



# SHANNON DEFRANZA

**2020-2021 NORTHEAST QUADRANT DIRECTOR**

*Candidacy Packet*

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Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA, Past President  
American Institute of Architecture Students  
1735 New York Ave.  
Washington D.C. 20006

November 12th, 2019

Dear Past President Rosen,

I am writing to you today to humbly declare my intent to run for the position of the 2020-2021 American Institute of Architecture Students' Northeast Quadrant Director.

When I attended my first FORUM freshman year in Texas, I hadn't yet found a place in my school's community. I didn't actually know anybody in AIAS, but had signed up (and paid) for this conference, so I had to go. **Little did I know that this conference would change the rest of my college career, and life.** The younger version of me looked around in awe, realizing I was surrounded by everything I was looking for in an architectural community. It was there that I met my best friends to this day, and saw the elections process for the first time. I heard speeches from inspiring older members, trying to make a difference in an organization that had given them so much love and support. So while I had boarded the plane to Texas alone, I dreaded my flight home to New York, having to leave the new family AIAS granted me.

After my first FORUM, I've thrown all of myself into the AIAS, and have received guidance back tenfold. Previous leaders kindled a spark for leadership and service they saw within me, and this inspired me to serve as my chapter's Treasurer/ Vice President this past year. Additionally, I expanded my engagement to the national level at the beginning of my sophomore year, serving on the Resiliency Task Force, the Sustainability and Resiliency Task Force, and participating in the 2019 Advocates Program. In addition to the support AIAS provides, the wide breadth of advocacy at different levels that this organization is capable of inspires me everyday to do more.

One of these mentors that the AIAS provided me with, was my chapter president from freshman year, Amelia Tayeh. When I was elected to my chapter's board at the end of my freshman year, she told me something I will never forget: **the most important position in the AIAS is the general member.** I couldn't appreciate the gravity of what she meant until I attended my second Grassroots this summer. After serving at the chapter and national levels, I've seen the effects that my fellow leaders and I could have, dreaming and scheming to support the membership at large, because there is no AIAS without the general membership. It may seem insignificant to point out, but chapter leadership and the national board would have nothing to do, no one to guide, without the general members. Thus, for me, leadership is about serving the membership whole-heartedly. For me, **leadership in itself is service.**

Clearly, a shift has happened within me since my first conference. Like so many, the AIAS has helped me find myself because it provided me with older mentors supporting me when I needed it most. **Looking forward, I am now more interested in emulating that role of support, dedicating myself to helping others find their way.**

I am running for Northeast Quad Director to give back to the membership. I hold a passion for advocacy, that has shown me how valuable every member's voice is, so in addition to guiding and supporting the members of the Northeast, **I want to empower them to advocate, both for their personal journey and the causes they believe in.** Everyone has something to offer.

I believe my experiences at the chapter and national levels with advocacy work and my growth as a leader make me a powerful resource and support system for the members of the Northeast Quadrant. If elected, I promise to emulate the leaders in this organization that I continue to look up to and provide the service I know my Quad deserves.

Thank you Amy, for your consideration of my candidacy, your service to the AIAS, and for being my mentor,



Shannon DeFranza, AIAS

EDUCATION	<b>ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY, BRISTOL, RI</b> Honors Bachelor of Science in Architecture Minors: Sustainability, Architecture and Art History Expected graduation, May 2021 Overall GPA: 3.943	August 2017 – Present
	<b>INTERNATIONAL STUDIES INSTITUTE, FIRENZE, ITALY</b> Advance Urban Design Studio, Prof. Carlo Achilli	August 2019 – December 2019
	<b>NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, NEW YORK, NY</b> Summer Architecture Program	July 2016
RELEVANT EXPERIENCE / LEADERSHIP	<b>AIAS ADVOCATE 2019</b> Platform: Waste Management and Resource Allocation	April 2019 – Present
	<b>AIAS SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY TASK FORCE MEMBER</b>	August 2019 – Present
	<b>AIAS RESILIENCY TASK FORCE MEMBER</b>	August 2018 – 2019
	<b>AIAS RWU CHAPTER TREASURER/VICE PRESIDENT</b> Tracked and produced yearly Budget; Coordinated with Administration; Planned and booked travel, stay, and registration for all AIAS conferences for RWU members	July 2018 – 2019
	<b>BEAUX ARTS BALL PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	January 2018 – Present
	<b>AIAS RWU STUDIO MENTOR</b> Assists Freshmen Studios; Helps run RWU Open Houses and Accepted Students Days	August 2018 – Present
	<b>TEACHER'S ASSISTANT AT NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY</b> Assisted Profs. Michelle Cianfaglione, Clara Ha, Sean Khorsandi Ran lessons on computer programs, hand drawing, and architectural theory	Summer 2018; 2019
	<b>SAAHP 3D PRODUCTION LAB MONITOR</b>	January 2019 – Present
	<b>RHODE ISLAND TREE STEWARD</b>	November 2018 – Present
<b>ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY MATH TUTOR</b>	August 2017 – December 2018	
HONORS	<b>ALPHA CHI NATIONAL COLLEGE HONOR SOCIETY</b>	April 2019 – Present
	<b>TAU SIGMA DELTA HONOR SOCIETY</b>	May 2019 – Present
	<b>ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SASH AWARD NOMINEE</b>	2019
	<b>ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, ART AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PORTFOLIO TALENT SCHOLARSHIP</b>	August 2017 – May 2021
	<b>ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP</b>	August 2017 – May 2021
MISC.	<b>4 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY / MODEL UN CONFERENCES</b>	2013 – 2017
	<b>SERVER FOR PRIME FINE CATERING, GARDEN CITY, NY</b>	Summer 2018 – Present
	<b>RWU DANCE TEAM AND DANCE CLUB</b>	August 2017 – Present
SKILLS	Adobe Suite   AutoCAD   Rhino 5 and 6   V-Ray Plug in for Rhino 6 SketchUp   Microsoft Office Basic Spanish and Italian   4 years of Parlimentary Procedure/ Roberts Rules experience	

**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?**

I've always wanted to be a leader, looking to save the world at eight years old. I can credit that to my family, who taught me to always serve others before yourself. In high school I worked on different scales of service as a student leader, from collecting and delivering food for the holidays in my hometown, to helping organize a Relay for Life with the American Cancer Society. That spark only grew when I reached college. On my final visit before committing to Roger Williams, our past chapter president, Amelia Tayeh, brought me around campus and told me about the AIAS. I was ecstatic to find an organization that would provide an outlet to serve, now relating to my chosen career path. Throughout my time in the AIAS, this role of mentors pushing early involvement has gotten me to where I am today. From Elizabeth Seidel telling me to join a task force/ committee during my first Quad Conference in New York, to our lovely Past President Rosen encouraging me to join the Advocates Program. Thus my advice to members that haven't realized their full potential is this:

**Find a topic you believe in and ask an older member how you can affect change in it. You will get an answer of a committee to join, a blog post to write, a contact to speak with, or a promise that they will work with you to create something that addresses your passion.** The AIAS emulates Dumbledore's words that (spoiler alert?) help shall always be given at Hogwarts to those who ask. I want to be one of these resources for the members of the Northeast Quad. I want to help you create those outlets for your passions.

**2. Describe your leadership style. Explain how previous experiences working with teams have helped you discover your leadership style.**

I have grown into my current leadership style through teamwork. At my chapter, I have worked on the Beaux Arts Ball planning committee for two years, and served as the Treasurer/Vice President on E-Board. Each experience came with their respective stresses and responsibilities, but I always had a team to work with. Both of these teams drove home the ideals of **trust, compassion, communication, and patience** which define the pillars most important to my current leadership style. We plan under blue skies for as long as we can, but true colors of leadership come through when things don't go exactly as planned. In these situations, the AIAS has taught me to take a breath, offer my help to anyone that needs it, and lead by example.

As a committed perfectionist, I used to bite off more than I could chew. I would also refuse to ask for help when times got tough, as my OCD would get the best of me. But AIAS has taught me **there's no way you can walk alone, and you don't have to**. I now understand how to delegate and provide resources to others, so as a team, we can succeed. Learning to lead, for me, meant learning to trust. I want to help others in my Quad find a healthy leadership style for both themselves and their teams.



**3. 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, learning and teaching 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?**

While I am an advocate for all of these topics, especially mental health and studio culture, I have personally worked the most on sustainability initiatives. As a part of the Resiliency Task Force, Sustainability and Resiliency Task Force, and the Advocates program, **I've dedicated my time to coming up with tangible ways of effecting change for a more sustainable future.** I have always been very concerned about climate change. As I write this while abroad in Italy, I'm watching daily how the government will deal with the worst floods Venice has seen in over 50 years, exacerbated by ocean levels rising. We need change now. That's why I am currently focusing on waste management and resource allocation in architecture, both at the school and industry level. Waste is not the most glamorous aspect of the climate change/sustainability issue, but my goal is tangible change. This is an aspect of the issue every student and architect can take action on now.

As a Quad Director, I would take a few different approaches to this issue. First, I would dedicate one month's hub hangout topic to the issue of sustainability and studio waste. This would culminate in a chapter challenge to share how each chapter is being green and less wasteful, structured like the Membership Month challenge from 2018. This way we can learn from each other while making a difference. Everyone would technically be a winner, helping to save our planet (woo!). I will also find ways to make the next Northeast Quad Conference as sustainable as possible with "green" partners and less physical materials. As a part of the national board, I would like to be a liaison to a committee/task force dealing with sustainability issues. I also want to advocate for more partnerships with green companies/firms to sponsor and speak at our events.

I want to close my answer with a thought on advocacy. Overall, you can care about everything, but no one can act on every problem simultaneously, no matter how much we want to. This is something I struggle with and I'm betting I'm not the only one. For your own mental health, cut yourself some slack (also get on Slack!), and remember to advocate at all takes the courage to act.

**4. The AIAS has over 250 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?**

There are **different aspects of diversity** that I would like to address as a Quad Director. First off, chapters differ in size, and geography, such as city versus rural schools. I believe both scales need to be shown next to each other so as a Quad we can better understand the different issues each of our chapters face regarding resources, funding, participation, etc.

Regarding cultural diversity, I want to partner with the Equity and Diversity Task Force to create content for advocacy month, and so the chapter presidents across the Northeast can inform their chapters about diversity issues and how to address them. I personally come from a University that is not very diverse and I would encourage all chapters to work with other organizations on campus such as NOMAS and Inter-cultural Student Unions.

For global engagement, I would like Quads to pair with international chapters. They could be invited as guests to hub hang outs, as well as video call into quad conferences. Lastly, to address global engagement, I think the AIAS should work with students studying abroad. I am currently studying abroad in Florence, Italy, and I believe students abroad can provide a connection to current events around the world for their Quad and the AIAS as a whole. This would be mutually beneficial providing an anchor to home with the AIAS for study abroad students.

**5. Describe how you intend to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of your chosen position on the Board. Elaborate on your intended communication/action plan and the primary goals you have for your one-year term.**

Ah the meat and potatoes question.

First, for the monthly hub hangouts, I want to create a fun atmosphere, because I find **a positive work space is a productive work space**. That being said, I already have theme songs for each hub picked out for the intro and outro of calls. For the structure of these calls, in addition to time dedicated question/concerns facing each chapter at the moment, I would like to have a theme for each month of calls. Some topics would be mental health, how to be an advocate, fundraising, and dealing with administration. In conjunction with each month's theme, I would like to release guides per topic with helpful how-to and information on the AIAS Northeast Quad social media accounts (Instagram and Facebook) that way the general membership of the Quad can easily access these resources.

Communication-wise, I will of course always be available to answer questions, but I would designate a day of the week dedicated to questions anyone in the quad may have by utilizing the AIAS Northeast Quad Instagram Story feature to submit questions to me. This way I can address **a personal goal to reach as many general members as possible**, not just the chapter presidents.

My primary goal for the year, should I be elected, is to **ensure the strength of each chapter** in the Northeast. First, I want to make sure each chapter is in itself sustainable, that it will have well-established bylaws and a transition process for their next year. Next, I would like to address communication with administration. We can workshop: studio culture policies, how to have town halls, and how to create a positive relationship between your school and your chapter. Lastly, as a past Treasurer/Vice President, we can definitely address successful methods of fundraising, because a true blue sky goal would be for every chapter in the Northeast to be represented at Forum Chicago. I come from a school with a strong AIAS chapter and I want to share my knowledge of creating a sustainable chapter with the rest of the Northeast Quad.

**6. 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.**

An opportunity for the AIAS to explore is **partnering with different types of organizations**. Many of our partners consist of organizations that relate to architecture and construction. Additionally, most keynotes at our conferences are architects. These are both great resources, however I think we can expand by working with representatives from environmentally conscious groups like the USGBC, mental health groups such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and non-profits working in other areas. In high school, I had worked with representatives of a New York chapter of NAMI to talk about mental health at my school's annual Human Relations Day. My idea of partnering with these organizations is based on an event my AIAS chapter does each year where we bring in school counselors to General Assemblies for mindful moments.

These representatives can help us and can voice different perspectives. They can serve as a reminder that we as architects can't be experts on everything. We must bring more people to the design table, and remember to be open.



Roger Williams University

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE,  
ART AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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November 11, 2019

Amy Rosen, Past President  
American Institute of Architecture Students  
1736 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-5292

RE: Shannon DeFranza, candidate  
Northeast Quadrant Director  
Letter of Support

Dear Past President Rosen,

Please accept this letter of support for **Shannon DeFranza's** initiative to become Northeast Quadrant Director. As Associate Dean of the School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation, and as Advisor to the AIAS/RWU chapter, I have come to know Shannon as a hardworking and thoughtful student. I have witnessed her active participation in the AIAS, first as chapter member, then as Treasurer-Vice President, and as a mentor to younger students. She has attended Forum, Grassroots and N.E. Quad conferences since a freshman at school, and is an invaluable member of our community. Shannon has the support of the students, is well-organized and motivated to succeed.

All of these attributes will also serve to make her a successful director, should the membership decide in her favor. This letter of support is submitted with great enthusiasm and without any reservation.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gregory Laramie".

Gregory Laramie, AIA  
Associate Dean

Roger Williams University School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation



November 12, 2019

Amy Rosen, Past President  
American Institute of Architecture Students  
1736 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-5292

RE: Shannon DeFranza, Candidate  
Northeast Quadrant Director  
Letter of Peer Support

Dear Past President Rosen,

I would like to express confidence in Shannon DeFranza as a candidate for Northeast Quad Director. Shannon and I both joined AIAS as freshmen, agreeing to room together at FORUM Texas although we barely knew each other. Both of our eyes were opened to the wonderful organization of the AIAS on that trip, finally understanding not only its importance, but the love and support it shows for architecture students everywhere.

The following year, Shannon and I ran and were elected onto the Roger Williams University Chapter Executive Board. I served as Special Events Coordinator, and Shannon served as Treasurer/Vice President. Together, we pulled off some incredible events for our chapter. I would not have been able to achieve half of the events and fundraisers I did without Shannon's support, intelligence, and determination. She pushed me to be a stronger student leader, and because of that, I had the confidence and experience to run for Chapter President the upcoming semester.

In addition to working alongside each other on an Executive Board, Shannon and I consistently have most of our classes/studios together. I have no doubt as a Quad Director she would demonstrate the same studious tendencies I have witnessed over two years of being her peer. Not only have I never witnessed Shannon miss a deadline, but she also continues to set the standard for our class with exemplary and inspiring work. I have full confidence that this same level of mental organization and desire to do everything with 110% percent of herself would carry over should she be elected Northeast Quad Director. She is someone who I would want to see working for our organization at the National Level.

Putting all business aside, as a friend, Shannon has demonstrated kind-heartedness, compassion and support. As I run my own chapter's executive board, I realize how important it is for each member to have compassion for each other, and be willing to hold each other up when times get hard. Shannon has shown all of these qualities and more as my friend for the last two years, in addition to having a strong sense of integrity and love for those close to her. I know that she would show this love to her fellow directors, and be ready and willing to provide support wherever it's needed.

Overall, I feel as though Shannon is an extremely well rounded candidate for Northeast Quad Director. She has demonstrated both the hard and soft skills that are important in a position of leadership, and I feel that she will not only fit in on the Board of Directors, but further its excellence.

Warmest Regards,



Rebeccah Trefethen  
Roger Williams University AIAS Chapter President, 2019 - 2020



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS  
1735 New York Ave., Washington, DC 20006  
202.808.0075 | aias.org

## 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: Shannon DeFranza

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: Shannon DeFranza

Date: 11/14/19



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## 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 and Board 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: Shannon DeFranza

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: *Shannon DeFranza*

Date: 11/14/19

Please submit this form with your confirmation for participation.



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## 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): Shannon

Chapter: Roger Williams University

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): Past Treasurer/Vice President

Email Address: sdefranza604@g.rwu.edu

Mobile Phone Number: (516)306-2462

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- o Facebook: Shannon DeFranza
- o Twitter: @
- o Instagram: @shannon\_defranza & @sdefranza\_architecture
- o Other: \_\_\_\_\_