



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

AIA MICHIGAN ANNOUNCES NEW FELLOWS

February 6, 2015 - Detroit, Michigan- The American Institute of Architects has named the 2014 College of Fellows inductees and AIA Michigan is pleased to announce Damian Farrell, FAIA and Sandra Laux, FAIA are recipients of this honor.



DAMIAN FARRELL, FAIA - Damian has served at a community, chapter, and state level in the AIA and architecture profession as a communicator, activist, and leader. He is currently in his second term as Vice President of the AIA Huron Valley Chapter board and will transition to the role of President for the second time. With the AIA Michigan Chapter, Damian has served on the Mid-Summer Conference committee continuously since 2000 and was the Committee Chair in 2002.

Damian also leads the Chapter Grants program on the Board of the Michigan Architectural Foundation. Working with chapters throughout the state applying for grants that are dedicated to the promotion of architecture, the grant applications have doubled in the 6 years that he has been working with the program.

With the Ann Arbor community, Damian has had leadership roles on two impactful task forces. One being a seven year process to rewrite the City's zoning ordinance and the other resulted in a set of planning and design guidelines for an area in the City of Ann Arbor. The outcomes of the two taskforces now act as guides for many projects in Ann Arbor.

Additionally in Ann Arbor, Damian was very active on the board of the Ann Arbor Art Center for 12 years. As president, he led the search for an additional facility to accommodate and promote the growth of the center. Damian currently serves on the Advisory Committee for an annual fundraiser, *The Event on Main* which benefits the Mott Children's Hospital and von Voightlander Women's Hospital in Ann Arbor. In an effort to raise awareness of the event, Damian leads groups through the contemporary art collection in the hospitals in the months leading up to the fundraiser.

As an impactful communicator, Damian has his own weekly radio show, *Damian on Design*, where he reaches thousands of individuals across the United States and across the globe to discuss design and connect with individuals who may not have access to such discussions.

Through Damian's many accomplishments and services, his actions show true advocacy towards the community, design, and leadership.

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SANDRA LAUX, FAIA - Through her impressive portfolio, award winning projects, and passion for the built environment, Sandra has made an impact on students, the public and her service to the AIA.

Sandra is passionate about education and stresses critical thinking. She conducts an informal lecture series called “My Two Cents” where topics about design decisions and past works are discussed in an effort to bring perspective to the work environment for young architects. As a past professor at the University of Detroit Mercy, she strived towards creating a positive learning environment to her students. So much, that many years later students were still impacted by her vision for their careers.

Sandra has also made an impact on the economy with her master plan for Atlanta’s Techwood-Clark Howell project for HOPE VI communities, which became the first mixed – income community in the nation to include a public housing component. Because of the success, this housing has set the standard for HOPE VI and has been implemented in other public housing developments across the nation. In October 2000, HOPE VI was nationally recognized and was a recipient of an “Innovations in American Government Award.”

In addition, Sandra was the designer for the Historic Detroit Opera House renovation project. Her mission to restore the space to its original glory demonstrates the thoughtful consideration for the character and detailing of the structure that serves today’s performance needs. It is now the permanent residence of operas, musicals, and dance recitals warranting the 2001 AIA National Honor Award, the 2000 AIA Michigan Honor Award, and the 1999 AIA Detroit Honor Award that it received. Most recently, the Wells Hall Language Arts Building at Michigan State University earned honor awards from AIA Michigan, AIA Detroit, and the Masonry Institute of Michigan.

As an advocate for the profession, Sandra has launched three initiatives as the Chair of the AIA Michigan Public Awareness Committee. These initiatives include: *Public Awareness, Public Involvement, and Education*. Because of the success of the programs, AIA Michigan created a Public Policy Director position which focuses to continue and propagate the initiatives.

Sandra continues to adapt to different projects, share her visions for the profession, and provide service to the community and strive towards a better built environment.

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