

**erin conti**

2020-2021

**aias national president**  
candidacy packet



## contents

- 3.** letter of intent
- 4.** resume
- 5.** letter of school support
- 6.** letter of peer support
- 7.** candidate questionnaire
- 10.** signed statement on aias elections  
code of ethics
- 11.** signed statement on aias policy on  
compensation for interns
- 12.** contact information sheet

November 6, 2019

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

Dear Past President Rosen,

I am writing to you today to formally declare my intent to run for the position of the 2020-2021 American Institute of Architecture Students National President.

When I first joined the AIAS five years ago I would have never expected that I would be writing this letter today, but if there is one thing this organization has taught me it is to never say never! What I knew as "the architecture club" at Keene State College in 2014 has had such an enormous impact on my journey through architecture school and I want to shout from the rooftops about how much more it is than simply a "club!" The magnitude of force with which this group of designers and leaders has to create a better future for architectural education and the profession is so powerful and should not be taken lightly.

Over the last five years I have had the opportunity to serve this organization in a wide range of roles on both the local and national levels at two very different schools in different quads. Through Chapter Leadership, Committees, Freedom by Design, the NCARB Licensing Advisor's Community, and now on the 2019-20 National Board of Directors, I have seen that there is no single path through the AIAS, much like there is no single path through the profession. While our paths are all unique, we all share common goals and it is this which drives us forward to create positive change together and continue the fight for our future within the profession and within our communities.

I have gained more than I thought possible throughout my journey within the AIAS. It has helped me find my voice and taught me how to use it effectively. I want to use my voice to give back to the organization that has given so much to me and so many others. I am endlessly thankful for the network of peers that have become colleagues, mentors, and friends who never cease to inspire me and who have helped shape me into the leader that I am today - a leader ready to give all that I have to push the AIAS into a new decade transforming architectural education and improving our world through leadership, design, and service.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

*Erin Conti*

Erin Conti, AIAS



EDUCATION

**Illinois Institute of Technology - Chicago, IL** Expected May 2020  
 Master of Architecture

**Keene State College - Keene, NH**  
 Bachelor of Science in Architecture – Summa Cum Laude May 2018  
 Minor: Occupational Safety and Health Applied Sciences  
 Study Abroad: Istituto Lorenzo de Medici, Florence, Italy Spring 2017

EXPERIENCE

**Schuler Shook** **Chicago, IL**  
 Lighting Design Intern 2019-Present  
*Assists with preparation of presentation materials, drawings, lighting fixture schedules, and fixture specification sheets.*  
*Performs lighting fixture research and computer calculations using AGI 32*

**Keene State College** **Keene, NH**  
 LP Young Student Center Building Manager 2016-2018  
*Oversees building operations and supervises building event setup teams. Provide assistance for events and troubleshoot technology issues.*  
 LP Young Student Center Information Desk Attendant 2014-2016  
*Welcome and assist visitors and provide information for building and campus events. Assist with building events setup.*  
 Orientation Staff 2015-2017  
*Assist new first-year and transfer students during their transition to Keene State College during summer orientation and Welcome Week*

**Corporate Cost Control** **Londonderry NH**  
 Receptionist/Data Entry Clerk 2012-2018

LEADERSHIP

AIAS National Midwest Quadrant Director 2019-2020  
 AIAS Governance Committee 2019-2020  
 AIAS Council of Global Representatives 2019-2020  
 AIAS Equity and Diversity Task Force Chair 2018-2019  
 AIAS Illinois Institute of Technology NCARB Student Licensing Advisor Spring 2019  
 AIAS Keene State College Chapter President 2017-2018  
 AIAS Freedom by Design Advisory Group 2016-2018  
 AIAS Keene State College NCARB Student Licensing Advisor 2016-2018  
 AIAS Keene State College Chapter Vice President 2016-2017  
 AIAS Keene State College Freedom by Design Director 2015-2017  
 AIAS National Elections Committee 2016  
 AIAS Keene State College Chapter Secretary 2015-2016

SKILLS

AutoCAD  
 Sketchup  
 Revit  
 Rhino  
 AGI 32  
 Adobe Creative Suite  
 Drafting  
 Model Making  
 Pencil Rendering

ACHIEVEMENTS

**Academic**  
 Keene State College Outstanding Senior Service Award 2018  
 Keene State College Dean’s List 2014-2018  
 KSC Presidential Scholarship Recipient 2014-2018  
 Lorenzo de Medici Tuition Scholarship Recipient 2016  
**OSHA Certification**  
 OSHA 511 Occupational Safety & Health Standards for General Industry  
 OSHA 510 Occupational Safety & Health Standards for Construction  
 OSHA 10-hour Construction Safety and Health Training Card



November 4, 2019

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

Re: Erin Conti for National Board of Directors of AIAS

Dear Amelia Rosen,

**MARTIN FELSEN**  
Associate Professor,  
Director, Master of Architecture  
Program

College of Architecture  
Illinois Institute of Technology

S.R. Crown Hall  
3360 S. State Street  
Chicago, IL 60616, USA

felsen@iit.edu  
312.617.4268

The Illinois Institute of Technology is proud to support Erin Conti in her candidacy for National President of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS). Throughout her academic career, Erin has been a committed and spirited participant in AIAS. She joined AIAS in her first year as an undergraduate at Keene State College and maintained substantial involvement throughout her undergraduate education. When Erin began her graduate studies in the Master of Architecture program here at IIT she immediately joined our AIAS chapter, making contributions based on her many AIAS experiences while serving as our NCARB Student Licensing Advisor.

Her dedication to the organization is reflected in her actions, serving the AIAS on both the local and national level for the past five years. Through her roles as Keene State College Chapter President, Freedom by Design Director, and NCARB Licensing Advisor, she worked to provide resources, opportunities, and leadership to help fellow undergraduate students and the KSC chapter succeed. As a national committee member of the Freedom by Design Advisory Group for two years, national committee chair for the Equity and Diversity Task Force, and currently as the Midwest Quadrant Director, she has worked to provide resources and support for students in programs throughout the entire national AIAS organization.

Time and again, Erin has demonstrated the organizational and leadership skills needed to take on the responsibilities of the position of National AIAS President. I extend the support of the IIT College of Architecture to Erin in her candidacy to the 2020-2021 Board of Director Elections.

Sincerely,

Martin Felsen, FAIA  
Associate Professor,  
Director, Master of Architecture Program



**American Institute of Architecture Students**

3360 S. State St, Chicago, IL 60616  
aias@iit.edu

15 November 2019

Dear Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA, Past President,

This letter serves as my formal recommendation of Erin Conti to be considered as a suitable Presidential Candidate for the American Institute of Architecture Students' 2020-2021 Board of Directors.

Erin is one of the most inspirational, supportive, and dedicated leaders I have ever met and I have been extremely fortunate to form personal and professional relationships with her over the years. She carries herself in such a professional and confident way, while also being approachable and extremely friendly, and I admire that deeply. Since meeting, I have seen her in many positions within this organization (general member, Chapter President, national committee member, Midwest Quad Director) and her passion for it has always been undeniable. Even as a general member last year at IIT, she made a point to be as engaged as she could and served as a great resource for our members (new and returning) to get excited to be involved.

Since Erin started grad school at IIT last year, I have been able to see more clearly just how much she puts into this organization and cares for its members. At Grassroots last July, the Midwest Quad talked about the importance of students' health and wellness and she gave us the avenue to collaborate and make a quad-wide event for the chapters to participate in together. That's a perfect example that if you bring up anything to her, she will follow through and work with whomever to get it done. Her drive is undeniable and I have no doubt it will only strengthen moving forward.

Overall, I strongly admire the way Erin is able to balance all the responsibilities in her life with such poise, elegance, professionalism, and care. I have no doubts that she would successfully fulfill the obligations and relationships relating to the Presidential position.

I hope this letter finds you well and thank you very much for your time.

Best Regards,

***Rachel Wiesbrock, AIAS***

Chapter President | iitAIAS

Architectural Intern | Stantec

B.Arch Candidate | College of Architecture

Class of 2021 | Illinois Institute of Technology



## questionnaire

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*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?*

My involvement in the AIAS began through encouragement of the Chapter President at Keene State College during my first year. I really did not know much about what the AIAS was, but when I was presented with the opportunity to represent our chapter at its first FORUM in 2014 in Nashville I took a chance and signed up. Attending that FORUM was truly life changing and sparked my passion for the AIAS - I met so many students that shared a passion for architecture and for making a difference in the world through design. I saw what other chapters were doing at schools across the country and was inspired to grow our chapter and get as involved in this organization as I could. I guess you could say I "drank the Koolaid" - and a lot of it! The passion I found for the AIAS at my first FORUM has driven me to become the leader I am today because I've seen what can happen when a dedicated group of leaders with a shared mission come together. We have achieved so much already, there is no limit to what we can do in the future! To anyone who has yet to realize their potential for leadership, take risks and follow your passions, whatever they may be, and you cannot go wrong. It will lead you to things you may not have thought possible and will challenge you to reach even further. The friends and mentors I have gained through this organization have been invaluable and have pushed me to keep going even when I've felt unsure. They have encouraged me to continue to do more and say more, not only for the AIAS, but for myself. Listen to those who inspire you and believe in you and encourage others that you believe in too. We can achieve so much more when we work together and support each other to reach our collective goals.

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

My leadership style has evolved as I have grown as a leader and transitioned into different roles. I believe this is an important part of being an effective leader; being flexible in different situations and being able to adapt your leadership style to best benefit the team you're working with and the outcome you are trying to achieve together. Serving in multiple chapter board roles in a relatively small chapter taught me the importance of working collaboratively. As a Chapter President I was able to delegate appropriately, knowing what it was like to work in those positions. Even though I had to delegate, I also had to recognize when to take on more responsibility to support a member of our team when needed. Similarly, working on national committees as both a member and a chair reinforced the importance of collaboration, but it also taught me how important communication is. Having a diverse team with members all in different locations was a very different experience than working with a chapter board at my school, and clear communication was key given our limited interaction. Being able to facilitate discussion and keep the conversation on track was a skill that I improved through my position as Chair of the Equity and Diversity Task Force, and has helped me as a Quad Director. Serving as the Midwest Quad Director I have found that leading is not always about doing or guiding and being the center of attention. Sometimes it is simply about listening and using your resources to help others achieve their goals. As Quad Director I have loved having the platform to support chapter leaders and elevate them to bring their ideas to the forefront! Each experience has taught me a lesson that I've been able to carry into my next leadership role, but it has also shown me that there are always more ways to grow and be a good leader.



## questionnaire

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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?

It's very hard to choose just one of these issues, because they are all relevant to members of the AIAS and our peers on varying levels! During my time as Midwest Quad Director I have put my focus toward the issues that have been most discussed by chapters, which have been learning & teaching culture and health & wellness. In order to raise awareness of this ever-growing issue, members of the MWQ expressed an interest in having a quad-wide health and wellness event, which led to the creation of our first ever Health & Wellness Week! It was a great success and chapters have been able to continue their efforts within their schools, working to rewrite their existing studio culture policies to reflect the values we want to promote within the AIAS. Fostering a positive learning and teaching culture means creating a healthy learning environment in which every student can feel confident in their own work, collaborate, and be able to express when they are met with challenges - including those related to their health and overall well-being! If elected President, I would hope to expand Health & Wellness Week to all of the quads, and I would continue putting efforts towards the issues that our membership feels is most important to them. The AIAS is an organization aiming to empower voices, ideas, and actions for the future – we need to listen to the voices and ideas of our members and take action together to work towards a better and brighter future.

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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?

As the AIAS continues to grow, so do the opportunities for collaboration amongst our chapters and our members. With such a diverse membership comes a diverse range of experiences therefore it is vital that we provide programs that are accessible and support our entire global network! Currently, our international chapters do not have the same ease of access to the benefits that come with an AIAS membership as our domestic chapters do. If elected, I would continue the work of the Council of Global Representatives to explore potential international partnerships that would add value to being an international AIAS member and increase the connections of those chapters abroad to our membership in the United States. Conversations with the members serving on the COGR has shown me that so much more work needs to be done if we want our international chapters to feel the same level of support the rest of the AIAS family receives. We cannot claim to be inclusive if we do not do everything in our power to fully welcome these chapters into our ranks. We cannot keep growing if we are not nurturing these relationships with our global community. Architecture students all around the world face many of the same challenges and once we establish these connections, we have an even stronger voice to work together to combat each and every issue we face in order to fight towards a better future we deserve!





## questionnaire

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*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.*

The role of National President is a multifaceted one, supporting our chapters and their members through various avenues and programs. Freedom by Design promotes service within the organization and has grown immensely as we reach the program's 15th year. I would like to reinforce the expanded scope for FBD so that we may grow even more in the next 15 years! Many chapters with programs don't feel that they are able to participate if they do not have a design-build project to declare and stop their efforts for the year when this happens. There is so much more opportunity to participate in service outside of a design-build project, and we should encourage FBD Programs to explore these possibilities to further increase service in our local communities. An important role of the President is to advocate on behalf of students to the collaterals on issues that are relevant and important to them. If elected I would work to encourage the collaterals to join us in being active advocates for students facing these challenges. This is not to say it is not already happening, but I believe there is potential for more to be done. Attending the NAAB Accreditation Review Forum and discussing what is affecting our students today with other collateral members opened my eyes to the fact that there are still many who are not aware of the issues, or the severity of them within architectural education. We are the only collateral organization made up entirely of students – we are the ones most affected by decisions made surrounding education, and I want to ensure that the AIAS can take the seats at the table that we deserve.

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*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.*

Architecture is a field that requires collaboration, both in education and in practice. It is important for students to have the opportunity to collaborate with others, and the AIAS does an excellent job of encouraging collaboration among students as well as members of the collateral organizations. One opportunity I think the AIAS should explore is collaboration with other architecture student organizations, as well as organizations outside of architecture. Many chapters, including the chapter at the Illinois Institute of Technology, already collaborate with student chapters of other organizations such as the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS) and the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) when hosting events and increase the participation of students at them. As students in these organizations, we all have a passion for architecture and strive to engage in our communities, and collaborating with these organizations on a national level would be very beneficial to the AIAS. In working together on efforts in advocacy we could reach more students and have a larger impact on these issues in architectural education that affects not just AIAS members, but all students! I also believe it would be beneficial for students if the AIAS collaborated with organizations that are not directly related to architecture. Many chapters within the Midwest Quad already do this - they are hosting lectures and engaging in dialogue with professionals in alternative careers. By collaborating with other organizations that relate to some of the alternative paths students can take, students would gain opportunities to explore these potential paths if they are unsure of which they wish to take. Our members are interested and have taken it on at their chapters, so we should reflect this interest on the national level and support them within our programming.



## 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: Erin Conti\_\_\_\_\_

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: Erin Conti\_\_\_\_\_

Date: 11/6/19\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form with your confirmation for participation.



## 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: Erin Conti-----

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: Erin Conti-----

Date: 11/6/19-----



## 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): Erin Conti\_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: Illinois Institute of Technology\_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): Midwest Quadrant Director\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: erin.conti41@gmail.com\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone Number: 603.341.4682\_\_\_\_\_

### Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- o Facebook: Erin Conti\_\_\_\_\_
- o Twitter: @\_\_\_\_\_
- o Instagram: @erinn.contii\_\_\_\_\_
- o Other: https://www.linkedin.com/in/erin-conti/\_\_\_\_\_