



**2025-2026**  
**SOUTH QUAD DIRECTOR**  
**Alixandra Harnist**

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November 29th, 2024  
Colt Brock, AIAS, NOMA, Assoc. AIA, Elections Chair and Past President  
American Institute of Architecture Students  
1735 New York Avenue, NW Washington DC, 20006-5292

**Dear Past President and Elections Chair Colt Brock,**

I first joined AIAS during my freshman year and have had the privilege of serving as Secretary in 2023 and Vice President for the past two years. This year, I've been honored to begin working with the AIAS JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Task Force, where I am excited to contribute to advancing equity and representation within our organization. Through these roles, I've grown to love the collaborative spirit of my chapter, particularly in working with other CAPPA organizations to host events like parking day and our career fair. These opportunities have reinforced my belief in the power of connection, advocacy, and shared purpose.

One of my most defining AIAS moments was attending my first conference in Washington, D.C. It was there that I felt a unique sense of belonging that comes with being surrounded by peers who share a passion for architecture and a drive to make an impact. That experience sparked my commitment to ensuring others have the same chance to connect, grow, and have their voices heard.

Another pivotal moment came during AIAS Grassroots, where I had the opportunity to sit down with the newly inaugurated AIAS President, Jordan Luther. After my flight was unexpectedly canceled, Jordan graciously offered me a place to stay. That evening, we had an honest and personal conversation about leadership and the challenges I was facing. Witnessing how she approached leadership with empathy, authenticity, and kindness inspired me to consider pursuing a national role. Her example motivates me to continue bettering myself so I can contribute more meaningfully to an organization that has given me so much.

If elected, I would strive to strengthen connections within our quad by fostering collaboration among chapters and ensuring transparency in communication. I aim to support chapters in achieving their goals, provide consistent updates on national initiatives, and serve as a bridge for sharing resources and ideas across the region. My focus would be empowering members, amplifying voices, and fostering a sense of unity within my quad.

Finally, I want to thank all the people who have inspired me to take this next step in my AIAS journey. Their guidance and leadership have helped me grow both as a student and a leader, and for that, I am truly grateful. This community has given me so much, and I am eager to give back by continuing to build spaces where others feel supported and empowered to achieve their full potential.

With that, I am thrilled to announce my candidacy for South Quad Director for the 2025–2026 academic year. I look forward to building on the incredible work of my predecessors and helping my quad thrive.

Sincerely,



Alixandra Harnist  
Vice President of UT Arlington - AIAS

## ALIXANDRA HARNIST

ALIXANDRA.HARNIST@MAVS.UTA.EDU

936.777.2299

## EDUCATION

## University of Texas at Arlington

2023–Present Masters of Architecture

2018–2023 Bachelors of Science in Architecture  
| Dual Minor in Architectural History & Business Administration

## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

## AIAS – University of Texas at Arlington Chapter

2024–Present Vice President  
AIA Fort Worth Liason2023–2024 Vice President  
Student AXP Advisor & Graduate Liason

2022–2023 Secretary

## American Institute of Architecture Students Nationals

2024–Present Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Task Force  
| Member

## ARCHITECTURE WORK EXPERIENCE

## Highland Homes | Dallas, Tx

Summer 2024 Summer Intern

August 2024–Present Architecture Project Coordinator

1. We all love the AIAS for different reasons, but it takes a critical and constructive analysis of the institutions we appreciate most to continue to evolve them into entities that can support each new generation of membership. **Why are you running for a position on the AIAS Board of Directors?** What about the organization and its membership motivates you to seek a leadership position?

I am driven by a desire to cultivate a strong sense of community for students in architecture, creating an inviting and safe space where anyone—regardless of their background, identity, or future aspirations—feels welcome to participate. Throughout my own journey, I have come to understand the profound impact that community, connection, and accessibility can have in empowering individuals to pursue their passions. My experience going to a high school that offered only a single architecture course, has deeply shaped my commitment to building a more inclusive and supportive environment. I know firsthand how limited exposure to architecture can deter students from even considering the field as a potential career path and prevent them from realizing the vast opportunities that lie within it.

If it weren't for my father's connection to the industry, I might not have had the courage to pursue this path myself. This personal experience has fueled my passion for ensuring that AIAS doesn't just focus on those who are already committed to the architecture track, but also actively reaches out to the next generation. I believe it is essential to foster connections with students in K-12 schools, helping them explore the significance of our field and inspiring them to see architecture not just as a career, but as a powerful way to shape the world.

By running for the board of directors, my goal is to help expand AIAS's mission and amplify its impact on the larger architecture community. I want to ensure that our organization continues to foster a spirit of inclusivity, outreach, and advocacy, strengthening its role as a catalyst for positive change in the field. I am committed to helping AIAS create spaces where all students, feel supported, heard, and motivated to contribute to a brighter future for architecture and the people who enter it.

2. Though it may be hard to believe, the AIAS is not perfect. A critical analysis of any organization is a healthy part of its operation. There may be things that you feel the AIAS could do better, or maybe you see new opportunities or partners to engage. **Where do you see room for improvement or new areas for the organization to expand into?**

While the AIAS is a remarkable organization, there is always room for growth and improvement. One area I see potential for development is fostering stronger communication and connection between quads. Currently, the limited opportunities for cross-quad interaction throughout the year can leave members feeling more isolated than they should in an international organization.

Additionally, many members within local chapters are unaware of the organization's global reach. AIAS has chapters outside the United States, yet the connections between them and domestic chapters are minimal. Strengthening these relationships would not only enhance our sense of community but also create opportunities for the exchange of ideas, perspectives, and best practices.

To address this, I propose implementing bi-monthly (every other month) co-organized check-ins between different quads and regions. These gatherings could rotate, ensuring each quad has the chance to connect with every other quad and region within the year. This initiative would deepen the sense of unity across the organization, enabling members to engage directly with peers from diverse backgrounds, countries, and contexts. It would also ensure that voices are heard not just by leadership but from member to member across the world. By enhancing communication and collaboration, AIAS can solidify its identity as a truly international organization, fostering a stronger, more inclusive community that supports and inspires all its members.



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 & 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 Board of Directors?

While all the listed topics are essential and deserve continuous advocacy, I believe health and wellness should be prioritized further in our discussions and initiatives. This issue affects students at a deeply personal level and intersects with all other aspects of our academic and professional lives.

Recently, my college held a Student Culture Forum where students, professors, and administrators came together to discuss various aspects of architectural education. I was part of a group focused on professional culture, where we explored topics like mental health, constructive criticism during reviews, and mutual respect. However, a recurring theme emerged across all groups: students expressed concerns about the detrimental impact of academic expectations on their mental and physical health. The consensus was clear—there's a pressing need for open dialogue between students and faculty to address these challenges.

As an elected leader, I would advocate for creating more opportunities for these conversations within AIAS, including integrating health and wellness discussions into conference programming and quad calls. Additionally, I propose developing resources and guidelines to help chapters organize similar forums, fostering collaboration between students and faculty at their schools. By bridging the gap between students and professors, we can begin to address the toxic elements of architecture education culture and work toward a healthier, more supportive learning environment. Prioritizing health and wellness not only supports current students but also lays the foundation for a more sustainable and compassionate architectural profession.

4. The AIAS has over 300 chapters across the U.S. and around the world, ranging in size, age range, and even purpose. **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?

To better connect and engage AIAS's geographically and culturally diverse membership, I would prioritize initiatives that foster both regional and international collaboration. In addition to implementing cross-quad bi-monthly meetings to strengthen inter-quad relationships, I would build on my predecessor's efforts to connect local chapters within regions. This could start with virtual meetings to establish connections and gradually evolve into opportunities for in-person collaboration, such as joint events or workshops hosted by nearby chapters.

One of my goals would be to help a South Quad chapter take the lead in revamping our regional quad conference. A reimagined conference could serve as a cornerstone event for our region, offering a platform for members to engage with the quad's collective voice, share ideas, and bring local concerns to the attention of national leadership.

To support chapter leaders, I would propose creating a toolkit with resources for hosting regional gatherings and organizing cross-chapter collaborations, including guides for virtual events, securing funding, and planning logistics. Additionally, I would encourage mentorship opportunities where established chapters can provide guidance to newer or smaller ones.

By strengthening connections at both the local and regional levels, we can create a more unified AIAS community that amplifies the voices of all its members while celebrating our diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

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.

A significant theme in my chapter this year has been transparency and effective communication—both of which are vital for the survival and growth of local chapters. These values would guide my approach to directing the South Quad. I aim to keep chapters consistently informed about updates from the national level while also providing regional opportunities that align with their specific goals. My communication strategy would rely primarily on Slack and email to ensure timely and accessible information. However, I am committed to accommodating any chapter's preferred method of communication to ensure no one feels out of the loop.

In addition to regular communication, I would actively engage with my committees to ensure that the concerns of the South Quad are brought to the national stage and incorporated into broader discussions. I understand the importance of not only keeping the chapters informed but also making sure their voices are heard at a national level. One of my primary goals would be to strengthen connections between chapters within the South Quad, through co-organized events and virtual check-ins, with the aim of revitalizing our quad conference. I believe these efforts can foster greater collaboration and strengthen the sense of community within our region. Furthermore, I would focus on expanding cross-quad and international collaboration, encouraging members to connect and share ideas beyond their immediate regions, which would create a more interconnected and supportive network.

Another major priority for me would be supporting initiatives that empower chapters to host events that address important cultural issues within the field. For example, fostering open dialogue on mental health, work-life balance, and the overall studio culture would help improve the educational environment for future students. I would also advocate for sustainability initiatives and ensure that the Climate Action & Sustainability Task Force remains a permanent fixture within the organization, helping chapters integrate climate-conscious programming into their work. By prioritizing communication, collaboration, and advocacy, I hope to make a lasting impact that strengthens the South Quad and helps its members thrive both individually and collectively.

6. As an organization that is constantly evolving, the AIAS has to often re-evaluate its priorities. **What strategic priorities would you like to see the AIAS focus on during your time on the Board?**

As we approach the 2nd quarter of the 21st century, it's vital for the AIAS to align with the architecture profession's 2030 commitments and focus on educating students about their role in addressing the climate crisis. Architects' perception of the built environment begins in school, making it critical for AIAS to lead in fostering sustainability initiatives.

During my time on the Board, I would advocate for the AIAS to prioritize sustainability and climate-conscious education. This could include inviting keynote speakers to conferences who specialize in innovative approaches to the climate crisis, as well as organizing workshops and panels focused on actionable ways students can contribute to these critical goals. Our position as students offers a unique opportunity to influence the future of architecture by shaping how we perceive and address our built environment.

By prioritizing these efforts, AIAS can inspire students to take ownership of their impact on the environment, both as students and future professionals. This focus will prepare our members to be leaders in achieving the 2030 commitments and building a more sustainable future.



**November 27th, 2024**

Elections Committee  
The American Institute of Architecture Students  
1735 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear AIAS Election Committee,

It is with great respect that I submit this letter of recommendation for Alix Harnist for the AIAS Squad Director Position. Since my freshman year in the College of Architecture, Alix has exemplified what it means to be a successful student, consistently serving as a source of inspiration and guidance for her peers. Over the years, and especially as I have advanced to my senior year, I have witnessed Alix not only excel academically but also make significant contributions to the growth and enrichment of our school community.

As a mentor, Alix has been a guiding beacon for students. In her role as vice president, she brings an unwavering eagerness to engage students beyond their studies, demonstrating acuteness, dedication, and a deep understanding in both her academic and professional roles. Her ability to adapt swiftly to any situation allows her to navigate challenges effectively, finding creative and impactful solutions.

Alix also takes the time to support students who may be struggling, offering clear and concise guidance to help them overcome obstacles. In meetings, she communicates efficiently, always getting straight to the point while ensuring that all parties are aligned. She has successfully coordinated several events that have been instrumental in building a strong sense of community within our school. Alix thrives under pressure, consistently performing at a high level while ensuring that the organization runs with the utmost standard of efficiency. Her ability to manage multiple responsibilities while maintaining excellence sets her apart as a leader.

Alix is more than capable of advancing into the next phase of leadership. I am confident that she will continue to excel, bringing her unwavering dedication, expertise, and vision to any role she undertakes. She has been a steadfast advocate for our students and has played an integral role in our community's success.

Sincerely,  
Shane Pellerin  
FBD | Director

B.Arch Student UTA CAPPA  
Email: [sjp2818@gmail.com](mailto:sjp2818@gmail.com)  
Phone: (832) 538 9995





UNIVERSITY OF  
**TEXAS**  
ARLINGTON

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE,  
PLANNING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

November 26, 2024  
Elections Committee  
The American Institute of Architecture Students  
1735 New York Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Members of the AIAS Election Committee,

Please accept this letter of recommendation on behalf of Alixandra (Alix) Harnist's application for the South Quad Director position for the 2025-2026 American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) Board of Directors. As the faculty advisor of AIAS at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), I have had the privilege of working closely with Alix in her role as AIAS Secretary and Vice President from 2021-2024. In addition to her strong leadership within the county's fifth largest school of architecture, Alix is also serving on the AIAS National Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Task Force.

During her time of service at UTA, Alix has helped increase UTA's AIAS chapter enrollment by over 15% and organized numerous student-led events that had a significant impact on UTA's undergraduate and graduate student body culture. She has demonstrated a deep commitment to AIAS's mission and has proven to be an effective, impactful, and fair leader. In Alix's various roles she has been instrumental in organizing and facilitating (1) regular AIAS student body and board meetings, (2) the annual CAPPa career fair featuring more than 75 local employers across architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, and urban planning disciplines that generated over \$30K in revenue in 2024; (3) student work sessions with practitioners and experts on resumes, portfolios, and licensure; and (4) celebratory collegial events in partnership with local AIA Chapters including the AIA Fort Worth Clay Shoot, AIA Dallas Home Tours, Beaux Arts Ball, and Parking Day – among many others. In addition, Alix is a strong advocate for AIAS Board representatives and members. On numerous occasions she has spoken up and acted as a mediator in difficult situations involving peer-to-peer conflict. Her maturity, compassion, and ability to listen and ask questions has positioned the organization as a collaborative leader within the School of Architecture and has set a high standard for future AIAS Board Members.

I know Alix to be a dedicated and respected individual among her peers, professors, and professional colleagues. She consistently generates and implements new creative ideas to support students and foster a fun and collegial environment. Her organizational skills, ability to clearly communicate thoughts, tackle multiple leadership tasks simultaneously, and her thoughtful approach will serve Alix well as the national South Quad Director.

I look forward to following Alix's career progression and believe she will make a fantastic AIAS Quad Director. I strongly recommend her for your consideration. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [julia.lindgren@uta.edu](mailto:julia.lindgren@uta.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia Lindgren'.

**Julia Lindgren**

*Faculty Advisor, AIAS  
Director, School of Architecture Undergraduate Program  
Assistant Professor, School of Architecture  
College of Architecture Planning and Public Affairs  
University of Texas at Arlington*



## 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: Alixandra Harnist

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: 11/24/2024



## 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: Alixandra Harnist

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: 

Date: 11/24/2024

Please submit this form with your confirmation for participation.



## 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): Alix Harnist

Chapter: University of Texas at Arlington

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): 2023-2025 Vice President

Email Address: Alixandra.Harnist@mavs.uta.edu  
alixharnist@gmail.com

Mobile Phone Number: 936-777-2299

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- o Facebook: \_\_\_\_\_
- o Twitter: @\_\_\_\_\_
- o Instagram: Alix\_Harnist
- o Other: \_\_\_\_\_