



PILLARS

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

2020–2021 REVIEW



AIA
Kansas City



2021 PILLARS CLASS

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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.



Wyandotte County Juvenile Justice Center presented by TreanorHL

NOVEMBER SESSION - SOCIAL JUSTICE

In November, Pillars took a deep dive into current events within our country in relation to criminal justice reform. Social unrest this past summer underscored the need for our society to take a deeper look into the operations of the criminal justice system and policies that put people of color under more legal scrutiny than other members of our community. Many current policies lead to biases within the criminal justice system and further disenfranchise members of the community from a social and economic standpoint. We focused on gaining a better understanding of what these policies are, the role policing within Kansas City plays, and how regional police forces are responding to the current climate and desire for police reform.

Jay Kovach from the North Little Rock Police Department began our presentations for the day by highlighting the differences between his police force and that of Kansas City. Comparing these two police departments furthered our understanding of ways policing might be changed in Kansas City to reduce the biases toward communities of color. Jay discussed the new justice center being built within his jurisdiction, giving insight into the role of the community in design decisions and a desire for changes in Justice Architecture.

The session continued with a panel discussion led by Jacob Becchina of the Kansas City Police Department, Eric Wesson, managing editor for the Kansas City Call, and Dave Helling with the Kansas City Star. The panel focused on

current policies and areas of improvement within the KCPD, as well as the role that media, including social media, has played in the dissemination of information in the past year. The discussion touched on the role traditional media can play in providing useful and timely reporting of facts as well as combating misinformation, especially in regard to reporting of criminal cases. The unique structure of the KCPD having very little local control was discussed in detail, shedding light on the benefits and shortcomings of a Police Department controlled by a board of directors appointed by the Governor of Missouri rather than appointed by the Mayor or elected by the residents of Kansas City.

Jeff Lane, Gwen Gigous, and Drew Hustedde of TreanorHL concluded our session by presenting the current and future state of Justice Architecture. Current design trends are focused on creating environments for prisoners that will lead to greater reform and preventing recidivism. Designing open environments with greater access to natural light facilitates growth and more meaningful interactions for prisoners. TreanorHL also focused on available programs within the facility that promote life skills and ease the transition for prisoners back into society after their release.

Lunch for this session was provided by Urban Cafe, a local minority owned restaurant in Kansas City. The session concluded with a virtual happy hour, due to COVID-19 restrictions, to discuss the topics of the day and reflect on the information presented throughout the session.