the Master Plan, and Stephen Hardy, CEO of MySidewalk. Each panelist brought a unique perspective to the discussion as they described the history and timeline of the project, its current status and what they hope to see in the future. The city is encouraged that the current version of the plan will continue to be developed, including expanded street improvements, a parks system, a YMCA/community center, a grocery store, a farmers market and an urban-agriculture component. The process of creating the master plan in conjunction with the community was a successful one, as considerations were made for demographics, metric trends and demand for things like multi-family housing. Mr. Taylor’s added viewpoint on the KCK project as a native Kansas Citian provided a good cross-section of community development across the city.



### Vision Metcalf Plan - Panel Discussion

The March session began at McCarthy Construction where the class arranged a panel discussion to understand the Vision Metcalf Plan for Overland Park and how it has spurred development along Metcalf Avenue. The panel consisted of Mike Berenbom with LANE4, Jack Messer, Director of Planning & Development Services in Overland Park and Bill Ebel, City Manager of Overland Park. The panel provided a history of the Vision Metcalf Plan and how it is helping the city evolve and adapt to modern needs of the area. The group also discussed how members of the community are impacting decisions on how land is or is not developed. The Metcalf South project was of particular interest, the location of a former mall currently owned by LANE4. The class learned about the process of planning the new development, the initial project supported by the community compared to the final project, and the challenges and costs associated with each.

The second half of the day was a presentation and tour of the Johnson County Arts & Heritage Center, a project which repurposed the former King Louie ice rink, bowling alley and pool hall into a museum and community space. The class heard from Brian Garvey, an architect with SFS, Chad Foster, project manager with Johnson County, and Joseph Waters, Assistant County Commissioner. They shared the complex history and timeline of the project, including unique requirements for having portions of the project open during construction, specifically to serve as an early voting

location for the county. The group learned from the panel the importance of not only finding a home for the museum and community functions but also the necessity to preserve the building as an iconic landmark in Overland Park. Extensive restoration was done to maintain the existing structure while still updating the interior of the building to fit its new purpose. Some of the functions include county offices, community meeting space, rentable event space, a black box theater, dance rehearsal space, museum and store. The project is successful in marrying all the different functions through a common architectural language, with as color, graphics and design elements that lead visitors through the building.



*Transportation Panel*



*Kansas City Ballet Todd Bolender Center Tour*

## APRIL & MAY

### Transportation Panel

In April, the Pillars class met at the Farmhouse near the Rivermarket in Kansas City, MO to kick-off the Community Amenities sessions. The head chef and owner of the Farmhouse provided a brief history of the restaurant and its local sourcing of food. After lunch at the Farmhouse, the class took the Streetcar to Hollis + Miller Architects' office in the Corrigan Building. There the class listened to a panel discussion on transportation – with an emphasis on issues and projects in the Kansas City Area. The transportation panel included Eric Bunch, Mike Goodman, David Johnson and Christopher Redline with BikeWalkKC, The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance and MODOT respectively. The panelists discussed the current state of the various transportation modes that they represent, as well as the challenges and upcoming projects. Panelists also discussed the impact of the Kansas City Go Bond and the interaction of the various forms of transit in the Kansas City region. Following the panel discussion, Bob Berkebile provided a history the current Kanas City International Airport and the drive to renovate or replace it. Bob led this discussion from his perspective as the architect for the existing airport and from his role as co-chair from the Airport Terminal Advisory Group.

### Kansas City Ballet Tour

The Pillars class traveled on foot through the Crossroads District from the Corrigan Building to the Kansas City Ballet's Todd Bolender Center. Kevin Amey, the Kansas City Ballet's General Manager, gave the Pillars a tour of the historic building that houses the Kansas City Ballet. Built in the early 1900's, the building was once the main steam distribution center for Union Station, the Post Office and other area buildings. Many elements from the original coal boilers and steam distribution were saved during the renovation of the building and have been incorporated into the design of the Ballet's main classrooms, office space and practice theater.





*Pillars & Vladimir Mitton at Cultivate KC's Juniper Gardens*

### **Cultivate KC**

The May session was all about edible amenities. After lunch at Grandstand Burgers in Merriam, Kansas, the Pillars carpooled to Cultivate KC's Juniper Garden's facility. Vladimir Mitton, Cultivate KC's Program Manager for the 'New Roots for Refugees' gave the Pillars a tour of the urban farm's 16 quarter acre plots, cleaning and storage facilities. During the tour, Dr. Mitton provided an overview of both the 'New Roots for Refugees' program and urban farming.



*City of Mission Charrette*

### **City of Mission Farmers Market**

After visiting Juniper Gardens, the Pillars traveled to Mission, Kansas to view the lots that currently host the Mission Farm and Flower Market. The City of Mission is looking to accommodate a number of improvements to help with vendor set-up, hosting activities and providing a civic face for the market and east end of the Johnson Drive Corridor. After a brief tour of the existing market site, conducted by Mission's Public Information Officer, Emily Randel, the Pillars convened at Sylvester Powell Community Center for a design charrette. Working with a city wish list site plans and photos of the site, the Pillars groups the Pillars broke into four groups to brainstorm ideas for phased growth and permanent facilities at the Mission Farm and Flower Market. The concepts were presented to Emily Randel and other City representatives at the end of the Charrette. The Community Amenities committee will also be presenting the ideas at the July 5th City of Mission meeting.