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AIA Minnesota Announces Three
2012 AIA Minnesota Special Award Recipients

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – AIA Minnesota announces three 2012 AIA Minnesota Special Award recipients: Poul Bertelsen, AIA Associate International; J. Drake Hamilton; and Michael Pilla. 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 who 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.

AIA Minnesota is pleased to present the following three individuals with a 2012 AIA Minnesota Special Award:

Poul Bertelsen, AIA International Associate member, MSAADA. Bertelsen came to Minnesota to found MSAADA in 1980. Prior to that he served seven years in Africa as missionary/architect and was, until recently, associated with Danmission. He is a former member of the Associated Danish Architects (ADA) and is an AIA International Associate member. Bertelsen completed his formal architectural studies at Aalborg Polytechnic and awarded professional registration by the Government of Denmark. He has taught as a “Professor in Practice” at the University of Minnesota’s College of Design, served as vice chair for Operation Bootstrap Africa, and was a founding member of the board for Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry. Having completed more than 750 projects worldwide, MSAADA believes that all people are worthy of respect - striving to consider the long-term economic, social, and cultural benefits a building can provide for a community. “Bertelsen uses his architecture as a mission,” commented one Committee on Design member. “Without him, most of these projects would never get done.”

J. Drake Hamilton, Science Policy Director, Fresh Energy. Fresh Energy is a 20-year-old private nonprofit organization working to lead transition to a clean, efficient energy system. Hamilton’s responsibilities include scientific analysis, policy development, and outreach on clean energy solutions. She serves on the boards of the United States Green Building Association (Minnesota Chapter) and of the United States Climate Action Network. She was appointed by Governor Tim Pawlenty to serve on the Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group. Hamilton earned degrees in physical geography from Dartmouth College and the University of Minnesota. She worked as a water quality planner for the Metropolitan Council, modeling nonpoint source pollution in the Minnesota River. Prior to joining Fresh Energy in 1995, she was Assistant Professor at George Washington University. In 2005, she was awarded an international leaders fellowship from the European Union. “Hamilton is closely tied to the profession of architecture though her advocacy on sustainability,” said a Committee on Design member. “Her work demonstrates how architecture can make a difference.”
Michael Pilla, Founder, Monarch Studios, Inc. As an expert in historic stained glass and art glass windows, Pilla has led meticulous restoration projects for some of the state’s most important glass installations. These projects have included two of the preeminent Prairie School landmarks in Minneapolis - the Purcell Cutts House and Redeemer Missionary Baptist Church - as well as Tiffany windows at Ascension Episcopal Church in Stillwater and at Saint Stephens Catholic Church in Minneapolis. He was also a key consultant for the cleaning, repair, and/or replacement of more than 71,000 pieces of glass for the full restoration of the rotunda of the Minneapolis Municipal Building (City Hall). One Committee on Design member said, “Pilla has a long record of community work - he supports the community, not just the architectural profession.”

2012 AIA Minnesota Special Award recipients will receive their awards at the annual AIA Minnesota Awards Celebration to be held November 30, 2012, at International Market Square in Minneapolis.

Find more information at [http://www.aia-mn.org/int_committees/awards.cfm](http://www.aia-mn.org/int_committees/awards.cfm)

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.