

September 19, 2014  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## AIA Minnesota Announces Four 2014 AIA Minnesota Special Award Recipients

**MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA** - The American Institute of Architects Minnesota (*AIA Minnesota*) announces **four 2014 AIA Minnesota Special Award recipients: John Carmody, Gunter Dittmar, Prashant Kharkar, and the Mortenson Construction Company.**

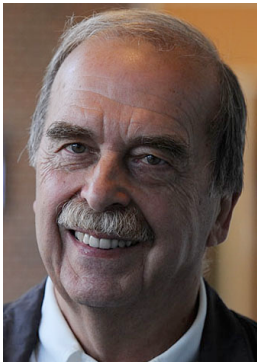
Through its annual Special Awards program, AIA Minnesota seeks to encourage, stimulate, and recognize exceptional contributions that improve the quality of our physical environment made by individuals and organizations that are outside of the architectural profession. AIA Minnesota recognizes these contributions because architecture is a collaborative effort that relies on the talents and commitment of many individuals working together to achieve common goals.

The 2014 AIA Minnesota Special Award recipients are:



**John Carmody**, a Senior Fellow in the University of Minnesota, College of Design, a Fellow at the Institute on the Environment, and founder of the Center for Sustainable Building Research within the College of Design—where he was Director through 2013. He holds a Bachelors and Masters degree in Architecture from the University of Minnesota. From 2005-2008, Carmody helped develop and taught in the M.S. in Architecture program focusing on sustainable design. He was one of the team leaders that developed the *B3 Sustainable Building Guidelines* and the *SB2030* program designed to transform Minnesota buildings to net-zero energy and carbon

by the year 2030. *"John really put Minnesota on the map as far as top quality education,"* said a Selection Committee member. *"He has elevated the level of sustainability, both locally and nationally."*



**Gunter Dittmar** was born in Austria and raised in Austria and Germany. He received his professional education in Germany and the United States at the Technical University Munich (Dipl. Ing. Arch) and Yale University (M.Arch). After practicing briefly in Germany, he taught at universities in Texas and California prior to joining the University of Minnesota School of Architecture. He has also been a visiting critic at Columbia University, Yale, MIT, and Berkeley. After a lengthy teaching career, Dittmar recently retired as Emeritus from the University of Minnesota. A Selection Committee member said, *"Dittmar is an outstanding teacher—no one at the University is more respected. He has had an enormous influence on students."*



**Prashant Kharkar**, retired Hennepin County Planning & Project Development Division Manager. He was educated in architecture at the Sir J J College of Architecture, University of Bombay receiving a Bachelor of Architecture degree. He studied at University College London, University of London, England receiving a post-graduate diploma in Development Planning. Kharkar worked at Hennepin County in the Property Management Department starting in 1979 and retiring in 2013. In partnership with the Office of Budget & Finance, he assisted and advised the County Administrator and the County's Capital Budgeting Task Force in the review of all major capital project requests and formulating a 5-year capital improvement plan. *"The fact is that he spearheaded the quality process. We don't often get a chance to recognize*

*clients that are doing great work and Quality Based Selection (QBS),"* remarked Selection Committee members.



**The Mortenson Construction Company** Founded in 1954, Mortenson Construction is a family-owned construction company headquartered in Minneapolis, that provides planning, program management, preconstruction, general contracting, construction

management, design-build, and turn-key development. It has offices in Chicago, Denver, Milwaukee, Phoenix, and Seattle, with international operations in Canada and China. This was stated in their nomination letter: *"In spite of the inextricably messy world of construction, Mortenson works tirelessly and aims to please the architectural profession by creating an enduring, quality product. In addition to being experts in construction, they are also experts in project management, budgeting, estimating, and technical issues. They are a galvanizing force and consistently help to bridge the gap between the design world and construction world."*

Learn more about the Special Award at <http://www.aia-mn.org/get-involved/aia-minnesota-awards/special-awards/>.

The 2014 Special Award recipients will receive their award at AIA Minnesota's "Let's Celebrate" awards dinner on Friday, December 5, at the International Market Square. Learn more about the awards dinner at <http://www.aia-mn.org/get-involved/aia-minnesota-awards/awards-celebration/>.

*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.*