



**For immediate release**

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Images (l to r): Bulbulian, Swenson

## **AIA Minnesota Announces 2008 AIA Fellows Bulbulian and Swenson**

*Minneapolis, Minnesota*- The 2008 Jury of Fellows from The American Institute of Architects (AIA) in Washington, D. C., elevated 116 AIA members, including AIA Minnesota's Francis Bulbulian, FAIA, and Mark Swenson, FAIA, to its prestigious College of Fellows, an honor awarded to members who have made significant contributions to the profession.

### **Francis Bulbulian, FAIA**

Bulbulian personifies the globalization of modern architectural practice. In three decades he has successfully completed 25 acclaimed major international projects and forty more in the U.S., while leading his local community, profession and heritage. His focus and leadership on collaborative international practice have helped develop protocols that bridged the gap between U.S. design and that of foreign countries, paving the way for subsequent collaborations by other American architects. The buildings that he has been responsible for have been praised for innovative use of material and energy conservation, as well as design excellence, 35 of which have won design excellence awards.

In addition to practice, Bulbulian has served on the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors and continuously on AIA Minnesota committees since 1978; and contributed significantly to community through relief efforts and Habitat for Humanity in Armenia. Bulbulian said of the fellowship, "I feel honored to be part of the comradeship of AIA Fellows who I have come to respect and many of whom were my mentors and teachers."

### **Mark Swenson, FAIA**

Swenson approaches each project, especially those incorporating the adaptive reuse of a historic building, with crucial knowledge in collaboration across professions, design sensitivity and thorough knowledge of each client's industry. Swenson has led his ESG design team in imbuing empty or underutilized landmark historic buildings on the National Register with new life through their adaptive reuse into economically viable, 21st century uses. Building on his reputation as one of the country's leading hotel design authorities; Swenson has fostered a national practice in hotel design that includes 50 completed hotel developments in 35 cities in 13 states, while moving into the civic realm of urban renewal through the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

Swenson's long-term involvement with the profession through AIA Minnesota includes service as the president (2006); member of the board of directors (2001-2007), executive, finance and convention committees; as well as AIA Minneapolis President (2002). In 2007, ESG under Swenson's leadership, received the AIA Minnesota Firm Award. "I am deeply honored to be elected to the College of Fellows of the AIA," Swenson remarked. "I have spent most of my career working in the development sector, often involved in adaptive reuse of historic buildings. I am glad that the jury valued the innovative reuse of landmark buildings that can revitalize the urban core."

The Fellowship program was developed to elevate those architects who have made a significant contribution to architecture and society and who have achieved a standard of excellence in the profession. Election to fellowship not only recognizes the achievements of architects as individuals, but also their significant contribution to architecture and society on a national level.

Out of a total AIA membership of nearly 83,000, there are fewer than 2,650 distinguished with the honor of fellowship. The elevation to fellowship is conferred on architects with at least 10 years of membership in the AIA who have made significant contributions in one or more of the following nomination categories:

1. Promoted the aesthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession
2. Advanced the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training and practice
3. Coordinated the building industry and the profession of architecture through leadership in the AIA and other related professional organizations
4. Advanced the living standards of people through an improved environment
5. Made the profession of ever-increasing service to society

Bulbulian and Swenson will receive their Fellowship medals during the Investiture of Fellows Ceremony at the AIA 2008 National Convention and Design Expo in Boston.

*The American Institute of Architects Minnesota, founded in 1892, is dedicated to strengthening our communities, improving our built environment and providing exceptional design. For more information on the organization and Minnesota architectural firms, reference our Web site at [www.aia-mn.org](http://www.aia-mn.org) and pick up a copy of Architecture Minnesota, the award-winning architectural magazine of the Midwest.*