Ventura Architect Gives Workshop at 2017 AIA Grassroots Conference in Washington, D.C.

On March 9, 2017, Ms. Mary Follenweider AIA LEED AP, American Institute of Architects Ventura County Board Director, along with Mr. Seth Hufford, The People Group LLC, lead the workshop “Community Leadership: Getting Involved to Impact Change” at the 2017 AIA Grassroots Conference in Washington, D.C.

The workshop explored how architects can grow personally and professionally while contributing time and energy to community issues, how to tap into ones’ personal passions for involvement and the importance of volunteering. Over one hundred and fifty participants worked in small groups to identify community challenges, to utilize expertise and to create a plan for getting involved. Also, participants exchanged resources, effective advocacy strategies and techniques.

Ms. Follenweider ended the hour and half community leadership session with a quote by Richard Rogers of Rogers, Stick, Harbour and Partners of London:

“The idea is that we have a responsibility to society that gives us a role, as architects, not just to the client but also to the passer-by and society as a whole.”

The annual AIA Grassroots Conference focuses on Architect leadership development and advocacy on Architectural issues.

American Institute of Architects (AIA) - Founded in 1857, the American Institute of Architects consistently works to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. Through nearly 300 state and local chapters, the AIA advocates for public policies that promote economic vitality and public wellbeing. Members adhere to a code of ethics and conduct to ensure the highest professional standards. The AIA provides members with tools and resources to assist with their careers and business as well as engaging civic and government leaders and the public to find solutions to pressing issues facing our communities, institutions, nation and world. Visit www.aia.org

Ms. Follenweider AIA, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional (LEED AP) is currently an AIAVC Chapter Board Director and AIA California Council Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and Co-chairperson of the AIACC Advocacy Advisory Committee. She is past Building Official for Boulder, Colorado, and was involved with the AIA Colorado State Government Affairs for over seven years.
Notes from Grassroots

By: Mark Di Cecco, AIAVC Vice President

Many in the AIA have this preconceived idea that National AIA is this abstract place where our dues go. At Grassroots I found that the reality is more of a large organization in the seat of our government in D.C. working on our behalf, where dues play only a small part of our organization’s financial structure. We were exposed to the myriad of programs, benefits and resources that National offers, but it was obvious that the focus of the AIA is insuring that the public’s welfare and safety are best served by architects, and communicating that notion to the Country’s leadership. There was also a palpable movement at Grassroots toward making National more inclusive, beyond a middle aged white male organization and profession.

In meetings with AIACC, the State AIA was naturally more focused on statewide concerns, but frankly more accessible and willing to work with us to make AIA valuable to architects that practice in California. And based on the importance of the state, issues of concern to us can influence the National AIA as well.

Beyond state, I spent as much time as possible talking to other small chapters and components, sharing best practices for how to be relevant and serve our membership. Our conversations focused on continuing education, joint event opportunities with our neighboring Chapters, and issues that affect us regionally such as housing affordability.

Seeing Washington, D.C. for the first time, I was struck by how it is a representation in built form of how we see ourselves and our society. So much of it is shaped by the architecture and the designed urban fabric. A great reminder of the importance of what we do as architects.

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2017 Lunch and Learn Series

Presenter: DuctTesters
Class: 2017 Energy Code

You are invited to attend the next Lunch and Learn Series on Wednesday, April 12, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Receive one learning unit, lunch, and networking opportunities. RSVP to Robert Trentham at info@aiavc.org by Tuesday, April 11th at noon. Free for AIA Members and $10 for non AIA members.

Location: Career Education Center, Conference Room, 465 Horizon Circle, Camarillo, CA 93010, (805) 437-1420.

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