



sara taketatsu

AIAS Vice President Candidacy Packet

2020-2021

- 1 letter of intent
- 2 resume
- 3 letter of school support
- 4 letter of support
- 5 candidate questionnaire
- 8 AIAS policy on intern compensation
- 9 AIAS elections code of ethics
- 10 contact information

Sara Taketatsu
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2880 Sundown Lane Apt #201
Boulder, CO 80303

Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA
Past President AIAS
1735 New York Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20006-5292

RE: Letter of Intent

Dear Past President Amelia Rosen,

It is with great excitement that I write to inform you of my intent to run for the 2020-2021 Vice President position on the American Institute of Architecture Students National Board of Directors.

The AIAS has played a critical role in my experience as a student and by running for this position I hope to continue the efforts of many leaders before me to elevate and support architecture students. The passion and drive of the AIAS membership astounds me every day and keeps me excited to serve. As a chapter leader as well as the current West Quad Director I have a broad base of experience to draw from, but what I am most excited about is the opportunity to listen and learn from current members to support their goals.

One of my passions is in fostering a sense of community within the field of design that is accessible, safe, and supportive to everyone. To get here we need to both critically listen to the experiences of members and then act in accordance with their needs. The agility of the AIAS has been a key aspect of this student-run organization and should be utilized to meet student needs. Understanding where we can improve processes while maintaining our favorite aspects of our beloved community will situate us to continue our work as an important collateral organization.

I am thrilled to be running for this position and am confident in my ability to carry out the duties of the Vice President in service of the American Institute of Architecture Students. Thank you for this opportunity as well as your own service to the AIAS.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara Taketatsu', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sara Taketatsu, AIAS
2019-2020 West Quad Director

sara taketatsu

719.298.7110

sara.taketatsu@colorado.edu

www.linkedin.com/in/taketatsu

education

**university of
colorado boulder**
2015 – 2019

bachelors of environmental design, specialization in architecture

awards and recognition

cum laude, AIA colorado north scholarship, envd design excellence award, cu outstanding colorado student award, regent scholarship, envd deans scholar (3.94 gpa), cu esteemed scholar, d.j. hyneck scholarship, flower family endowment scholarship, designers without boundaries (dwb) scholarship, dwb outstanding student award, dwb emerging leader award

experience

architectural designer
boulder, co
aug 2018 – current

sopher sparn architects

- generating bim and construction documents for residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects.
- conducting research and creating client presentations.

architectural intern
brownsville, tx
summer 2018

buildingcommunityWORKSHOP

- collaborated with grassroots organizations to engage communities on issues of flooding, health, and housing.
- design work for the city of brownsville belden trail project, cdc housing units, and sustainABLE house projects

undergraduate intern
boulder, co
spring 2018

growing up boulder

- planned and conducted engagements with children and youth in the boulder area.
- contributed to reports on gub youth engagements conducted for city of boulder planning and design projects.

architectural intern
denver, co
summer 2017

wold architects and engineers

- assisted in generating building information models and construction documents in revit.
- developed graphics for promotional content and client meetings.

archives technician
yosemite np, ca
summer 2016, 2017

yosemite national park archives

- communicated with researchers from around the world to fulfill their research requests.
- designed informational booklets and posters for the archives to publish and print.

leadership and service

**american institute of
architecture students**
aug 2016 – current

cu boulder chapter secretary, chapter co-president, chapter past-president
west quad director

**envd student
ambassador**
2017 – 2019

student ambassador
environmental design lead student ambassador

envd peer mentors
2017 – 2019

peer mentor
peer mentor coordinator

**national history day
colorado**
2017 – 2019

regional and state contest judge
volunteer intern, local high school assistant



University of Colorado
Boulder

Program in Environmental Design
Environmental Design Building
Rm 109
314 UCB
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0314

t 303 492 6308
f 303 492 6163
eversn@colorado.edu

Re: Letter of School Support for Sara Taketatsu, AIAS

To: Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA
Past President
American Institute of Architecture Students
From: Neal A. Evers, AIA
Instructor & AIAS Faculty Liaison
Date: November 5, 2019

Dear Ms. Rosen,

I am honored to compose a candid recommendation in support of Sara Taketatsu's bid to become the AIAS national Vice President. I've known Sara for over five years including my tenure as AIAS faculty liaison. I've been incredibly impressed with her dedication to the organization. CU Boulder's chapter of AIAS is part of a larger campus Program in Environmental Design which has positioned Sara to understand a unique discipline-competitive environment. Thus, I believe Sara understands possibly *more* than her peers from dedicated architecture programs exactly how AIAS is uniquely positioned to add value to the ranks of student membership.

As past president of the AIAS chapter at the University of Colorado Boulder, Sara has shown evidence of innovation in her leadership by beginning an AIAS-sponsored regional career fair, numerous local firm and construction site tours geared towards AXP advancement, and various scales of network-focused events like co-sponsoring the greater community's "Month of Modern." Currently Sara is the acting West Quad director for AIAS while also having recently sat on industry panels representing her architecture firm and a board of director's position for a Colorado Green Building Guild initiative. Through all of this, what is perhaps most astounding is how pure Sara's intentions are in service to the AIAS student and organizational body— there is no expectation on her end for accolades and recognition. Please take note of the selflessness I'm trying to describe; it is a rare and valuable quality that Sara brings to her commitments.

Lastly, I would like to speak to the organizational qualities that qualify Sara for the AIAS National Vice President position. Beyond knowing Sara in the AIAS organization, she has also been in two of my upper level design studios. I have not known a student to possess her unique, commanding ability to interconnect complex positions in an easily-understand and digestible manner. Sara is *always* prepared without fail, and often seems to be several steps ahead of the curriculum. Furthermore, Sara is a commensurate team-member in group settings always listening as well as she speaks and building up team members' positions above her own. As the VP position is one for an internal-facing Officer role, I can think of no one better-suited for the position.

Sara is gifted, innovative, poised, and steadfast in her determination to achieve excellence. I strongly recommend Sara Taketatsu for national Vice President for the AIAS. Please don't hesitate to contact me for further information in regards to Sara's qualifications.

Sincerely,

Neal A. Evers, AIA
Instructor I Program in Environmental Design
University of Colorado Boulder

Endorsed by,

Paul S. Chinowsky
Director I Program in Environmental Design
Professor I Dept of Civil, Environmental and
Architectural Engineering
University of Colorado Boulder

Re: Letter of School Support for Sara Taketatsu, AIAS

To: Amelia Rosen, AIAS, Assoc. AIA
Past President
American Institute of Architecture Students
From: Nick Berg
CU Boulder AIAS President
Date: November 10, 2019

Dear Past President Amy Rosen,

My name is Nick Berg and I am currently a Junior at CU Boulder and the current President of our AIAS Chapter. After joining the AIAS Board last year, I grew closer and closer to Sara Taketatsu because she was once our President and also served as Past President. She is now our West Quad Director and also serves me personally by providing amazing advice with collegiate and future life choices.

The Vice President of AIAS must be an important position to fill. I would imagine that this decision affects many people and processes across the nation. So why not elect the person who has the ability to fill that important role and maximize every opportunity at hand?

Sara Taketatsu is the best candidate for this position. A driven, college graduate, who is eager to immerse herself in the everyday lifestyle of the American Institute of Architecture Students, Sara can accomplish everything she sets her mind to. Taking a look into her college success, Sara worked for buildingcommunityWORKSHOP to help empower the residents of Brownsville Texas to create change within their communities, led the CU AIAS chapter as president, and conducted research through an Honors Thesis focussing on Community Centered K-12 School Design. Of course these are outstanding achievements that certainly shape a hard working individual. However, the way I see it, these achievements highlight Sara's most prominent professional qualities:

- Ambitious
- Detail-Oriented
- Motivated
- Reliable
- Self-driven

One of the main duties of AIAS Vice President is to facilitate all national conferences such as Quad, Forum, and Grassroots, so obviously this person needs to be on top of their game. Sara is someone who is always one step ahead of the game due to these professional personality traits. Therefore, I believe that she is the perfect candidate for this position. CU Boulder AIAS would love to see her rise again to the Vice President position! Her hard work and efforts are more than deserving of this.

Sincerely,



Nick Berg
CU Boulder AIAS President

candidate questionnaire

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?

Early on in my freshman year, I remember a few people from another freshman studio organizing a firm tour as part of the AIAS. I told them I was too busy with studio and remember thinking, “Wow, those kids are going to get burnt out really quick, we’re already doing too much for class.” Fast forward to the end of my first semester, I was the one who was burnt out, and it seemed like those crazy AIAS kids had figured something out. I jumped in without hesitation, quickly learning that this organization could fill the gaps, provide tools, and connect people unlike anything else being provided as part of my design education! It was something that I felt needed to be shared with everyone, prompting me to take the leap into leadership. That right there is also the advice I would give everyone reading this. Leadership is a leap and a scary one at that! You’ll never feel completely prepared, but really, when will you ever? So lean into your passion, don’t look back, and jump in!

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

I am what some people might call a first follower, meaning I buy into people’s passions and ideas when I see that something is being done for a genuine purpose. I want to support you and your vision and connect you to the resources you need to make it happen. My team experiences in studio, the workplace, and especially in the AIAS have again and again shown me that this type of supportive leadership is what’s most fulfilling for me, even as I’m always looking for ways to improve. My multidisciplinary education background also supports thinking through different scales and with a system based mindset. One small positive action can have a resounding ripple effect if supported and celebrated in the right ways. This only occurs with the support of a community, so understanding how to be a team player is the only way to achieve our collective goals.

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?

One of my passions is in creating a community within the field of design that is accessible, safe, and supportive to everyone. Not one issue here is clearly the most important, especially as they all intersect with each other and are a part of the overall architectural education experience. Can you imagine a Venn diagram of all of these issues? As soon as one overlaps the other a slew of new challenges emerge: a diverse student struggling with student debt, a leader struggling to manage their health and wellness in a taxing classroom environment, or perhaps a student eager to gain practice experience without technology skills. As a current member of the AIAS Board of Directors, I have the opportunity to hear about so many different experiences and recognize how often these factors compound to create complex, real-life challenges for people. I want to continue giving a voice to those experiencing the intersection of these challenges.

As Vice President of the AIAS, I will continue to highlight the amazing work being done to address these challenges and renew efforts to share student experiences among chapters and members. We all grow as a community and are better able to support one another when we connect. There are still plenty of opportunities to bring more peer-to-peer learning to all levels of the organization.

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?

Our greatest resources lie in one another, and in order to access them, we need to connect. This all happens through conversation, plain and simple. I believe that the collaborative energy and the intention to have those conversations exist in the AIAS, but also understand that communication takes time and energy. Slack, Instagram, twitter, facebook, and emails hamper us all day long with streams of information and “ways to connect.” It can feel intensely isolating, or even a chore. So what can we do to make peer-to-peer connections more engaging? I propose a ‘getting down to basics’ approach. We don’t necessarily need new technology or means of connecting with other people, instead, we need to take some time to have more honest, vulnerable and empathetic conversations. Let’s make sure we all promote a culture of listening first and honing our skills to ask really great questions to each other. If we mastered that, all our 250+ chapters would be more connected, engaged, and empowered.

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 time as West Quad Director, I have been working full time while balancing the responsibilities of the director position. Although my time is constrained, I’m more energized than ever. I get to come home after work and connect with some of the coolest people I know! The main challenge I’ve been facing is trying to accomplish all my goals in the time I have since I feel especially responsible to this community that I’m really inspired by and committed to. There are so many ways to continue to support the membership and I want to do it all! I’m a systems thinker and in an interesting combination, am also into administrative tasks. The Vice President position is a highly administrative role and that’s exciting to me! There are so many opportunities to bolster processes that directly support students, like the honor awards and membership support! My goal for the one-year term would be to serve the membership to the best of my abilities and make sure the systems of the AIAS are working for everyone!

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.

I would like to see various chapters engaging more with their previous generations of members. The AIAS has an amazing group of alumni and I would love to see better connections with them. This relationship needs to be developed with more input from alumni and current chapters, but there is so much opportunity for a better way. As a recent graduate, I can identify with the jarring experience of graduating from school and realizing your academic support systems are not as accessible to you. How can we create a mutual relationship where we support our graduates who are becoming emerging professionals while they also provide valuable insight to students about the professional world? I believe it starts from within the academic experience before students graduate. If current



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: SARA TAKEYATSU

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: [Signature]

Date: 11/4/19

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: SARA TAKEKATSU

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: [Signature]

Date: 11/4/15

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): SARA TAKETATSU

Chapter: UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO - BOULDER

Chapter Leadership Position (if any): WEST QUAD DIRECTOR

Email Address: SARA.TAKETATSU@COLORADO.EDU

Mobile Phone Number: 719-298-7110

Social Media Account Handles (optional):

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