



AIA Minnesota

A Society of The American Institute of Architects

For immediate release

Date: February 12, 2008

Contact: Jennifer Gilhoi, Communications Director

Email: gilhoi@aia-mn.org

Phone: 612.338.6763/ Fax: 612.338.7981

AIA Minnesota Housing Advocacy Committee to Host its 21st Annual Search For Shelter Design Charrette

Minneapolis, Minnesota - The American Institute of Architects Minnesota Housing Advocacy Committee, which focuses on affordable housing, will be hosting its 21st Annual Search For Shelter Design Charrette February 15-17, 2008. On average, six to eight projects are chosen each year and over 50 volunteers participate.

The purpose of this weekend event is to aid nonprofit organizations providing housing for the disadvantaged, homeless, those on low-income or seeking safety, and those in need. Building projects submitted by these housing agencies, which lack the funds to hire an architect, are given a weekend of intense planning and development by volunteer multi-disciplinary design teams. The teams are comprised of architects, interior designers, landscape architects and students in these disciplines. The resulting product of each team is a set of graphic ideas and plans, which become a visual tool for the client-agency to acquire funding, educate about their cause, or serve as preliminary building plans.

The Charrette will be held in Rapson Hall, home of the College of Design at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities campus. The Friday evening opening will begin with our guest speaker Kate Swenson of the Rose Fellowship. After this the projects will be introduced, followed by group meetings of clients with their respective design team. Saturday morning the design teams visit their project sites, design all day long and often late into the night. There is a concluding program on Sunday at noon, when the design teams present their finished project designs to each respective agency and each other.

The media and public are welcome to attend the opening and concluding programs, or observe on Saturday, with an RSVP to Michaela Larson, AIA Minnesota Housing Advocacy Committee liaison at larson@aia-mn.org, 612-338-6763.

The French word for cart, *charrette* refers to an architecture or art event with a timed deadline for finishing a project. The term is said to originate from the École des Beaux Arts in Paris during the 19th century, where instructors would walk around with a cart, or "charrette," to collect final drawings as students scrambled to complete their work.

#