

### **SUMMARY STATEMENT**

Through award-winning designs, teaching, and publications, Sarah Nettleton is shaping a new generation of green design. Her practice integrates technology with a deeper understanding of simplicity in architecture and connection to the land.

### **SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS | NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS**

Sarah Nettleton, AIA explores new and integrated approaches to green design that she shares with the profession and broad audiences. For thirty years, she has managed her practice to create new solutions and to expand public engagement in green design.

#### **National Leadership in Sustainable Design**

Sarah is a pioneer in measuring sustainable outcomes. Her design for the Tofte Cabin (Exhibit 3) on the North Shore of Lake Superior is recognized for its low carbon impact and carefully documented and accurate energy usage model. Monitored over several years with actual results shared through the project's website, the Tofte Cabin became a global demonstration of measurable outcomes from green strategies. The Tofte Cabin won a COTE Top Ten Award and an AIAMN Design Award in 2002. The website has received over 3 million views documenting how this pioneering project nearly achieved its net zero energy goal with 97.5% of usage generated on site.

Sarah sees green design as more than an assemblage of high-tech systems and materials. Her first major project, the 1,200-acre LEK Ranch (Exhibit 1) in Wyoming, set the groundwork for her practice with an inclusive approach to buildings and landscape. At LEK, she designed a collection of ranch buildings, linking new technologies with commonsense practices that work with nature, such as solar orientation, recycled timber, natural airflow, and native prairie restoration.

Sarah has always anticipated the next step in sustainable design. In the early 1990s, before LEED existed, she helped to write the Hennepin County Design Guidelines that ultimately shaped mandatory sustainability standards for all state funded projects in Minnesota.

#### **Integrating Simplicity and Green Design**

Sarah manages her practice to guide clients in finding the right balance between traditional and contemporary sustainable materials, technologies, and strategies. She shows clients and broader audiences how green design should be part of every project and can meet their needs and budgets. In 2007, following the success of the Tofte Cabin, Sarah authored *The Simple Home* (Exhibit 4) demonstrating how, beyond building strategies alone, simplicity in living, working, and possessions are also part of sustainability. She challenges Americans' desires for large houses with complicated lives and offers the optimistic alternative of "the luxury of enough". A lively and professional tour of 21 homes around the country—including two of her own designs—*The Simple Home* shows how owners, in collaboration with architects, can rethink their environments and daily routines to find a simpler and more rewarding life.

#### **Teaching for New Audiences**

One reason that Sarah is such an effective advocate for the profession is that she mentored design students at an urban community college for ten years before opening her own practice. As a full-time instructor at Minneapolis Community & Technical College, she taught a diverse audience, including many minority students, lasting skills such as architectural technology, illustration, and professional practice. She opened the world of architecture for students who may have never thought they could take part. Sarah also re-wrote the vocational curriculum to embrace critical thinking and problem solving—skills that help first-generation students to succeed in finding jobs in the profession and become better managers themselves.

Sarah's book *The Simple Home* reached thousands of readers around the world both in print and online versions—showing how architects bring tangible value to sustainable solutions in residential design. In over 50 lectures, interviews, and inclusion in the book *Women in Green*, she speaks to an even larger audience including builders and college students. Because of her recognized speaking skills, Sarah was invited in 2007 to serve as spokesperson in the 2007 AIA produced video, "How to Work with an Architect"—still in use today.