

SHANNON “MAC” MCNAMARA

AIAS NORTH EAST QUAD DIRECTOR

2025-2026 CANDIDACY PACKET



Table of Contents

1	Letter of Intent
2	Resume
3	Faculty Support Letter
4	Peer Support Letter
6	Questionnaire Response
9	AIAS Intern Compensation Policy
10	AIAS Elections Code of Ethics
11	Contact Information

Letter of Intent

Colt Brock, AIAS, NOMA, Assoc. AIA, Past President

American Institute of Architecture Students

1735 New York Ave NW, Washington, DC 20006

Dear Past President Colt Brock,

I am greatly excited to declare my decision to run for the Northeast Quad Director Position. Two years ago, I was greatly struggling after a loss in my family when I was volun-told to join the UMA AIAS board. At the time I felt isolated and overwhelmed. But attending meetings and working with peers, who would soon become some of my greatest friends, gave me the energy and encouragement I needed to continue. It is thanks to my involvement with AIAS that I have grown into the person I am today and am expected to graduate this Spring. It is my greatest desire to give back and re-invest that energy into others.

At the start of my involvement in AIAS I realized I wasn't the only one struggling. My chapter's activity and standing had greatly dropped post pandemic, and our small community of architecture students was just as disconnected. I felt inspired to reinvigorate our chapter, build up our community, and provide students with opportunities to grow their careers and more importantly their relationships with one another. Over the last two years, I have been passionately dedicated to developing my chapter and working towards increasing opportunities for students both at the local and national level. In December of 2023, I proposed a resolution that led to a change to the AIAS Bylaws to be more equitable and inclusive for all chapters. I am very proud to have played a part in advocating for a positive change that will greatly assist small programs like mine to be able to contribute to AIAS and engage in international discourse on architectural education.

As I go into my final year of architecture school, I am greatly excited to continue to build this momentum, and I hope to continue this work and help other chapters connect and grow. Thank you for your consideration for this candidate position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shannon Mac'.

Shannon 'Mac' McNamara

SHANNON **MAC** MCNAMARA

Oakland, ME • SHANNON.MCNAMARA@MAINE.EDU • (518) 429-3708

Education

Bachelor of Architecture, Minor in Art History University of Maine at Augusta (UMA)	Augusta, ME	Expected May 2025
High School Regents Diploma Scotia Glenville High School	Scotia, NY	June 2016

Professional Development

AIAS Membership Committee	October 2024-Present
AIAS UMA Chapter President	August 2023-Present
US Navy Operational Intelligence C School Class Honor Graduate	March 2017
US Naval Basic Training	October 2016

Experience

University of Maine at Augusta - Danforth Art Gallery Gallery Monitor	Augusta, ME	February 2024-Present
Technergetics LLC Lead Imagery Analyst, Government Contractor Deputy Facility Security Officer	Utica, NY Utica, NY	November 2017-August 2020 January 2018-August 2020
United States Naval Reserve, Defense Intelligence Agency, Middle East Africa Regional Center, HQ0797 Imagery Analyst, Intelligence Specialist Second Class Unit Photographer Unit Uniform Coordinator Logistics	Rome, NY Rome, NY Rome, NY	August 2016-September 2022 August 2018-August 2020 June 2019-August 2020

Professional Skills

- Active TS//SCI Clearance
- Adobe Office
- Lumion
- Laser
- Microsoft Office
- Rhinoceros 2D and 3D
- Sketchup

Relevant Skills

Confident public speaking and presentation skills developed from years of experience giving military intelligence briefings, architectural presentations, and leading UMA AIAS Chapter meetings and events. Passionate, productive, and dedicated work ethic combined with a creative and optimistic outlook to put in the dedication and effort to find solutions to problems. Gained efficient research and quick learning skills from time in Naval Intelligence, and honed these abilities while in college, resulting in winning the Top Presentation and Top Qualitative Research Awards from the UMA Annual Student Research Conference. Refined patient and respectful customer service representative after several years of working part time in the service industry while attending school full time. Cultivated strong time management and organizational skills to balance responsibilities and tasking. Life long focus on improving leadership skills, from achieving the Girl Scout Gold Award, to taking on additional leadership roles in Naval Unit, leading a winning team for UMA's Community Design Charrette, and taking on the duty of being the Chapter President of UMA AIAS. Team player within AIAS Chapter that advocates for and supports members so they can achieve their own success, and proposed a Resolution charging the AIAS National President with finding a more equitable

Awards

UMA Annual Student Research Conference: Top Presentation and Top Qualitative Research "The Influence of the Female Nude on Modern Rape Culture"	April 2023
Winning Team for UMA Community Design Charrette	January 2023, January 2024
President's List Achievement Award - UMA	Spring 2024
Dean's List Achievement Award - UMA	Fall 2020, Spring 2023, Fall 2024
Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition	June 2017
Girl Scout Gold Award	August 2016

Letter of School Support

December 1, 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in strong support of Shannon “Mac” McNamara for the position of AIAS Northeast Quad Director. As the president of the AIAS Chapter at the University of Maine at Augusta, Mac has exhibited exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to our chapter’s success. Her energy and passion for architecture have been instrumental in motivating and organizing our members, fostering an environment of engagement and collaboration.

This has been evident in the many successful events executed under her leadership, including in just the last year, a walking tour of downtown Portland, Maine and a visit to Louis Kahn’s Exter Library in nearby New Hampshire. These experiences have been highly valued by our students, many of whom have shared with me how enriching and inspiring they found these opportunities, and they eagerly anticipate future events. These opportunities have significantly enhanced the learning and engagement of our school’s entire student body, not just the chapter members.

Mac’s leadership has also extended beyond our campus. This past year she applied for and successfully secured a Presidential Mini grant for herself and several members of the AIAS executive committee to attend the AIAS national conference in Washington, DC. The funding from the grant was able to greatly reduce the travel and registration expenses for students, providing them with the opportunity to connect with other AIAS leadership from across the country. During this conference she played a key role in advocating for a change to the AIAS National bylaws, making it easier for smaller schools like ours to maintain a good standing.

Despite these significant leadership responsibilities, Mac has consistently balanced her duties with the demands of our rigorous five-year Bachelor of Architecture program. She has also participated in multiple international study trips, further highlighting her dedication, organizational skills, and passion for the field.

Mac has been an outstanding leader in our program, and I firmly believe she deserves this prestigious position. Her vision, determination, and ability to inspire others make her an excellent candidate for AIAS Northeast Quad Director.

Sincerely,



Carter Skemp

Assistant Professor of Architecture, AIAS Faculty Advisor
University of Maine at Augusta
Handley Hall, 331 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04330
e: carter.skemp@maine.edu

Letter of Peer Support

Kelsey George
PO Box 884
Brewer, ME 04412
kelsey.george@maine.edu

December 1, 2024

2025-2026 AIAS Northeast Quad Director

I am thrilled to offer my strong recommendation for Shannon “Mac” McNamara in support of her nomination for the 2025-2026 AIAS Northeast Quad Director position.

Mac currently serves as the AIAS Chapter President at the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA), a position she has held for two consecutive terms. Throughout her tenure, she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to inspiring and engaging architecture students to become active participants in our AIAS Chapter. Mac’s infectious energy and warm leadership style create an environment that fosters collaboration, cooperation, and shared success. Her efforts have significantly increased engagement among board members and class representatives, expanded chapter membership, and led to the execution of several impactful programs and events.

Under Mac's leadership, UMA's AIAS Chapter has become a vibrant and integral part of the architecture program. She has cultivated strong, respectful relationships with both faculty and administration, earning the trust and admiration of the academic community. Furthermore, her ability to work collaboratively with external partners has been exceptional. Mac has been instrumental in organizing a variety of enriching events, such as architectural walking tours, construction site visits, professional workshops, and student-led social activities. Notably, her efforts secured grant funding to send three students to the prestigious GRASSROOTS Conference in Washington, D.C. in 2024.



UMA Architecture Students at the US Dept of Commerce, during our Arch. Walking Tour, Portland Maine, Fall 2023. Mac is pictured in the center with a red sweater.

Mac's dedication to advocacy was further exemplified when she successfully developed and championed a resolution to address the challenges faced by smaller AIAS Chapters. Her resolution, which seeks to improve the equitability of good standing requirements, was passed at the GRASSROOTS National Conference in July 2024. This initiative stems from Mac’s firsthand experience of leading a small chapter with fewer than 50 students, highlighting her capacity to identify challenges and advocate for meaningful change.

In addition to her work within AIAS, Mac excels within the UMA architecture program. She was selected as a design team lead for a high-profile community design charrette, overseeing the creation of detailed drawings, renderings, and multimedia projects. Despite unexpected team setbacks, Mac's leadership led her team to secure first place in the competition, showcasing her resilience and problem-solving abilities.

Financially, our chapter remains in excellent standing, thanks to Mac's strategic planning and organizational skills. She has spearheaded initiatives to explore new fundraising avenues and is in the process of creating a dedicated fundraising coordinator position to further expand our chapter's reach and resources.

In conclusion, Shannon "Mac" McNamara embodies all the qualities of a dedicated and exceptional leader. Her passion, strategic vision, and ability to inspire and engage her peers make her a perfect candidate for the 2025-2026 AIAS Northeast Quad Director position. I offer my highest endorsement of her nomination and believe she will continue to make a positive impact in the AIAS community.

Should you require further information, please feel free to contact me at kelsey.george@maine.edu.

Sincerely,

Kelsey George
AIAS UMA Chapter Vice President



Mac captures photos during our UMA ARC travel course in Seattle, WA – Summer

Questionnaire Response

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 running for a position on the AIAS Board of Directors because I am passionate about continuing the work I've started in my chapter and extending that impact to a broader community of students. Over the past two years, I have been dedicated to growing my chapter and developing my leadership skills, leading to a 75% increase in membership. This experience has shown me how transformative an active, engaged chapter can be in supporting and fostering a strong student community. As I approach graduation and the end of my term as chapter president, I feel compelled to continue this work on a larger scale, helping other chapters thrive, particularly those struggling with growth and engagement.

My experience meeting with fellow chapter leaders at events like the monthly hub hangouts and GRASSROOTS has deeply motivated me. The discussions, exchanges, and connections I experienced were invaluable, reinforcing the power of collaboration within AIAS. I am incredibly grateful for the support I've received through AIAS, and I want to continue this legacy by giving back to others. As a member of the Board, I would work to share the lessons I've learned, fostering a supportive, dynamic network that empowers chapters and students to succeed.

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?

The AIAS has done tremendous work supporting architecture students as they navigate their academic and professional paths. However, there is an opportunity to expand our reach and relevance by addressing the diverse career trajectories that architecture students often pursue after graduation. While many students follow the traditional path to licensure, many others are drawn to design-related fields such as urban planning, industrial design, digital fabrication, and more. Yet, many students who are interested in these alternative career paths do not see the AIAS as an organization that could support them.

To make AIAS more inclusive, we could emphasize and support these non-traditional career opportunities by broadening the scope of our programming. This could include webinars, lectures, and design competitions that explore a wider array of design fields beyond traditional architectural practice. By highlighting these pathways, we would attract a wider range of students, including those who might otherwise feel disconnected from AIAS. This initiative could serve as a retention strategy for students who may face self-doubt or contemplate leaving their program due to its challenging nature. By showing that there are many rewarding paths for design graduates, we could help students feel more supported and confident in completing their architecture degree, knowing that they have numerous career options ahead of them. Expanding our focus would not only increase AIAS's membership but also strengthen its relevance and impact on a broader scale.

Questionnaire Response

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?

The issue of student health and wellness is, without a doubt, the most critical to me. In recent years, we've seen a growing epidemic of loneliness and rising suicide rates among young adults, with architecture students being particularly vulnerable due to the demanding nature of our studies. As an elected leader on the AIAS Board of Directors, I believe we must take actionable steps to create a supportive environment that prioritizes mental health and well-being. To address this, I would focus on building and promoting opportunities for connection and collaboration across chapters. By creating more platforms for students to engage with one another, whether through virtual support groups or peer mentorship programs we can reduce isolation and foster a culture of openness about mental health struggles. I would also work to ensure that AIAS provides resources and materials on mental health, stress management, and self-care, tailored specifically for architecture students' unique needs. I would advocate for partnerships with mental health organizations and wellness professionals to offer workshops, seminars, and access to counseling services. By empowering chapter leaders with the tools and support they need to prioritize student health and wellness, we can make significant strides toward creating a healthier, more connected AIAS community.

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?

As a student from a small, geographically isolated architecture program, I understand firsthand the challenges of feeling disconnected from other AIAS chapters. The lack of interaction with other chapters can limit the exchange of valuable insights and ideas. However, I have also seen how much of an impact inter-chapter collaboration can have through virtual hub hangouts or in-person events, where fresh perspectives and support have been invaluable.

To better connect and engage our geographically diverse membership, I would propose expanding opportunities for both digital and in-person workshops, events, and group activities beyond the traditional hub hangouts. These events could focus on shared interests or specific challenges faced by smaller or more remote chapters. In addition to the Quad conferences, which are fantastic but often inaccessible due to cost and time constraints, I would advocate for more frequent, smaller-scale events that foster intimate, meaningful connections between chapters. These events could be regional or virtual and designed to facilitate collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and relationship-building. Another initiative I would introduce is a "sister chapter" program. This would pair chapters from different regions to create mentorship like relationships where students could share challenges and advice. These partnerships would help build a strong, interconnected global network of support that all members can rely on. By increasing the frequency and accessibility of engagement opportunities and facilitating deeper connections between chapters, we can create a stronger, more unified AIAS community that truly serves and supports its members, no matter their location or background.

Questionnaire Response

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.

Throughout my life, I've developed strong leadership and organizational skills that will help me fulfill the responsibilities of the Northeast Quad Director. My experience in communication, writing, information analysis, fundraising, and working with diverse groups has equipped me with the ability to manage high-priority tasks on tight timelines, adapt to unexpected challenges, and collaborate effectively. Whether through in-person meetings or virtual platforms, I'm comfortable facilitating communication across various mediums, adjusting to time zones, and responding promptly to ensure smooth collaboration. These abilities have been honed through diverse roles, such as my time in the military, leading my chapter, and navigating the demands of architecture school. In my three years serving on my chapter's board, two of which were as Chapter President, I took a hands-on approach to improving the chapter's organization. I successfully reorganized our Google Drive to serve as a crucial tool for managing resources and disseminating information. Additionally, my passion for spreadsheets and data analysis has helped me secure grants that funded key chapter activities, and I look forward to sharing these skills with other chapters.

My primary goal would be to focus on strengthening chapter organization and communication. I plan to create and share resources that help chapters run more efficiently, ensuring they have the tools to thrive. This includes offering templates, guides, and training sessions on topics such as data management, grant writing, and communication strategies. By helping chapters better serve their communities, I aim to leave a lasting impact on the AIAS and its members.

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 an evolving organization, it is essential that the AIAS continues to adapt to the changing needs of its members and the broader architectural community. During my time on the Board, I would like to see the AIAS focus on several key strategic priorities that will better serve our diverse membership and ensure that we remain relevant and meet the needs of students regardless of their location or chapter status and size. I believe strengthening chapter resources and inter-chapter collaboration should be a continued priority. By offering more tools for chapter management, such as organizational templates, grant writing classes, and leadership development programs, and more events we can help chapter leaders operate more effectively and ensure that smaller or struggling chapters have the support they need to grow. These priorities will help ensure that the AIAS remains a vital, inclusive organization that supports students throughout their academic journeys and into their diverse professional futures.

AIAS Intern Compensation Policy



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

1012 14th St NW, Suite 415, Washington, DC 20005

202.808.0075

www.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 MCNAMARA

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: 11/25/24

AIAS Elections Code of Ethics



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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 MCNAMARA

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: 11/25/24

Please submit this form with your confirmation for participation.

Contact Information



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

1012 14th St NW, Suite 415, Washington, DC 20005

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www.ias.org

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 "Mac" McNamara

Chapter: University of Maine at Augusta

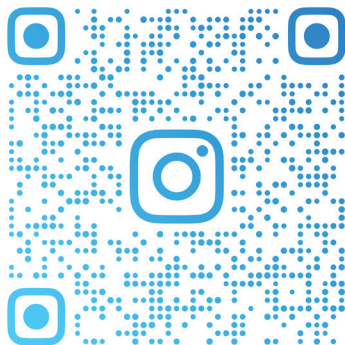
Chapter Leadership Position (if any): 2023-2025 President

Email Address: shannon.mcnamara@maine.edu

Mobile Phone Number: 5184293708

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- ☐ Facebook: _____
- ☐ Twitter: @_____
- ☐ Instagram: mac_a_roni
- ☐ Other: _____



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