



sara taketatsu

AIAS West Quad Director Candidacy Packet
2019-2020

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Sara Taketatsu
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Boulder, CO 80303

Keshika De Saram, AIAS, Assoc. AIA
Past President AIAS
1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006-5292

RE: Letter of Intent to Run for AIAS West Quadrant Director

Dear Past President Keshika De Saram,

It is with great excitement that I write to inform you of my intent to run for the 2019-2020 West Quad Director position on the American Institute of Architecture Students National Board of Directors.

The community of students that AIAS brings together is absolutely inspiring. We all strive to be better than we were and we all value good design. These incredibly fundamental traits connect all of us as makers, doers, and dreamers. The amount of passion and drive that AIAS members have astounds me every day and keeps me excited for the future of architecture.

The people I get to interact with because of AIAS are my reason for running. I am running for the opportunity to support their goals, passions, and local school communities. I also see an incredible amount of potential of the organization and the profession to develop more inclusionary practices in the pursuit of more meaningful collaboration and increased access to the design community. People are foundational to design, to my experience as an architecture student, and the future of the profession. I am delighted to have the chance to serve and advocate for the members of AIAS, and the West Quad.

I am incredibly excited to be running for this position and am confident in my ability to carry out the duties of the West Quad Director based on my leadership experience and dedication to AIAS. Thank you for this opportunity as well as your service to AIAS.

Best regards,



Sara Taketatsu, AIAS
CU Boulder AIAS | Past President

sara taketatsu

719.298.7110

| sara.taketatsu@colorado.edu

| www.linkedin.com/in/taketatsu

education

antonito high school

2011 – 2015

high school valedictorian

yale young global scholar, completed coursework from adams state university and trinidad state junior college, varsity athlete (cross country and track), colorado student leaders institute advisory board

university of colorado boulder

2015 – 2019

bachelor of environmental design, specialization in architecture

awards and recognition

AIA colorado north scholarship, envd design excellence award, cu outstanding colorado student award, regent scholarship, envd deans scholar (3.95 gpa), cu esteemed scholar, d.j. hyneck scholarship, flower family endowment scholarship, designers without boundaries (dwb) scholarship, dwb outstanding student award, dwb emerging leader award

leadership and service

American Institute of Architecture Students (cu boulder chapter secretary, chapter president, chapter past president), lead environmental design student ambassador, envd peer mentor coordinator, designers without boundaries, leadership theory course teaching assistant, student association of landscape architects member, national history day in colorado judge

experience

architectural intern

boulder, co

aug 2018 – current

sopher sparn architects

- modeling and producing drawings for residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects
- conducting research and creating design option presentations for clients

architectural intern

brownsville, tx

summer 2018

buildingcommunityWORKSHOP

- collaborated with grassroots organizations to engage communities on issues of flooding, health, and housing
- design work for the city of brownsville belden trail project, cdcb housing units, and sustainABLE house projects

undergraduate intern

boulder, co

spring 2018

growing up boulder

- planned and conducted engagements with children and youth in the boulder area.
- contributed to reports on gub youth engagements conducted for city of boulder planning and design projects.

architectural intern

denver, co

summer 2017

wold architects and engineers

- assisted in generating building information models and construction documents in revit.
- developed graphics for promotional content and client meetings.

archives technician

yosemite np, ca

summer 2016, 2017

yosemite national park archives

- communicated with researchers from around the world to fulfill their research requests.
- designed informational booklets and posters for the archives to publish and print.

skills

revit, indesign, photoshop, illustrator, sketchup, microsoft office, autocad, lightroom, premiere pro

Re: Letter of School Support for Sara Taketatsu, AIAS

To: Keshika De Saram, Assoc. AIA
Past President
American Institute of Architecture Students
From: Neal A. Evers, AIA
Instructor & AIAS Faculty Liaison
Date: November 14, 2017

Dear Mr. Saram,

I am honored to compose a candid recommendation in support of Sara Taketatsu's bid to become West Quad Director of AIAS. I've known Sara for three years during my tenure as AIAS faculty liaison, and I've been incredibly impressed with her dedication to the organization. CU Boulder's chapter of AIAS is part of a larger campus Program in Environmental Design, which has positioned Sara to understand a unique discipline-competitive environment. I believe Sara understands possibly *more* than her peers at dedicated architecture programs exactly how AIAS is uniquely positioned to add value to the ranks of student membership.

As president of the AIAS chapter at the University of Colorado Boulder, Sara has shown evidence of innovation in her leadership by beginning an AIAS-sponsored regional career fair, numerous local firm and construction site tours geared towards AXP advancement, and various scales of network-focused events like co-sponsoring the greater community's "Month of Modern" and even finding time to organize small intimate group discussions with local architects over coffee. Sara and her leadership team have also begun a Freedom By Design chapter that is currently working towards bringing accessible improvements to Boulder's oldest and low-income community. Through all of this, what is perhaps most astounding is how pure Sara's intentions are in service to the AIAS student and organizational body—there is no expectation on her end for accolades and recognition. Please take note of the selflessness I'm trying to describe; it is a rare and valuable quality that Sara brings to her commitments.

Lastly, I would like to speak to the organizational qualities that qualify Sara for the AIAS West Quad Director position. Beyond knowing Sara in the AIAS organization, she has also been in two of my design studios. I have not known a student to possess her commanding ability to interconnect complex positions in an easily-understand and digestible manner. Sara is *always* prepared without fail, and often seems to be several steps ahead of the curriculum. Furthermore, Sara is a commensurate team-member in group settings always listening as well if not better than she speaks and building up team members' positions above her own.

Sara is gifted, innovative, poised, and steadfast in her determination to achieve excellence. I strongly recommend Sara Taketatsu for West Quad Director of AIAS. Please don't hesitate to contact me for further information in regards to Sara's qualifications.

Sincerely,



Neal A. Evers, AIA
Instructor | Program in Environmental Design
Univ. of Colorado Boulder

candidate questionnaire

1. Describe your origin story as a student leader. What prompted you to get involved? What advice would you give others who have yet to realize their potential for leadership?

Freshman year of college I started out overwhelmed and not motivated to be a part of student groups or many extracurriculars. I was intimidated by a new scale of everything. I had just graduated from a class of 18 students (yes, 18) in rural Colorado, and didn't know if I had what it took to be involved in leadership in college. My perspective shifted when I saw my peers from studio involved in AIAS and other student groups. I realized that I had a voice and that there was an amazing community to tap into around me. I began my collegiate leadership journey by becoming an AIAS member and then running to be a class representative. In this process, I got up the courage after emails from our chapter president to run for secretary since we didn't have one yet. For me, this really was an act of courage because I was unduly terrified I wouldn't do a good enough job. In the end what really prompted me to get involved were my friends and their encouragement.

Once I tapped into our community of students, staff, faculty, and local professionals it was like a floodgate opened in front of me. I applied to be an ambassador and peer mentor in our program and the next year I was the Lead Ambassador coordinating recruitment events and initiatives as well as giving tours of our school. I would also become a peer mentor coordinator, planning events and managing the program. I also ran as Co-President of our AIAS chapter, which led to one of my most fulfilling academic years. Cumulatively, all these experiences routed my understanding of leadership in local knowledge, a sense of community, and the mindset of service above all else. With this in mind, my advice would be to start small and just help and support others around you. After all, one of the most important communities to tap into is the one that you see every day. It surprised me how a few small steps to connect with the people around me so quickly led to more opportunities to be involved.

2. In recent years, the AIAS has increased its efforts in advocacy for architecture students on issues including but not limited to health and wellness, equity, student loan debt, studio culture, practice experience, leadership, and technology. What one issue do you personally find the most important? How would you make progress on this issue as an elected leader on the AIAS National Board of Directors?

As a diverse student myself, my passion lies in creating accessible communities within the field of design. Storytelling is one of the most powerful tools we have to inspire change and create a more united experience for everyone. Stories allow us to connect to each other on a human level and better allow us to empathize with people we may not otherwise identify with. As a community in AIAS we already have a powerful bond as design students with common goals. However, there is always room to increase accessibility, bridge more gaps between people, and be more open to more people we haven't been having conversations with.

As West Quad Director, I would advocate for more ways to elevate the voices of our membership

by telling their stories. Being a conduit for new narratives, and new ways of thinking, even if they challenged my own, is a service I hope to provide to the members of our incredible community-driven organization. By highlighting their amazing work and sharing their experiences we will all grow as a community and be better able to connect with those not part of our community. This has always been my experience within AIAS. Most members from my chapter, including myself, got involved because of friends or individuals who made the organization feel accessible and supportive on a human scale. I think there is plenty of opportunities to continue and push the work being done to bring that peer to peer experience to all levels of the organization.

3. The AIAS has over 160 chapters across the U.S. and around the world, ranging in size from just a few students to hundreds. How would you use your position on the Board to better connect and engage our geographically and culturally diverse membership? What resources would you propose to better serve Chapter leaders seeking to grow their chapters and connect to other students around the world?

Conversation and accessibility are key to creating personal relationships with other members. Our greatest resources lie in one another and to access them we need to connect on a human scale. This all happens through conversation, plain and simple. Some of the most valuable conversations that I had as a chapter president happened in Quad Pod meetings where I got to discuss what was happening in my chapter with other chapter presidents and they got share the same. This swapping of experiences brings us closer together and bridge those geographical gaps. As a West quad director, I would hope to get to know chapter leaders, their interests, their challenges, and their strengths to better connect them with others who could support and learn from their experiences.

There's nothing intrinsically complex about my approach, but it requires an immense amount of dedication to build and maintain relationships. In my experience, there aren't many programs or tools that make this easier besides consistent communication and a genuine intention. I believe in the incredible amount of collaborative energy that exists in the West Quad and I hope to be someone who can fuel that existing energy to create lasting connections between chapters. More frequent and accessible conversations will be paramount to making communication easy, fun, and meaningful.

4. Describe one area in which you see an untapped opportunity for the AIAS to engage in a new way. Either with other organizations, with school faculty and administrators, with the profession, with the international design community, or any other audience or venue.

One of my favorite things about the CU Boulder chapter, and the boulder design community it's just that, it is a community. I would like to see various chapters engaging with their local design communities to create stronger bonds that are personal, and can span generations of leadership. Part of our transition from board to board needs to be transitioning relationships with local architects and professionals who spend years in the same community. Resources for these types of board transitions or guides on how to start building these local connections would be key and pivotal to creating institutional knowledge about this topic. AIAS also has an amazing group of alumni and I would love to see better connections with those who have been a part of the organization in the past. Asking them to create relationships with their local chapters again, as well as getting a better understanding of how they see the lasting impact of AIAS, can foster long-term support systems.



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS POLICY ON COMPENSATION FOR INTERNS

In July 1993, the AIAS Board of Directors adopted a "Public Policy on Uncompensated Interns." The policy has been subsequently reviewed and reaffirmed by the Board and reads as follows:

The AIAS maintains that employers must properly compensate all employees. Compensation must be in compliance with the regulations for the jurisdiction in which they are working.

In 2010, AIAS crafted a public statement on intern compensation in conjunction with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the American Institute of Architects, which reads as follows:

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Institute of Architecture Students recognize that architects are bound by law and ethics to pay interns, and strongly advocate for the appropriate compensation of architectural students and interns. Because of current economic transformations, some architects have both solicited and accepted the services and labor of interns without pay. We strongly urge architectural firms and other for-profit employers to respect the law and comply with the ethical standards of our profession, and we strongly encourage interns to refuse to accept employment without pay, and to notify the Department of Labor in cases where employers propose such an arrangement. For more information on labor laws and professional ethics, please see the AIA Code of Ethics and the U.S. Labor Department standards under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The ACSA, AIA, and AIAS further support architects, students, and recent graduate doing pro-bono work. We recognize the distinction between unpaid work for profit-making employers, and unpaid work for non-profit organizations, communities in need, and volunteer activities, which allows participants to determine their own hours and degree of involvement. The AIA has established guidelines for service that are provided on a Pro Bono basis. They can be found under the member section of the AIA website.

POLICY ON COMPENSATION FOR INTERNS AFFIRMATION

As a way of confirming that the AIAS is not promoting or being promoted by architects employing unpaid interns, we ask that each participant in an official AIAS function review and sign the following statement. We appreciate your participation in our event and thank you for your support of our position against unpaid internships. This position is supported as well by the Board of Directors of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Name: Sara Taketatsu

I do hereby affirm that I understand and support the AIAS policy on the compensation for interns. If I employ interns, I further affirm that I do not use unpaid architectural interns in my professional practice when applicable by federal wage and hour laws.

Signature: 

Date: 11/7/18



**AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS
ELECTIONS CODE OF ETHICS**

Elections are a critical step by which the American Institute of Architecture Students is governed. Annual elections, as outlined in the Bylaws and the Rules of the Board, ensure that the membership of the organization participates in the selection of the best candidates to serve on the national Board of Directors.

Individuals elected to the Board of Directors represent the membership and ensure the continued success of the organization. Therefore, participants who are involved in the elections process, including candidates, Board members and elections committee members, are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and good judgment.

Confidentiality is required of all participants in the elections process. Participants should not discuss details of the elections process to the general membership before, during or after FORUM. Elections information that is considered public knowledge, and therefore can be shared with the membership, occurs during the General Business Sessions and at the General Assemblies.

Campaigning is strictly prohibited prior to FORUM. Conversation between chapters regarding candidates should not take place. Campaigning will only begin at the first General Assembly of FORUM.

Campaigning during FORUM shall be professional. Candidates and candidate support groups should be respectful in their campaigning efforts. Disrespectful campaigning will be a violation of the Elections Code of Ethics, and will be grounds for immediate review by the Past President.

Campaigning materials should follow the Election Guidelines, and should be distributed in appropriate venues only. Appropriate venues include FORUM General Business Sessions, General Assemblies, and Quad Breakouts.

As leaders of this organization, and future leaders of this profession, we must uphold the highest ethical practice. Questionable behavior during elections will not be tolerated. Any concerns should be immediately raised with the Past President.

ELECTIONS CODE OF ETHICS AFFIRMATION

To promote the highest level of professionalism during elections, we ask that each participant in the elections process review and sign the following statement. We appreciate your participation and thank you for your support and dedication to the organization.

Name: Sara Taketatsu

I do hereby affirm that I have read, understand and agree to abide by the AIAS Elections Code of Ethics and the Elections Guidelines.

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]
Please submit this form with your confirmation for participation.

Date: 11/7/18



**AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS
CANDIDATE CONTACT INFORMATION FORM**

Candidate contact information will only be used by the Past President to communicate elections-related information. If provided, social media handles will be shared when candidates are posted publicly on AIAS website and social media.

Name (as preferred): Sara Taketatsu

Chapter: UC Boulder

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): past-president

Email Address: sara.taketatsu@colorado.edu

Mobile Phone Number: 719-298-7110

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- Facebook: /sara.taketatsu
- Twitter: @_____
- Instagram: _____
- Other: _____

sara taketatsu

for 2019-2020 AIAS West Quad Director

