



Diversity Task Force Members

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Introduction

The profession of architecture is undergoing tremendous change. One of the most critical areas of change is the growing need and demand for greater diversity and inclusion within the profession - both nationally and within Minnesota.

There are both external and internal pressures demanding that the architectural profession become more diverse. The external pressures include public sector clients requiring a more diverse workforce, and private sector clients representing a more diverse cross section of the population. Internal pressure is primarily driven by an aging workforce that is predominantly white male and the need for more experienced professionals to fill the void – professionals who, due to external pressures, would ideally represent a more diverse population. These internal and external pressures have raised the priority of a diverse workforce to the point where it is now a key business goal for architectural practices.

AIA Minnesota recognizes that significant changes must occur if these needs and demands are to be met and is working proactively to grow the diversity and inclusion of the profession. In 2014, the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors established a task force to formulate a diversity policy for AIA Minnesota and to suggest ways to support the implementation of this policy.

In establishing the Diversity Task Force, the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors passed a resolution that outlined its reasons and rationale for this group to be formed:

Whereas, AIA Minnesota is committed to significantly improving the representation of diversity in the architectural profession, and we recognize that we must embrace and encourage differences in age, race, physical ability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make us unique.

Whereas this requires a cultural shift in AIA, in our workplaces, and in ourselves.

Whereas action is required on two fronts: 1) on an organizational level to ensure there are no barriers to organizational diversity, and 2) within the profession itself to encourage and support ways to overcome professional barriers.

With this charge, the Diversity Task Force has been working to initiate discussion around the issues related to diversity and inclusion, and to bring forward a vision and potential strategies for how AIA Minnesota can help to transform the profession to reflect the communities we serve.

Challenges and Obstacles



1. Architectural Education and Knowledge of the Profession

Personal background and experiences shape how we see the world, the careers to which we aspire, and the skills we seek to build. Because most members of the public do not interact directly with architects, public knowledge related to the roles that architects play in the built environment is lacking. Educators – particularly those educating elementary through high school students – are, by and large, not introducing architecture as a profession to aspire to or prepare for. Efforts are needed to expand knowledge of our profession – within the general public overall but with a special focus on elementary and high school students and teachers. Planting seeds of interest in the field architecture early on with today's young people – the most diverse in our nation's history – is essential to growing the diversity of the profession. It will take a special effort on the part of current architects to develop broad public awareness, understanding, and aspiration within the diverse populations of our Minnesota communities. Willingness is needed on the part of both educators and professionals to develop and implement outreach programs inclusive of all populations.

2. Cost of Education and Earning Potential



The cost of higher education shapes the decisions of most students in their choice of educational institutions and fields of study. Students are increasingly weighing the cost of education against the degree to which their anticipated future earnings will allow them to pay back educational loans. This calculation is often unfavorable to the pursuit of an architectural education for many potential students and is impacting the profession's ability to attract new students from diverse communities. Students striving to develop their talents and pursue the dream of becoming an architect are also concerned about the time it takes to become a productive member of the profession and the commensurate delay in earning potential, as compared to other professions.



3. Lack of Cultural/Community Networks Related to the Profession

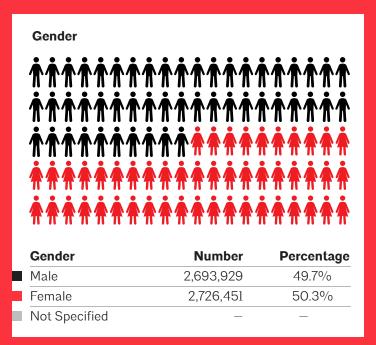
Knowledge of the architectural profession through family or friends who are practicing architects is one way that students gain an interest in the profession. Students from diverse backgrounds may lack access to the profession through friends and family, and as a result may have more limited access to role models and mentors. This lack of access to the architectural network can create systemic disadvantages in obtaining internships and employment.



4. Cultural Homogenity in Defining Success

Like all regions of the country, diversity and inclusion in Minnesota involve issues specific to our geography, cultural heritage, and current events. This context infuses Minnesota-based institutions — including educational institutions, firms, and associations — with specific cultural norms regarding evaluation and decision-making and what is deemed successful or insufficient. Specific to architecture and the profession, many aspects of architectural design education and practice are subjective in nature; those subjective drivers often determine what is considered to be a successful architectural solution. The challenge for students, educators, young professionals, architects, and firm leaders is to be continually open to new ideas and methods of expression, to embrace the influence of diverse backgrounds, and to recognize differing definitions of success in design and problem solving.

Demographic Data for the General Population of Minnesota – 2013 U.S. Census



Race/Ethnicity



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	4,395,928	81.1%
Black or African American	308,962	5.7%
Hispanic or Latino	271,019	5.0%
Asian	243,917	4.5%
Two or more	124,669	2.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	70,465	1.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5,420	0.1%
Not Specified		0.0%

Current AIA Minnesota Efforts & Adopted Policies

AIA Minnesota has multiple vehicles to engage membership and the community regarding diversity. Below are clear examples of ways that the organization is currently supporting diversity within the profession.



Committees:

Women in Architecture – in 2014 The Women in Architecture committee was established. The committee is working on issues specific to retaining women in the profession, providing additional pathways for women to enter the profession, and establishing programs that support women.

Architecture in the Schools – The Architecture in Schools Committee has been committed for multiple years to provide programs at FAIR Downtown and Perpich Center for the Arts. Both schools are ethnically diverse.



Awards/Scholarships:

AIA Minnesota has actively supported the Minnesota Architectural Foundation for many years. The foundation provides a substantial scholarship (Wigington) that support students of color at the University of Minnesota.



Convention:

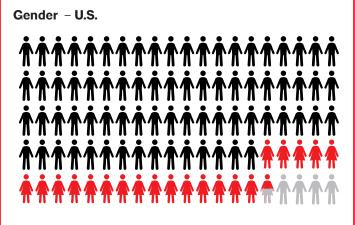
The convention is one of the primary venues through which AIA Minnesota communicates with its membership. In 2014, the Diversity Task Force and the Women in Architecture committee both sponsored and developed convention programs. The Women in Architecture committee has developed a program, co-sponsored by the Diversity Task Force, for the 2015 convention.



Diversity Policy:

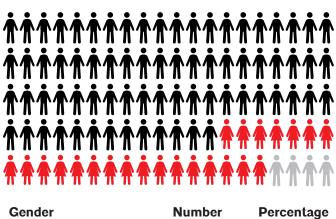
The AIA Minnesota Diversity Task Force developed and proposed a Diversity Policy (see p. 6), which was approved by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors in July 2015. The numerical goals identified in the policy are based on the research of the Diversity Task Force (including the data and infographics shown throughout this report). Efforts have begun to implement this policy throughout the organization.

Demographic Data for Architects – 2015 AIA Members (AIA and Assoc. AIA Members)



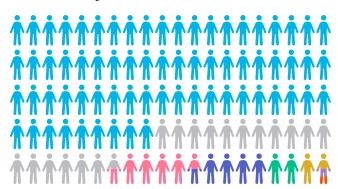
Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	62,882	75.13%
Female	17,145	20.48%
Not Specified	3,676	4.39%

Gender – Minnesota



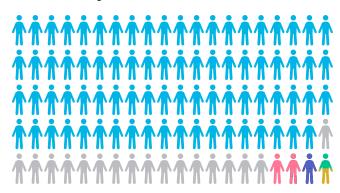
Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	1,572	72.81%
Female	502	23.25%
Not Specified	85	3.94%

Race/Ethnicity - U.S.



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	57,918	69.19%
Not Specified	14,778	17.66%
Asian	4,242	5.07%
Hispanic or Latino	3,626	4.33%
Black or		
African American	1,509	1.8%
Two or more	1,255	1.5%
Native Hawaiian or		
Other Pacific Islander	220	0.26%
American Indian or Alaska Native	155	0.19%

Race/Ethnicity - Minnesota



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	1,703	78.88%
Not Specified	362	16.77%
Asian	42	1.95%
Hispanic or Latino	23	1.07%
Black or		
African American	15	0.69%
Two or more	12	0.55%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0.09%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%

Diversity Policy

Adopted by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors on July 10, 2015

AIA Minnesota believes that a talented and diverse membership is key to the long-term success of our profession and our organization. We believe that when the cultural, demographic, and ethnographic makeup of our members mirrors the communities our members serve, the profession will be better suited for long-term growth. As such, we embrace and encourage differences in all characteristics* that make each of us unique. In support of this vision, AIA Minnesota will:

- Establish, communicate and support a commitment to diversity and inclusion through the organization's governing documents and committees, and through leadership behavior.
- Take and support reasonable risks, including the risk of incurring criticism from dissenting individuals or groups, to foster positive behaviors that promote organizational diversity.
- Commit funding for ongoing initiatives that will strengthen organizational diversity at all levels.
- Require accountability at all levels for fostering and achieving organizational diversity.
- Ensure that the nominating and appointing bodies proactively recruit and include a diverse mix of individuals that reflect the diverse mix of the membership.
- Ensure that access to elected office and committee memberships, chair and spokespersons positions is open to all members in accordance with their talents and interests.
- Mentor new leaders and members from under-represented populations, with particular emphasis on growing the inclusion of women and racial/ethnic minorities.

Therefore, we recommend that AIA Minnesota take the following actions:

- Create partnerships with other organizations (e.g. University of Minnesota College of Design) to research and understand the challenges related to why people leave the profession, with the goal of finding possible solutions to minimize attrition and ways to bring greater diversity into the profession.
- 2. Highlight diverse professionals in our communications with members and the public to build awareness.
- 3. Publish an annual demographic report of all the components of AIA Minnesota (committees, task forces, board members) focused on self-identified gender identity and race/ethnicity to ensure that there is accountability on diversity within the organization.
- 4. Amend the Strategic Plan to include the Diversity Statement and Policy.
- 5. Review and revise AIA Minnesota's bylaws for language demonstrating inclusiveness to show commitment to change.
- 6. Establish reasonable targets to increase participation of women and racial/ethnic minorities. Preliminary AIA Minnesota membership targets (subject to revision by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors) recommended by the AIA Minnesota Diversity Task Force are as follows:
 - a. Reflect the percentage of women in the population of Minnesota (approximately 50%) by the year 2026 (pursuing a 2.5% increase annually in female membership); and

b. Reflect the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities in the population of Minnesota (approximately 19%) by the year 2035 (pursuing a 0.75% increase annually in the number of members who are racial/ethnic minorities).

7. Annually review the Diversity Policy and progress on targets, and adjust the policy as needed.

Our purpose in setting forth this commitment is to develop an architectural profession that reflects the diversity of the communities, users, and clients we serve.

* Characteristics shall include, but not limited to, age, race, physical ability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and veteran status.

Demographic Data for Students of Architecture (National and Minnesota Data)

Gender – U.S. (NAAB Enrollment 2012)

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	15,394	57.33%
Female	11,456	42.67%
Not Specified	_	_

Gender – Dunwoody College of Technology 2015–16 Bachelor of Architecture Program



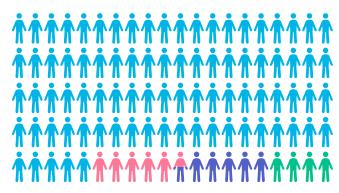
Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	40	75.0%
Female	13	25.0%
Not Specified	_	_

Race/Ethnicity – U.S. (NAAB Enrollment 2012)



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	13,602	52.25%
Black or African American	3,924	15.07%
Asian	2,742	10.53%
Non-Resident Alien	2,732	10.49%
Not Specified	1,751	6.73%
Hispanic or Latino	554	2.13%
Two or more	554	2.13%
American Indian or Alaska Native	111	0.43%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	63	0.24%

Race/Ethnicity – Dunwoody College of Technology 2015–16 – Bachelor of Architecture Program



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	45	85.0%
Asian	3	5.5%
Hispanic or Latino	3	5.5%
Black or African American	2	4.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Two or more	0	0.0%
Non-Resident Alien	0	0.0%
Not Specified	0	0.0%

Goals & Recommendations

At the national level, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) established the "Gateway Commitment" in 2008 and, consequently, developed and began implementing the 2009-2013 AIA Diversity Action Plan.

Within that plan, four clear goals were established to create greater diversity within the profession, nationwide. The following goals are modified from this national action plan to be specific to AIA Minnesota. Within each goal area, the Diversity Task Force is also recommending a variety of potential action items to be considered as AIA Minnesota moves forward with strategic planning and the allocation of resources.

The goals, recommendations, and potential additional actions are intended to be consistent with the Diversity Policy approved by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors in July 2015 and to provide suggestions for how that policy might be implemented.

The Diversity Task Force also recognizes that commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive profession, and willingness to change processes and institutions in order to demonstrate that commitment, is needed from many stakeholders – most importantly, AIA Minnesota's volunteer and staff leadership, the leaders of firms/employers in the Minnesota architecture community, and the leaders of Minnesota's educational institutions. The Task Force is hopeful and optimistic that these leaders will embrace these goals and devote the resources necessary to drive real and meaningful change within the profession.

Goal 1:

Create awareness of the profession within communities of color and underrepresented cultures and encourage architecture as a career path.

Recommendations

- 1. Highlight diverse professionals in communications with members and the public;
- Raise awareness of issues related to diversity and inclusion

 in the context of the profession and in the broader context as well;
- 3. Incorporate awareness-raising information and perspectives in regular communications, such as newsletters, magazines, annual reports, and membership/ leadership meetings; and
- 4. Lift up diverse practitioners in communications to the general public, such as through magazine articles, demonstrating that there are diverse role models in the profession to emulate.

Additional action items to consider:

- Create benchmarks of current data and diversity and inclusion efforts;
- Conduct a survey of current associates to learn about their path to becoming architects;
- Support and foster engagement in current (and potentially new) mentorship programs and afterschool programs;
- Hold a "career day" focused on the many options available to practice architecture;
- Actively recruit diverse students to consider the profession of architecture;
- Get involved in existing job and career fairs;
- Establish and grow existing partnerships with local high schools; and
- Identify and provide support to STEM classroom programs.



Gender – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, M.Arch.

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	53	56.0%
Female	42	44.0%
Not Specified	_	_

Race/Ethnicity – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, M.Arch.



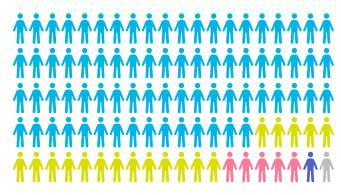
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	62	65.0%
International	18	20.0%
Asian	7	7.0%
Hispanic or Latino	4	4.0%
 Black or African American 	3	3.0%
Not Specified	1	1.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Two or More	0	0.0%

Gender – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, BS



Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	74	67.0%
Female	36	33.0%
Not Specified	_	_

Race/Ethnicity – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, BS



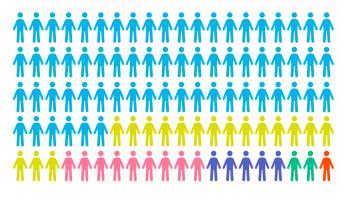
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	83	75.0%
International	20	18.0%
Asian	5	5.0%
Hispanic or Latino	1	1.0%
Not Specified	1	1.0%
American Indian		
or Alaska Native	0	0.0%
Black or		
African American	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or		
Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Two or more	0	0.0%

Demographic Data for Students of Architecture

Gender – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, BDA

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	67	51.0%
Female	65	49.0%
Not Specified	_	_

Race/Ethnicity – University of Minnesota 2015-16 School of Architecture, BDA



Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	87	66.0%
International	22	17.0%
Asian	12	9.0%
Hispanic or Latino	6	5.0%
Black or African American	3	2.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Two or More	0	0.0%
Not Specified	0	0.0%



Goal 2:

Increase the demographic representation of diverse students from communities of color and underrepresented cultures enrolled in Minnesota architecture programs at NAAB-accredited schools to at least 100 percent of their proportional representation within the State of Minnesota population.

Recommendation:

1. Work with the NAAB-accredited schools in the Minnesota region to develop collaborative efforts in attracting and retaining diverse students.

Additional action items to consider:

- Create benchmarks of current student data;
- Collaborate to develop a five-year plan with specific targets and milestones;
- Create a state-wide representative leadership team to focus on student recruitment and retention;
- Conduct a survey of current students to learn about their path to pursuing a degree in architecture;
- Grow connections to members of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS);
- Reach out to the underrepresented students of color enrolled in the architectural program for mentoring and support and establish clear lines of communication;
- Grow the scholarships provided to diverse students of architecture;
- Create opportunities for job shadowing;
- Work with faculty to identify and acknowledge bias within academic texts and curriculum; and
- Encourage a diversity of project types be explored as part of the curriculum.

Goal 3:

Increase the representation of diverse professionals from communities of color, underrepresented cultures, and women among associates, senior management, partners, and principals in architecture firms to at least 100 percent of their proportional representation within the State of Minnesota.

Recommendations:

- 1. Determine when and why individuals, overall, drop out of the profession of architecture or choose a non-traditional career path and where they go/intend to go next;
- 2. Conduct in-depth research on when and why women and people of color drop out of the profession or choose a non-traditional career path and where they go/intend to go next;
- 3. Partner with NAAB-accredited institutions to generate accurate data on the current diversity of the profession and solid research methodologies to employ going forward;
- 4. Work with NAAB-accredited institutions to track the career paths of their architecture program graduates; and
- 5. Identify experienced and well-regarded research organizations that are conducting, or could conduct, research related to diversity and inclusion and/or the profession of architecture.

Additional action items to consider:

- Create a benchmark of current data for each firm to set baselines;
- Actively engage with underrepresented professionals of color to provide mentoring and support throughout the first years of the profession;
- Strengthen support for the pursuit of ARE and IDP;
- Develop leadership capacity around equity and diversity within firms;
- Educate firm leaders on the benefits of having diverse groups represented on their teams and within firm leadership;
- Gather research to inform improvements in education for leadership on various diversity and inclusion topics;
- Grow understanding of unseen and implicit biases and how such biases play out within firm culture and the everyday practice of architecture;
- Grow understanding of the broader issues of systemic and institutional racism;
- Educate firm leaders on how to deal with situations when clients demonstrate bias or overtly demean diverse individuals within the architecture profession (e.g., women, people of color, LGBT individuals, people with disabilities, etc.);
- Identify and take advantage of high-quality cultural competency training;
- Identify data/research-driven changes necessary to create a workplace culture that is inclusive of diversity; and
- Hold leaders accountable to established diversity goals, policies, and values.

Goal 4:

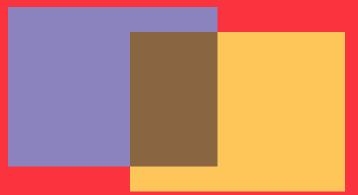
Increase the demographic representation of diverse professionals from communities of color, underrepresented cultures, and women who are members of AIA Minnesota to at least 100 percent of their representation within the State of Minnesota population.

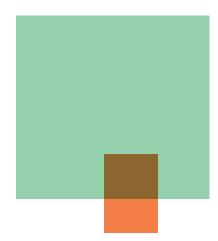
Recommendations:

- 1. Commit to change by fully implementing the Diversity Policy passed by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors in July 2015;
- 2. Include the Diversity Policy as part of the 2015 strategic plan update and ensure that future strategic planning processes are informed by the Diversity Policy;
- 3. Track diversity within the AIA Minnesota membership, measuring diversity in the profession within Minnesota (including non-members and unlicensed architectural workers), measuring and comparing the diversity of the profession to the diversity of Minnesota's NAAB-accredited schools of architecture, and measuring (and tracking over time) the percentage of diverse members of AIA Minnesota in comparison to the percentage of diverse members of the national AIA organization.
- 4. Expand member information updates to gather diversity-related data.
- 5. Infuse AIA Minnesota committees, task forces, boards with diverse leaders in terms of gender and race/ethnicity.
- 6. Ensure that the Nominating Committee's selection criteria includes consideration of diversity in terms of gender and race/ethnicity.
- 7. Include a reporting of AIA Minnesota's demographic composition in each year's annual report to the membership.

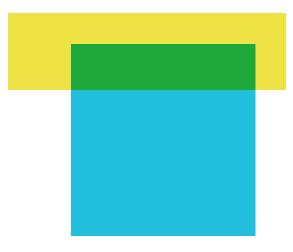
Items for consideration:

- Create a benchmark of current membership data;
- Connect with other like-minded organizations with similar goals that are already active in diversity and inclusion efforts;
- Reach out to diverse professionals who already hold leadership roles in firms and engage them in this effort; and
- Organize data on the diverse professionals already in the profession in any role and engage them in this effort.











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