



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.



Darwin Pennye shows off the indoor field at the Urban Youth Academy



Rodney Riffle and John Teegarden explain the design for Kansas City's new adaptive softball complex

MAY SESSION - ACCESS AND EMPOWERMENT - YOUTH SPORTS FOR ALL ABILITIES

Recently hailed as the 'Soccer Capital of America', Kansas City boasts a feverish sports culture and impassioned fan base for all of the city's professional sports teams. Much of this support comes from the young athletes dreaming of one day hitting a home run at Kauffman Stadium, catching a touchdown from Patrick Mahomes, or burying a penalty kick in front of the Cauldron. For some, these dreams can only be made possible by the support of organizations throughout Kansas City with the mission to empower the city's youth. From under served communities, to those on track to become professionals, the city offers opportunities for youth to have fun, develop character, and grow not only as athletes, but as leaders in the community.

The May session started with a 'tailgate' style lunch and yard games to dive into the sport day experience. The group then toured the Kansas City MLB Urban Youth Academy, led by Darwin Pennye, Executive Director. Mr. Pennye has a vast career in sports and explained how the Urban Youth Academy provides baseball and softball experiences for kids between the ages of 5-18 years old within the urban core. Mr. Pennye discussed the four main pillars of the organization: physical, academic, social and spiritual.

Following the tour, Diego Barrios, the Youth Development Coordinator for the Soccer for Success program at the Mattie Rhodes Center, joined in for a conversation with Pillars and Mr. Pennye to discuss how their organizations have become a vehicle for social change through developing athletic programs to help empower youth in underserved communities. The discussion included challenges to the current environment including transportation, the joy kids get out of the game, and the unfortunate societal norms that surround sports in modern time.

Following the discussion on urban youth sports programming, the Pillars class explored how another undeserved population is gaining the ability compete by listening to a presentation by Midwest Adaptive Sports, a non-profit organization focused on positively impacting the lives of those with physical, cognitive, emotional or behavioral challenges through adaptive recreational and competitive sports. The presentation focused on access to sports for youth and adults and how the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department is aiding in development of the first complex dedicated to wheelchair softball.



Steve Foutch gives the Pillars a tour of HyVee Arena



Pillars enjoy happy hour with a view of the upper level courts at HyVee Arena

Rounding out the session, Steve Foutch, of Foutch Brothers gave the group a tour of the Hy-Vee Arena and discussed the challenges of the preparation, design, and construction process. The once 18,000 seat arena was transformed into a multi-level facility where 12 courts are comprised on two separate floors, with dining, business and retail space located throughout the concourse. The arena is a one of a kind experience within the Midwest and Foutch Brothers successfully adapted the historical building into usable space to avoid demolition of the structure. Pillars enjoyed happy hour at the Bottoms Up bar located within the arena where fans, family, and friends can gather to enjoy a drink while taking in the action on the courts.