



## **2020-2021 west quad director candidacy packet**

**Nicholas Jonathan Romero**

505.702.5920

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Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA  
Past President AIAS  
Chair of Elections  
1735 New York Ave. NW,  
Washington D.C. 20006

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

It is with great excitement that I write to you my intention to run for the 2020-2021 American Institute of Architecture Students West Quad Director Position on the National Board of Directors.

AIAS has been an amazing experience full of valuable opportunities and lessons which have led to personal growth during my undergrad years and now into graduate school. Since I first entered the architecture program at The University of New Mexico, I have come to love and appreciate the impact that AIAS has on the student body. From the many Workshops, TimeOuts, and Mixers, we are always learning in a positive environment with other like-minded students. Now after 4 years of student interactions I am able to not only learn but lead as the UNM Chapter President. The leadership, knowledge, and experience I have gained has given me the skills needed to serve as a member of the Membership Committee and most recently the Forum Site Selection Committee.

My participation in these leadership opportunities was not for self-interest but for the ability to make positive change in my chapter. AIAS has an impact on current and potential students, as well as on the architecture profession. With that, my goal is to offer the same learning and leadership opportunities to other like-minded students as West Quad Director.

Enclosed in this packet, you will find all the necessary documents needed for the application. I look forward to being able to continue to serve our community on the National Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Romero', with a stylized, flowing script.

Nicholas Jonathan Romero, AIAS  
2019-2020 UNM AIAS President  
Masters of Architecture Candidate | University of New Mexico  
Bachelors of Arts in Architecture | University of New Mexico

## EDUCATION

University of New Mexico  
BA Architecture *May 2019*  
M.Arch Candidate

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## EXPERIENCE

Albuquerque Public Schools  
Construction Management Intern  
*May 2019 - Present*

Compass USA Group  
Meal Plan Representative  
*Mar 2018 - May 2019*

GAP  
Sales Representative  
*Aug 2017 - May 2019*

Country Line  
*Feb 2015 - Aug 2017*

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## SKILLS

Photoshop	AutoCAD	Graphic Design
Illustrator	SketchUp	Urban Sketching
InDesign	Rhino	
Lightroom	Photography	
VRAY	Revit	

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## ORGANIZATIONS

American Institute of Architecture Students  
*Aug 2015 - Present*

National Society of Leadership and Success  
*Aug 2016 - Present*

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## LEADERSHIP

UNM AIAS President  
*Aug 2019 - Present*

National AIAS Forum Site Selection Committee Group Member  
*Aug 2019 - Present*

UNM AIAS Vice President  
*Aug 2018 - May 2019*

National AIAS Membership Committee Group Member  
*Aug 2018 - May 2019*

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## AWARDS

D/P/S Design Competition for Secondary Education  
AIA Albuquerque Scholarship Recipient  
John Quinn Pate Endowed Scholarship



SCHOOL OF  
ARCHITECTURE  
& PLANNING

School of Architecture and Planning  
MSC04 2530  
1 University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131-0001  
Telephone (505) 277-2903

November 11, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to fully support Nicholas Romero, a graduate student at the University of New Mexico, and current leader of our school's AIAS group. Nicholas is an excellent student, and appears to be very thoughtful leader. He is taking his current role very seriously.

Recently he decided to pursue the position of AIAS Western Quad Director. I have observed Nicholas in various situations, and am impressed with his professionalism, enthusiasm for the position, and success in architectural education.

I am confident that Nicholas will be an be a thoughtful leader. In addition, I am aware he wants to become a licensed architect.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John Quale  
Chair and Professor of Architecture  
quale@unm.edu

John Quale  
Chair and Professor of Architecture, Department of Architecture  
University of New Mexico School of Architecture + Planning

ecoMOD Project Founder and Director  
Director, Jeff Harnar Award for Contemporary Architecture in New Mexico  
Director, Urban Innovation Certificate

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,**

It's my absolute pleasure to recommend Nicholas Romero for AIAS West Quad Director.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Nick for almost three years and this year, we have worked together as President and Vice President of our AIAS chapter at the University of New Mexico.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working with Nick, and came to know him as a truly valuable asset to any team. He is reliable and incredibly hard-working. Beyond that, he is dedicated to making our chapter of AIAS a welcoming, positive and successful group to be a part of. He goes above and beyond what any president should do and I feel that is what makes him a perfect candidate for West Quad Director.

Nick's knowledge and experience with AIAS is unparalleled by anyone else. He has lead the UNM team for two years, both as President and Vice President, as well as being very involved since his start in architecture school. Not only is he passionate about the organization as a whole, but he is passionate about how architecture can help others and make the world a better place. Along with his indisputable talent, Nick has always been an absolute joy to work with. He is a true team player, and always brings out the best in other students.

Without a doubt, I confidently recommend Nick to join your team at AIAS. As a dedicated student leader and an all-around great person, I know that he will be a favorable addition to your organization.

Please feel free to contact me should you like to discuss Nick's qualifications and experience further. I would be delighted to expand on my recommendation.

Best Wishes,

**GEENA GUTIERREZ**  
**AIAS UNM VICE PRESIDENT**

101 Broadway Ave. NE  
Apt. 408 B  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: 505-328-1332  
Email: [geenagutierrez@unm.edu](mailto:geenagutierrez@unm.edu)

## 1. Describe your origin story as a student leader.

My origin story really began in my first year at The University of New Mexico where I was in the same situation as many other first year students, unfortunately lost and unsure of what I wanted to do with my future. This was also around the time when I was walking around the studio space and came across an AIAS flyer which was advertising for a representative from each academic level. I thought, well lets just see where this leads, not knowing that this was something I could really be interested in. Overall, the first year was inspiring and it truly amazed me by how involved all students were at my school. We had students from all grade levels and other degrees participating to create a healthy culture that I felt fortunate to be a part of. Two years later I decided to take a leap of faith and run for Vice President for a chance to be more involved and to help our then President lead a successful chapter full of amazing students. Close to the end of my term, I realized that AIAS has such an impact on my life and the many friends I had made along the way (even from the numerous conferences I attended) that it encouraged me to keep going and continue my passion for improving studio culture, mental health, and social interaction between all students regardless of profession or background. Now as president, I feel that I have learned so much in contributing to my chapter and school, yet there is so much more I can learn and give back to the organization that made me who I am today.

## 2. Describe your leadership style.

Leadership starts with a team. This team is comprised of varying experiences from students ranging from just starting their architecture degree to those who are on their last year of grad school. The position the members applied for are assigned in the beginning of the summer to handle certain tasks such as marketing, professional development, fundraisers, etc. My style when it comes to leadership follows the sequence of collaborate, divide, and concur. To further explain, an initial brain storming session with the team is an opportunity to hear out everyone's thoughts and opinions and how that fits into the time line. From this we are able to create new events, workshops, group studio breaks, and fundraisers that will create learning and networking opportunities for all students. I then delegate certain rolls in any event based off of the team members chosen position to produce or gather information for the given event. I trust that each member will produce what is needed in time to ensure maximum involvement. In the event that a team member is unsure of their skills in that roll, I either pair them with someone who has experience in that area or personally assist them, this then becomes a mentor-mentee relationship that I believe is very beneficial to overall learning and team strategizing.

## 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?

As of recently I just started graduate school at UNM, and with this I began taking out student loans. However, until recently, I began to think about my future and the effects that this will have on it. It is something that I feel is often not spoken about, when in reality this will stay with us for years beyond our education. Six months later we receive a notice that our first payment is due, and on top of our monthly expenses we have to contribute a lump sum to our student loan debt. Now this doesn't seem to bad, but we should also be contributing to our retirement, despite that fact that I've heard that architects never retire. In a way I feel that student loans also play a role in our equity, health, and wellness. We also have to consider that we also must budget for the licensure tests before we can be a registered architect. Until we earn that title, we will be paid significantly less. We as students are unaware of the affect this will have and what it costs us when we retire. This past summer, I attended the AIAS Grassroots Conference where I had to opportunity to attend the Capital Hill Lobbying Session for a new kind of policy that would enable our employers to buy in to a option where if we were to contribute 5% of our income to student loans, this would count as a 5 percent contribution to our retirement, allowing the employer to match that. As the elected leader for the AIAS Board of Directors, I want to advocate and inform the students of how student loans will affect us in the long run and push for changes like the policy for capital hill to help contribute to our retirement as we pay our student loans.



**4. The AIAS has over 250 chapters across the U.S. and around the world, ranging in size from just a few students to hundreds. How would you use your position on the Board to better connect and engage our geographically and culturally diverse membership? What resources would you propose to better serve Chapter leaders seeking to grow their chapters and connect to other students around the world?**

There are many successful chapters, and for those who are starting a new chapter or those that contain a smaller group of members that are interesting in growing should be connected with another chapter(s). The best way to build a relationship with other chapters is through conferences like Grassroots and Forum, but also with regular Quad Pod calls. Above all, I think the best way connect and engage each chapter is through a mentor-mentee relationship, like what I described in a previous answer. There are many ways each chapter has strengths, and by networking with other chapters in the West Quad (and even the full 250 chapters) we all could provide learning opportunities for each other. Information such as how to get a chapter established, grow in member numbers, or to be financially stable, are just a few ways we can create a national (and even global) network of people who have each others' backs. We can all have the potential to be great, and with the opportunity to serve as West Quad Director, I will strive to connect us all even with an expansive geography and cultural diversity.

**5. Describe how you intend to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of your chosen position on the board.**

With my role as the West Quad Director, I want to bring together our chapters beyond the Quad Pod calls. I know that we all have something to learn from each other, and we all have the potential to do some pretty incredible things, such as increasing our membership numbers, financial stability, AIA involvement, and much much more. I want to see us all succeed and create healthy relationships where we can all bounce ideas off of each other in brain-storming sessions. I intend to dedicate some time each day of the week solely for AIAS. This way I can spend more time to be interactive with the different chapters and give them what they are needing most. This can be advice on how to do a certain task or if they need someone to hear our their opinions and concerns. I like to think of my self as a easy to talk to person that can be serious when needed but approachable at any time.

**6. Describe one area in which you see an untapped opportunity for the AIAS.**

An untapped opportunity that I see with AIAS is the utilization of our graduate students. Their knowledge of the world beyond the four walls of studio is extremely beneficial. There are things that we do not yet know that they may have been exposed to. Such topics may include advanced softwares used in the profession, how to get experience needed in a specific category on NCARB, and/or what you should expect when starting an internship. In the short time they have moved on from school they have experienced so much and I think by having them come back and lead specific sessions at all conferences or even lead small Q&A discussions at our schools, we could learn so much about what our profession is like. This is something that I am bringing to my university this spring to give the current undergrad and grad students the opportunity to ask questions that will benefit us all. What I see today is that most Alumni students finish and leave. But if we invite them back to our school, to lead certain discussions, workshops, or to event donate their art pieces for our annual art auction fundraiser, we have the opportunity to speak with them and get their insight on the profession before we graduate.



## 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: Nicholas Jonathan Romero

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: 11.14.19

## 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.

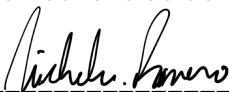
As leaders of this organization, and future leaders of this profession, we must uphold the highest ethical practice. Questionable behavior during elections will not be tolerated. Any concerns should be immediately raised with the Past President.

### 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: \_\_\_\_\_ Nicholas Jonathan Romero

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: \_\_\_\_\_ 11.14.19

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): \_\_\_\_\_ Nicholas Romero

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ University of New Mexico

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ President

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ nromero96@unm.edu

Mobile Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 505-702-5920

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

- o Facebook: \_\_\_\_\_ Nicholas Jonathan Romero
- o Twitter: @\_\_\_\_\_
- o Instagram: \_\_\_\_\_ \_njnr\_
- o Other: \_\_\_\_\_