

2025-2026 West Quad Director Candidacy Packet

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January 6th, 2025

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

American Institute of Architecture Students

1735 New York Avenue, NW Washington D.C. 20006-5292

Dear Past President Colt Brock,

You've been the heart of this organization since I've gotten involved with the greater national level of AIAS and your hard work has been contagious to many. It's with great pleasure that I'm able to write this letter to you as I've not considered seeking a position within the national tier of AIAS. I've focused much of my time with the organization working at the local level and being an advocate for students in Idaho.

Throughout my first years in college and architecture school I wasn't so sure that I would stick with it. It wasn't until my third year of architecture school where we were finally able to go on a studio trip as an entire class. My Fall of '22 semester was crucial in guiding me to the place I'm at now, and it all started with that group of people I got to know on a camp trip in the middle of the Columbia gorge. The following semester I won chapter VP and went on to create a limited run podcast. Our chapter struggled to have consistency on every level. I went on to run for president the following year hoping to flip the chapter upside down. I've gone on to repair nonexistent relationships with alumni, faculty, and students to the point that we're able to garner enough funding to send 2-3 people to national conferences.

I can't attribute it all to just our e-board's ability to be persistent as none of this effort would have happened without Bloom. When Simon and I attended that conference the people we met and spoke (Trevin, Jordan, and Valerie) gave us the spark that we needed to begin the process of rebuilding. Seeing such a successful conference also motivated us to want to host the West Quad ourselves, which we then went on to win the bid in July.

I also want to thank you Colt (even though we've not known each other for long) for giving me the nudge to pursue what's led me to write this letter to you. I would like to formally declare my candidacy for the position of West Quad Director 2025-2026. I'm excited for the things in store for the AIAS this year! Let's kick the year off right and have some fun in Austin!

Best,



Connor T. Reakes, AIAS

Idaho Chapter President

2025 West Quad Conference Chair

reak7769@vandals.uidaho.edu

CONNOR REAKES

Architectural Designer



CONTACT

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+1 (208)-608-4955
ctreakes@icloud.com
www.reakesportfolio.com

EDUCATION

Masters of Architecture
University of Idaho
2024-2026

B.S. Architecture
University of Idaho
2019-2024

Mountain View High School
2015-2019

CLUBS & AWARDS

AIAS University of Idaho
Chapter President - 2024-2025

AIAS University of Idaho
West Quad Conference Co-Chair 2024-2025

Spectacular - Black Spectacles
Student Ambassador - 2024-2025

AIAS University of Idaho
Chapter Vice President - 2023-2024

SKILLS

Sketchup
Rhino 7 & 8
Autodesk Suites - AutoCAD, Revit
Adobe Suites - Photoshop, Illustrator, Lightroom
Microsoft Suites - Word, Powerpoint,
Twinmotion
Enscape

WORK EXPERIENCE

Idaho Air National Guard / United States Air Force
Aerospace Propulsion Journeyman 2A6531C/E
Sep. 2020 - Present

As a journeyman in the Idaho ANG I've learned various skills such as leadership, heavy equipment operation, troubleshooting, mechanical knowledge, timeliness, and discipline.

Boise Ranch Golf Course
Range Staff
2016-2018 & 2023

Trained new employees in opening and closing duties, delegated tasks to other employees, operated and maintained the cart storage, driving range, and the golf course overall.

HOBBIES

GOLF PHOTOGRAPHY WRITING LIFTING

Dear AIAS National Board

I am pleased to write this letter to strongly support the candidacy of Mr. Connor Reakes for the AIAS West Quad Director in 2025-2026. Connor Reakes is currently a graduate student in our M. Arch Program at the University of Idaho. He is also serving as the Chapter President of AIAS University of Idaho and the Co-Chair for AIAS West Quad Conference 2025. In the meantime, he has been an aerospace propulsion journeyman for Idaho Air National Guard and US Air Force since 2020. As a faculty member at the University of Idaho and a faculty co-advisor of AIAS University of Idaho, I have worked closely with Mr. Reakes in recent years and witnessed his tremendous growth. He took several courses that I taught in 2023-2024 and a study abroad program led by me in Summer 2024. Since Summer 2024, we have worked together on matters related to AIAS University of Idaho. Connor's consistent dedication to delivering exceptional work on all those courses and remarkable leadership in AIAS has made a model of excellence for his peers. He is one of my few best distinguished students whom I will never forget and would like to keep in touch with. I am highly confident that Connor Reakes will be perfectly fit for your team.

As a student leader, Connor Reakes has demonstrated remarkable qualities such as strong communication skills, detail-oriented organization, proactive problem-solving, and visionary thinking. One of Connor's key achievements is the improvement of our AIAS activities. Before Connor's involvement, our AIAS Chapter experienced several years of inactivity due to various issues among the students. Connor became the Vice President of our AIAS in 2023 and since then he has played a pivotal role by working with other AIAS leaders and members to breathe new life into our AIAS. He is a team member that successfully reactivated the core operation of AIAS and reengaged its members. He demonstrated outstanding ability to motivate and inspire his peers and consistently worked with other AIAS members to foster an inclusive and collaborative environment. Through organizing AIAS events, leading initiatives, and working for recruitment and fundraising, Connor always worked hard with enthusiasm and efficiency to ensure the objectives were met. With countless meetings and volunteering works with both external professionals and internal faculty and students, Connor helped not only stabilized the organization but also set a new course for its long-term growth. In Summer 2024, Connor became the President of our AIAS and led a team to submit a proposal to host the 2025 AIAS West Quad Conference on University of Idaho campus. During that time, he was studying abroad in Singapore. Although there were numerous fieldtrips and works, Connor demonstrated unwavering commitment, dedicating himself fully to the task. He had a lot of online meetings after midnight to prepare the proposal with his team who were in the US. Connor and his team finally won the bid to host 2025 West Quad AIAS Conference on our Moscow Campus. Since then, Connor and his team have exhibited a rare level of persistence, working diligently and with focus to prepare for the Conference.

In addition, Connor is a compassionate and responsible individual. Highly regarded by his peers, Connor is generous and attentive in helping other students with his time and knowledge. He has exhibited a genuine concern for others and has worked tirelessly to support his fellow students in both academic and extracurricular endeavors. For example, he is a student ambassador for *Black Spectacles*, the largest online platform to study for the ARE.

In short, Connor's capability and skills to motivate his peers, create a sense of unity and shared visions, and offer solutions to unforeseen challenges is a testament for his qualification as a successful student leader. I truly enjoyed working with him and fully support his candidacy. I believe he will make a unique and outstanding contribution to your organization. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Xiao Hu



PhD, Associate Professor

Dept. of Architecture, University of Idaho

208-885-6850 /xiaoh@uidaho.edu

1. 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've been a member of AIAS since my third year in Architecture school. It was then that I didn't really understand what the organization was all about. Then in April of 2024 prior to our chapter elections I attended the West Quad Conference where I met some amazing individuals and really began grasping the best parts about the organization. When I was elected chapter president that same month, I made it my goal to rebuild our chapter and host the West Quad conference. I'm running for West Quad Director because I know that when I put my mind to something I get it done. While I struggle with questioning my decision sometimes, I know that with the support of the people around me, I'll make the right decision.

The organization and its membership are what motivate me to seek a leadership position. I've had the pleasure of visiting amazing places and meeting wonderful people because of this organization. The AIAS is one of the best networking tools for students in Architecture and it comes with the benefits of seeing incredible architecture and listening to people that are currently making it in the industry.

2. Where do you see room for improvement or new areas for the organization to expand into?

The AIAS has done a great job at giving the resources for students to network and engage with each other outside of their normal realms. Where I could see improvement in the organization is in the tangible things that our members interact with. I would like to inject the conversation in focusing on giving the AIAS a facelift. Rid ourselves of the AIAS of the 2010's and breathe life into the organizations marketing and graphical representation. While we have the captivation of the current membership base those people will stick with us through thick and thin. It's the people that aren't members that we need to be advertising to, and as most of us are visual people the first thing we see is the drab coloring of the current scheme.

Throughout my Architecture school career graphics are incredibly important at selling your designs. The same goes for marketing a 50-dollar membership to students where their goal is to sell design.

3. 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?

Health, Wellness, and Studio Culture. These three issues are what plague architecture students for better or worse. Health is important to every one of us and throughout my time as a student it's clear that while you can pull all-nighters until the day you're done with school it won't serve to benefit you in your career. It creates a toxic work culture with yourself and those around you. I'm an advocate for moderation in everything and that comes with my work as well. I will continue to be an advocate for helping people with their time management skills. This is something I think that's been engrained with me at least since I joined the United States Air Force. Getting things done in an efficient amount of time in the military is crucial and I've carried it with me throughout college.

Wellness of course ties into the previous paragraph. I've been an advocate for wellness ever since I took up leadership roles in high school. Following multiple student suicides and a family friend suicide I couldn't stand idly by. I created a short-lived organization called the Nirvana Union where I led students to talk to the Idaho Legislature to speak to lawmakers and the Idaho Health and Welfare committee.

All throughout my educational career I've never grasped for leadership positions, but I've found myself being nudged towards them.

Studio culture is my final issue, that's important and one that's so important to our education. In my third year of architecture school, it is where studio culture was really able to flourish. We had just gotten rid of all of the covid restrictions and people were actively inhabiting studio again. Ever since then my year has had a consistent studio culture that from what I've seen only comes around every so often. I want to be a huge advocate in helping chapters develop studio culture. The easiest way I've found to develop culture is to bump music in studio during crunch time, everyone's stressed but we're all helping each other with our individual projects. I've really found a passion to help other people through issues when it starts coming down to the wire.

How will I make progress? Through being an advocate for students and being there to support them every step of the way. I can't say exactly what my step-by-step plan is but I know that I will make progress to continue to keep the West Quad the best Quad.

4. 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?

The use of social media and technology is incredibly important for our region. The West Quad is the most geographically diverse and divided region in the AIAS. My predecessor has been pushing to have more online interactive experiences between chapters and I want to continue what he started. Pre covid times there were chapter takeovers of our social platforms, I want to bring these back. A collaboration between quadrants is one way we could connect our members to one another.

Technology however can't bridge the gap that conferences do. Which is why I want to support students in reaching out to their program directors to secure funding to attend forum, grassroots, and most importantly to the region the West Quad conference. During the 2025 bid process I would like to collaborate with our current West Quad Director and get multiple chapters onboard for the 2026 conference. For the 2026 bid process I would similarly collaborate with the newly elected West Quad Director to get multiple chapters bidding for the conference.

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.

My plan of action is to first support the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and regional directors in our global objectives set out to continue to expand the organization in the US and across the world.

As director of the West Quad, I intend to communicate with our membership on a regular basis via email, Instagram, and Slack outside of our monthly scheduled POD calls. I would also like to explore the idea of creating a West Quad Discord as it's a place for more casual conversation to happen and where the potential to share work can be had. Along with the currently established communication I'm going to have an open-door policy where any member can hop into a call with me quickly for any reason whether its small chapter grievances or just to bounce ideas off me. I will also be working with National to hopefully break the membership barriers that far too often I've seen bar students from getting involved with the organization. Of course, these matters come down to our fiscal policy and need to be balanced with giving the organization longevity.

With my experience in my local chapter and in developing a West Quad conference I believe communication will continue to be key in keeping the West Quad healthy. In addition, expanding the digital communication options to discord will hopefully help create a more casual place for members to interact with one another.

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 I've been briefed over the last year having a healthy fiscal plan is a priority that next year's board needs to heavily focus on. I mentioned in a previous answer that I would like to organize a small team that would give the organization's face and marketing a facelift. The current scheme is a bit stale and corporate. As I said previously architecture students and professionals are in the business of selling their designs. Why isn't the premier architecture student organization trying to sell itself to potential members? This is one of my long-term goals that I would like to set for the next board year and would cost next to nothing except man hours.



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: Connor Timothy Reakes

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: 12/31/2024



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: Connor Timothy Reakes

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: 12/31/2024

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): Connor Reakes

Chapter: University of Idaho

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): President, Vice President

Email Address: reak7769@vandals.uidaho.edu

Mobile Phone Number: (208) 608-4955

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- o Facebook: _____
- o Twitter: @_____
- o Instagram: @ctreakes
- o Other: LinkedIn: Connor Reakes