



Matrix is the official newsletter of
The American Institute of Architects Minnesota

Matrix

AIA MINNESOTA MATRIX NEWSLETTER
November 2025



**Honorary
AIA Minnesota
Membership
for
Mary-Margaret
Zindren,
Hon. AIAMN**

Hon. AIAMN

by Mary-Margaret Zindren, Hon.AIAMN, EVP/Executive Director

Those of you who attended the Annual Meeting of AIA Minnesota on Tuesday witnessed my surprise and tearful response when I was awarded honorary membership in AIA Minnesota.

As a past president said to me the next day, didn't you expect it was coming? It's true that, as of July 6, I'd served the organization for 10 years – the threshold at which one can be considered for this honor – and I'd had every indication that my presidents and boards of directors had been pleased with my work for the duration of that time.

But when the awards event in August came and went, and the preparations for the Awards Celebration and Annual Meeting at the Annual Conference showed no signs that this was in the offing I thought, maybe, probably, in all the stress of Conference preparations and life in general, it just got missed. I had reconciled myself to the fact that it wasn't going to happen this year.

And then, SURPRISE! Not only had my dearest collaborator, Amber Allardyce, kept this secret from me, she had made arrangements with my family to be there, too (which I didn't know had happened until they joined me at the end of the program, flowers in hand). President **Jennifer Christiaansen, AIA**, and the entire AIA Minnesota Board of Directors had kept the secret, too – who knows for how long. And past president **Amy Kalar, AIA**, had written and delivered the most humbling speech about my leadership and service. She knew me well enough to know the surprise would require a written version I could read later, as I would be too overwhelmed to hear it in real time.

What's true is that even if it wouldn't have been a surprise, I probably would have been a bit of a wreck receiving it. I have been doing this work of associations for 30 years. The greatest honor one can receive in association leadership is for your members to see you, to honor you, as one of their own.

I have tremendous respect for your intelligence and knowledge, your work ethic and fortitude, your creativity and innovative thinking, your ideals and values, and for the good you do in the world for people and for the planet. It is truly an honor and a privilege to support your success and I am so grateful to be in your company – and that of my fellow long-tenured staff members Amber Allardyce, Hon. AIAMN; Deanna Christiansen, Hon. AIAMN; Chris Hudson, Hon. AIAMN, and Pam Nelson, Hon. AIAMN, as well as the staff who I hope will meet this milestone in the future, too.

Thank you to all the AIA Minnesota leaders I have worked over the past decade – I wouldn't be here without you – and to the members who went out of their way to offer congratulations during the conference. It was wonderful to share one of the happiest and proudest moments of my life with you!

AIA MINNESOTA FIRM AWARD 2025



Alliance Receives 2025 Firm Award

AIA Minnesota is pleased to announce that [Alliance](#) is the 2025 AIA Minnesota Firm Award recipient. Given biennially, this prestigious award is among the highest honors bestowed by the association; it recognizes an AIA Minnesota architecture firm that has made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the architecture profession.

The Architectural Alliance (the firm's original name) was founded in 1970 by **Bob Bell, AIA**, **John Lackens, FAIA**, and **Herb Ketcham, FAIA**, on a collaborative design philosophy that prioritized teamwork, client partnership, and connecting people and place through design. That founding ethos still guides the firm today.

For more on the firm and the award, including jury comments, [read](#) the press release.

AIA MINNESOTA HONOR AWARDS 2025



2025 Honor Awards Announced

In October, the following 10 projects were selected to receive a 2025 AIA Minnesota Honor Award:

- **Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Research Building** in Rochester, Minnesota, by HDR
- **Energizer Park** in St. Louis, Missouri, by HOK + Snow Kreilich Architects
- **Jackson Hole History Museum** in Jackson, Wyoming, by HGA + Prospect Studio
- **Lakewood Welcome Center** in Minneapolis, by Snow Kreilich Architects + Miller Dunwiddie
- **Metal Lark** in Frederic, Wisconsin, by SALA Architects
- **North Island Retreat** in Ely, Minnesota, by VJAA
- **Pennsylvania State Archives** in Harrisburg, by HGA + Vitetta, a DRG

Architects Company

- **River Hub at Graco Park** in Minneapolis, by Snow Kreilich Architects
- **Treetop Trail at the Minnesota Zoo** in Apply Valley, by Snow Kreilich Architects
- **Windgate Studio and Design Center at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville**, by HGA + MAHG Architecture

[Read](#) the press release.

A'25 MN: THE MINNESOTA CONFERENCE ON ARCHITECTURE



Thank You for Attending A'25 MN!

The staff and member leaders of AIA Minnesota thank you for attending our annual conference. We hope you found it educational and inspirational! Look for a recap in the December edition of Matrix.

A special thanks to all of our speakers and volunteers. This could not happen without your participation and support.

Thank you to all of our exhibitors and sponsors!

Without your support, this event would not be possible. We hope that the venue, exhibit hall spaces, and the programs provided the opportunity for you to engage with our attendees, showcase your products and services, and further your relationships with the architects and project decision makers. [View the complete list of exhibitors and contact information »](#)

Continue Learning from Keynote Speaker Molly Kawahata

Molly Kawahata, former advisor in the Obama White House and the subject of Patagonia's *The Scale of Hope*, was our closing keynote speaker. She continues that conversation on her podcast, *Full Spectrum*, where she brings together researchers, creators, and thinkers to explore how we find motivation, clarity, and

purpose in uncertain times. Whether you're looking to build hope in your team, find clarity amid uncertainty, or rethink how you approach change, *Full Spectrum* offers practical tools you can apply in your own life and work.

Listen: [Full Spectrum Podcast](#)

CALL TO ACTION

Share Your Feedback on the 2026 Minnesota Climate Action Framework Draft

Minnesota is updating its Climate Action Framework to include a more comprehensive set of actions with a stronger focus on collaboration, community benefits, and workforce needs. Increased state and federal investments in climate action over the last three years have resulted in new opportunities defined in the updated framework.

State leaders recently shared a draft of [the 2026 Climate Action Framework update](#) for public comment.

The State is looking for your feedback by November 9. How do you see yourself in the draft of the framework? What would you add or change? Read a draft of the framework and share your perspective through a survey on our [Engagement HQ page »](#)

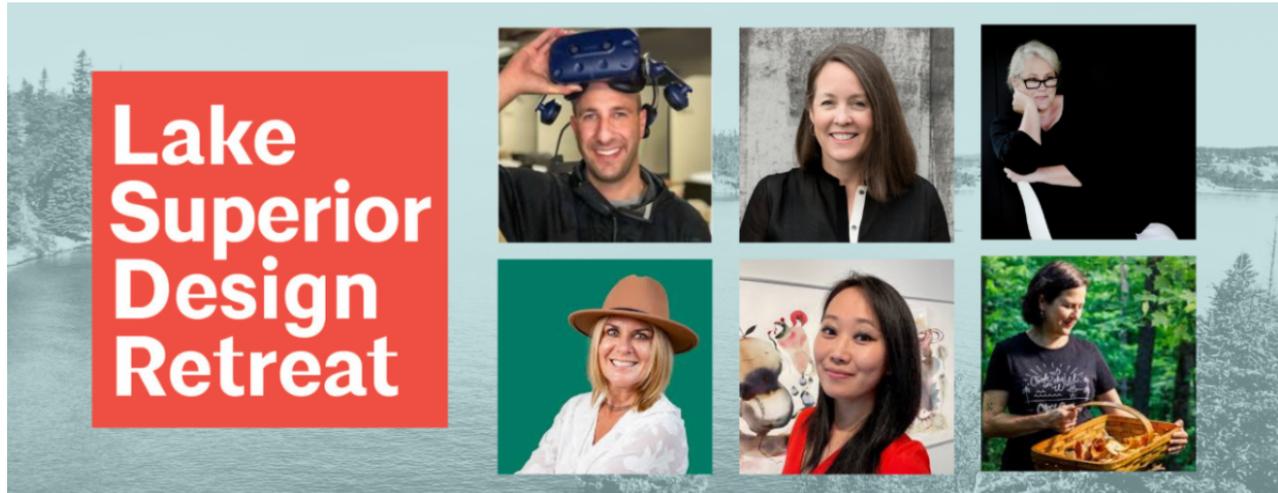
Unlock Your Next Opportunity with the AIA Minnesota Job Bank

Whether you're seeking a job or looking to hire new employees, the AIA Minnesota Job Bank is your FREE connection to talent and opportunities in Minnesota's architecture and design community.

Firms & Companies: [Start posting your open positions today »](#)

Job Seekers: [Begin your search for your next job now »](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Lake Superior Design Retreat 2026

Mark your calendars: The 2026 [Lake Superior Design Retreat](#) will be March 6 & 7 at Zeitgeist in Duluth! [Click here](#) to join our mailing list and be the first to hear LSDR updates. Registration and sponsorship opportunities will open soon!

Meet all six of our speakers:

Amir Berenjian is the CEO of [REM5 Studios](#), an immersive technology company focused on empowering its partners with emerging technologies like augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), spatial computing, and artificial intelligence (AI).

Jennifer Guthrie, FASLA, is a founding partner of [GGN](#) and a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Her work ranges broadly, encompassing urban districts of green streets and mixed-use housing, public squares, rooftop gardens, urban farms, and cultural institutions.

Mary Jo Hoffman is a former aeronautical engineer turned [artist](#), photographing found nature every day for over a decade. Her 2024 book [STILL: The Art of Noticing](#) features 275 of her photographs and personal essays, illustrating how "the art of noticing is the same as the art of living." She has collaborated on collections with Target and West Elm.

Amy Noble Seitz is the founder and CEO of [Exhibit Development Group](#) (EDG) and [CultureNut](#), a division of EDG. EDG ignites and promotes cultural exchange by bringing high-quality traveling exhibitions of art, science, history and popular culture to a diverse audience worldwide. CultureNut is a sustainable solution to help cultural institutions and the attractions industry upcycle idle assets, transforming unused inventory into income while reducing storage needs and landfill waste.

Suyao Tian is a water-based [abstract painter](#) and independent curator based in the Twin Cities. Her work has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally, and her paintings are included in the permanent

collections of prestigious museums, institutions, and distinguished collectors. She has collaborated with MSP International Airport and partnered with leading companies including Target, West Elm, and Room & Board.

Kathy Yerich is a [forager](#) specializing in mushrooms and co-author of [Mushrooms of the Upper Midwest](#), a field guide for lay folks to identify fungi around them.

New FAIA Legacy Project Videos Available

The three new FAIA Legacy Project videos that premiered at A'25 MN are now available for viewing on the AIA Minnesota [website](#). Hear from **Sally Grans Korsh, FAIA**, **Julie Snow, FAIA**, and **Joan Soranno, FAIA**, about their careers, and watch all the legacy project videos captured so far. You can also read the oral history transcripts captured as part of the legacy project, available on the same webpage.

Nathan Davies, Assoc. AIA, Representing Minnesota on National Associates Committee

Nathan Davies, Assoc. AIA, was selected by the AIA Minnesota Board of Directors to serve as the Minnesota AIA State/Territory Associate Representative (STAR) on the National Associates Committee (NAC). Davies will be a key conduit for information and support between Associate AIA members within Minnesota and AIA.

MINNESOTA ARCHITECTURAL FOUNDATION



MAF Raffle Success!

The Minnesota Architectural Foundation (MAF) is thrilled to share the success of this year's raffle! We successfully raised over \$10,000 to support much needed scholarship funds. MAF is deeply grateful for your contributions!

2026 Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Opportunity

The MAF Ralph Rapson Traveling Study Award Committee reminds you and your colleagues of the upcoming 2026 competition dates: January 29–February 10, 2026. Applications will open on December 1, 2025. [Learn more about the application eligibility, process, and timeline.](#)

CONTINUING EDUCATION



Continuing Education

AIA MINNESOTA ON-DEMAND WEBINARS NOW AVAILABLE

Make use of [AIA Minnesota on-demand webinars](#) to gain new knowledge and apply the credits to meet your CE requirements.

- [Demystifying Decarbonization](#) 1.25 HSW LUs
- [What Would You Do? Navigating the Intersection of Building Codes and Ethics](#) 1.5 HSW LUs and Ethics
- [Ethics in Public Interest Design](#) 2.0 LUs and Ethics
- [Means of Egress: A General Introduction](#) 1.5 HSW LUs
- [Do Designers Know Best? Fighting for the Design Solutions We Believe In](#) 1.25 LUs and Ethics
- [Local Lessons from the COTE Top Ten](#) 1.5 HSW LUs
- [\(Sustainable\) Design is in the Details](#) 1.5 HSW LUs
- [The Ethics of Ableism](#) 2.0 HSW LUs and Ethics
- [Ethics: Designing/Constructing Public Projects through an Equity Lens](#) 2.0 LUs and Ethics
- [Code Provisions for Mixed Occupancies](#) 1.5 HSW LU
- [Ethical Design in the Era of Climate Change](#) 2.0 HSW LUs and Ethics

Questions? Contact [Deanna Christiansen](#).

LEADERSHIP FORUM



Leadership Forum

Applications Due Soon - November 14, 2025!

We are now planning and looking forward to year 17 of the AIA Minnesota Leadership Forum! The Leadership Forum develops and fosters leadership skills of mid-career members of AIA Minnesota and MSP NOMA. The content of the curriculum provides insight and tools for growth in the areas of leadership styles, values, self-awareness, intercultural leadership, communication, motivation, and engagement.

Eligibility requirements are:

- Candidates **must be** an AIA Minnesota or MSP NOMA member
- License is **not** required
- Minimum of 10 years' industry experience **is** required

[2026 Application »](#)

View a [PDF application](#) here for review purposes only.

Applications due - November 14, 2025

Cohort selection announced - December 4, 2025

Tuition is \$800 (scholarships and payment plans available)

Visit the [Leadership Forum website »](#)

Questions? Contact [Deanna Christiansen](#).

NATIONAL & LOCAL CHAPTER UPDATES

AIA NATIONAL

AIA AWARDS OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS

Several important AIA awards and recognitions programs are accepting applications in November.

Programs accepting submissions: Architecture Award, COTE Top 10, Education Facility Design Award, Healthcare Design Award, Housing Award, Interior Architecture Award, Justice Facility Award, Regional & Urban Design Award, 25 Year Award, and Small Project Award. **All programs have a submission due date of November 13.**

[Learn more about open AIA awards programs »](#)

AIA INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY TOWN HALL

Join the Interior Architecture Knowledge Community on November 18 at 4pm ET to hear about the work of Interior Architecture groups across AIA components and explore opportunities to get involved. Connect with peers, share ideas, and gain inspiration for starting or expanding a group in your area. [Register »](#)

AIA ADVOCACY: FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN, H1-B VISA FEES

The AIA federal affairs team is tracking the impacts of the ongoing federal government shutdown. You can learn more on the potential impacts and [get updates from AIA »](#)

Additionally, the Trump Administration added a \$100,000 fee to enter the H1-B visa lottery program, which significantly impacts the design industry.

The AIA federal affairs team is advocating against this move and may reach out to ask you to contact your members of Congress to urge them to act on these and other issues in the coming weeks. Please watch your inbox and act quickly on any requests from the federal team that you receive.

INFORM AIA's 2026 POLICY AGENDA

AIA is seeking input to guide its 2026 national government affairs and public policy priorities. Member and component feedback will inform AIA's approach to affordable housing, environmental resiliency, tax policy, and other key issues impacting the profession. [Respond today »](#)

NEW REPORTS AVAILABLE FROM AIA

The *2025 AIA Compensation & Benefits Report* was released on September 30. A printed copy is available at the AIA Minnesota office. Please contact [Amber Allardyce](#) to schedule a time to view the report.

The *AIA Small Firm Compensation & Benefits Report*, customized for sole practitioners and very small firms with no more than three licensed architects, will be released in January 2026.

AIA has also released its *2030 by the Numbers* report, which explores the data reported by firms that have taken the AIA 2030 pledge and completed reporting through 2024. Explore the full report for trends in renewable energy inclusion, embodied carbon data, building electrification, and energy model usage. [View the report »](#)



Now is the ideal time to renew your AIA membership! As an AIA member, you are part of a powerful, unified voice for the architecture profession. You've helped us advocate for better building codes, champion sustainable design, and connect thousands of professionals across the industry. Don't let your connection lapse. Renew your membership now to ensure you keep receiving the resources you rely on. [Renew your membership & stay connected »](#)

AIA NORTHERN MINNESOTA

INFINITE FACADE CEU & TOUR OF THE LAKEVIEW AT 333 (1.0 AIA LU) + SOCIAL AT SIR BEN'S**Thursday, November 13**[Register »](#)

At 3:30–4:30 pm, in a presentation and walk-through hosted by Jace Rossow (Wells Regional Facades Manager), we will learn about the Infinite Façade system by Wells and tour some of the beautiful Lakeview at 333 E. Superior building that is opening this fall.

4:30-5:30 pm, join us for a social at Sir Benedict's Tavern on the Lake (805 E Superior St). Appetizers to be purchased by AIA Northern Minnesota. Beverages to be purchased on your own.

AIA ST. PAUL

ST. PAUL PRIZE

Calling all designers! Get ready for the highly anticipated annual AIA Saint Paul Prize design competition to open November 6–25, 2025. Compete alongside fellow emerging designers for a chance to win \$3,000. As an added honor, the winner(s) will receive an exclusive invitation to present at AIA Saint Paul's Food for Thought seminar, set for the first quarter of 2026. [Learn more and apply »](#)

ROCHESTER AREA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CAREER FAIR

The Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a STEAM Summit where more than 3,000 middle and high school students participate in interactive, hands-on activities. The AIA MN Architecture in the Schools Committee is seeking volunteers to take on shifts for this event; activities support will be provided by the Committee in advance of the event.

The STEAM Summit will be held Tuesday Nov 18, 7:00 am - 3:00 pm at the RCTC Regional Sports Center in Rochester.

To learn more or to sign up, contact [Mary-Margaret Zindren](#).

COMMITTEE AND KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY UPDATES**ARCHITECT LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Next meeting, Wednesday, December 3, 12:30 pm

[Virtual meeting](#)

LATTES + LICENSURE

Wednesday, November 12th, 8-10am

@ Rise Bagel Co., 530 N 3rd Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Have questions about the path to licensure?

Are you stuck on an exam/experience category?

Don't know where to start?

JOIN US for a licensure study, support, and resource group!

Questions? Email ALA Committee co-chair [Olivia Sprosty, AIA](#).

ARCHITECTURE IN THE SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 20, 12:00 pm

[Virtual Meeting](#)

Architecture in the Schools is now Youth in Architecture (YA!)

We're changing our name! The Architecture in the Schools Committee will now be the Youth in Architecture (YA!) Committee. The name change recognizes that most of the Committee's K-12 outreach takes place outside of school settings through partnerships with nonprofits and community events.

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BUILDING CODES KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 10, 12:00 pm

[Virtual Meeting](#)

COMMITTEE ON DESIGN

Thursday, November 13, 12:00 pm

[Virtual Meeting](#)

COMMITTEE ON EQUITY IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (EBE)

Tuesday, November 18, 3:30 pm

[Virtual Meeting](#)

Join our next meeting as we plan activities for 2026.

COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (COTE)

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Next meeting: Friday, December 12, 12:00 pm

[Virtual Meeting](#)

COUNCIL OF FIRMS KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Join us in December for an in-person social. Details soon.

EMERGING PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 13, 12:00 pm (meetings are held quarterly)

[Virtual Meeting](#)

ENTER COMMITTEE

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 18, 12:00 pm
[Virtual Meeting](#)

HEALTH DESIGN KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

The Health Design Knowledge Community is Reengaging!

The Knowledge Community is reengaging and planning to meet in January. Details will come soon. If you are not on the **HDKC email list** and would like to be, please email [Deanna Christiansen](#).

Please also take 2-5 minutes to complete this [BRIEF SURVEY](#). Your responses will help us shape future programming, determine the most beneficial topics, and identify the best timing and format for our gatherings.

HOUSING ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Next Meeting: Wednesday December 3, 12:00 pm
[Virtual Meeting](#)

LAKE SUPERIOR DESIGN RETREAT COMMITTEE

Monday, November 17, 11:30 am
[Virtual Meeting](#)

Mark your calendars! The 2026 Lake Superior Design Retreat will be on March 6-7.

MINNESOTA DESIGN TEAM COMMITTEE (MDT)

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

WINTER SOCIAL

Thursday, December 18, 4:30 pm
[The Market at Malcom Yards](#)

Join us for an in-person social to celebrate the successful visit this year and connect with your fellow MDT volunteers—or join us for the first time to learn more about the committee and program. No need to RSVP, and feel free to invite your friends and colleagues.

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 11, 12:00 pm
[Virtual Meeting](#)

Join us at our November 11 committee meeting to review and discuss the Homes by Architects Tour Small Projects Showcase pilot and the Homes by Architects Tour submission review process.

Did you know our Residential Architecture Committee is a chapter of AIA CRAN, the Custom Residential Architects Network? [Learn more about CRAN and access its forums and resources »](#)

WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 17, 12:00 pm
[Virtual Meeting](#)

PEOPLE & FIRMS

Lee Tollefson, FAIA, is retiring after 55 years of shaping communities through design. There will be a celebration of Lee's retirement on November 6, 2025 in conjunction with the **Architecture Advantage** 20 year anniversary celebration. [Please click here for more information and to RSVP »](#)

WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

Sean Donner, Assoc. AIA

New Allied Members

Watson-Forsberg Construction
Hagstrom Builders

IN MEMORIAM

Tom Cain, AIA, passed away in October 2025. [View the obituary »](#)

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION NEWS & EVENTS

[UMN KUSSKE LECTURE: BRUCE MAU & BISI WILLIAMS NOVEMBER 10 »](#)

[CONSTRUCTION TALENT ACQUISITION CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 11-12 »](#)

Hosted by Project Build MN, this event is designed for people who are passionate about recruiting and retaining skilled talent.

UMN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW CLINIC

The [IP Clinic](#) provides local community members with the opportunity to receive legal assistance in matters involving intellectual property, including copyrightable works, trademarks, patents, and confidentiality obligations. Legal assistance is provided by second and third-year law school

students under the supervision of a licensed attorney. There is no charge for participating in the IP Clinic, though clients are responsible for out-of-pocket costs (such as copyright registration and trademark application fees). Complete the [application](#) and send to lawclinic@umn.edu. Services available through April 2026.

UMN ONLINE RESOURCES

Visit the College of Design's [online calendar](#) for regular updates on activities.

UMN CAREER AND INTERNSHIP RESOURCES

Employers with jobs, internships, or smaller, project-based micro-internships are encouraged to post opportunities for students and recent grads at careerhelp.umn.edu.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit the [AIA Minnesota Events Calendar](#) for more information about upcoming events.



*Matrix is published
by AIA Minnesota.*

AIA Minnesota President
Jennifer Christiaansen, AIA

AIA Minnesota Executive Vice President
Mary-Margaret Zindren, CAE

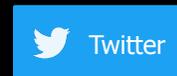
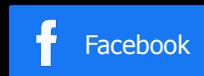
AIA Minnesota Matrix Editor
Sheri Hansen

DECEMBER Matrix editorial deadline is Friday, November 14.

JANUARY Matrix editorial deadline is Friday, December 12.

Please submit content to [AIA Minnesota](#).

Get updates on events, activities, and the latest architectural news from AIA Minnesota and its chapters on social media. Don't forget to tag us on your news to share!



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