

WiA LA 2016 Year End Summary

12.06.2016

The WiA LA leadership group is pleased to present our 2016 Year End Summary. We are proud of all that we were able to accomplish in this founding year as a new AIA LA Committee including member participation in monthly hosted events and a sold-out annual Powerful conference, actively contributing to the advancement of women in the profession and topics of equity and diversity. There are many lessons learned that we will keep in mind as we enter 2017. We look forward to the evolution of our leadership, our group, and being “more powerful together” with AIA LA!

Sincerely,

Your 2016 WiA LA chairs:

Patricia Rhee, AIA

Pooja Bhagat, AIA

Tania Van Herle, AIA

Ashley Perkins, AIA

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 2015: Powerful 2 Symposium (fee charged)

December 2015: Post Powerful Recap Meeting

The following were discussed as a group: Tentative goals/objectives, potential conference/monthly session topics, tools/resources, partnerships and communication. An executive group was formed (Patti Rhee, Tania Van Herle, Pooja Bhagat and Will Wright). Subsequently Ashley Perkins joined the group as one of the chairs.

January 2016: WiA Launch Meeting (42 RSVP's)

The co-chairs presented to the first monthly meeting of Women in Architecture (WiA), creating a new group that would develop the Powerful Symposium with AIA LA. Mission and goals were presented and individuals signed up for subgroups (marketing, metrics/best practices, professional/educational outreach, resources and issues).

February 2016: “Getting FAIA’d” Panel Discussion (40 RSVP's)

Steve Tanner, Barbara Bouza, Alek Zarifian and Debra Gerod discuss what the jury is looking for in awarding Fellowship and what the process entails.

March 2016: Roundtable Mentoring Session (67 RSVP's)

We had a very successful Roundtable Mentoring Session with a fully booked event. Aimed at fostering a link among Architects, Designers, and Emerging Professionals through short and lively conversations, this innovative form of mentoring encourages architects of all

experience levels to share their stories and advice. Surveys were sent out following the session to receive feedback from attendees. 96% of those surveyed felt this event was valuable to their career development. Additionally, 100% of survey takers said they would recommend this event to others.

April 2016: WiA is approved as an official committee of AIA LA.

April 2016: Rosa Sheng of Equity by Design (EQxD) Video Conference (74 RSVP's)

Our April web conference with Rosa Sheng, driver of the Missing 32% Project and this year's Equity by Design (EQxD) survey, was a huge success! We had over 50 attendees with very enthusiastic support. The recorded video is posted on our Facebook page. Many difficult questions were asked and spurred further conversation regarding equity in the workplace.

May 2016: Executive Presence Communication Skills Seminar with Dr. Judith Segal (76 RSVP's)

"When you know you have something you bring to the table, no one can undermine you."

We had a successful, fully-booked May event with special guest, Dr. Judith Segal. Dr. Segal spoke and guided the group to define executive presence, assertiveness, and methods for dealing with difficult people. Dr. Judith Segal is a coach, internal mediator, lecturer and consultant, who works with globally based companies in all aspects of Human Relations, Management Development, Leadership and Communication Effectiveness.

Several key issues were brought up by attendees, which Judith helped address. It was a highly motivating session and we are incredibly grateful to have had an esteemed speaker such as her!

When dealing with difficult people, one helpful idea Dr. Segal mentioned,

"Take people where they are, not where they should be."

One of the better takeaways from the session was Judith's comment on commanding a room:

"The good news is if you don't have an executive presence, you can grow it."

June 2016: Pico Branch Library Tour with KEA (41 RSVP's)

The first WiA building tour of the Pico Branch Library by Koning Eizenberg Architecture was a huge success, with a great turnout. Julie Eizenberg and Nathan Bishop gave a personal tour to the group.

Conceived as a community living room, the Pico Branch Library engages its park setting to encourage use of an educational resource in a diverse neighborhood. The project was developed with the community in a series of public design workshops. The library's siting preserves existing green space while repurposing underutilized space to activate the park's event plaza.

July 2016: Just Label Panel Discussion (51 RSVP's)

The JUST Label, created by the International Living Future Institute, is a program that provides an innovative transparency platform for organizations to reveal much about their operations, including how they treat their employees and where they make financial and community investments. Organizations working toward this label must take a close look at their HR policies, and diversity and pay scale equity data, which is needed for reporting to this transparent database.

The panel included Francis Janes, ILFI's JUST Program Manager; David Herd, Managing Partner of BuroHappold U.S.; Caroline Kreiser, Principal at Miller Hull; and was moderated by Heidi Creighton of BuroHappold. The conversation covered the importance of transparency, metrics, social equity, diversity, and how these tie into sustainability. The panelists discussed their experiences with pursuing a JUST Label, why it is important, and the impact it has had on their firms.

August 2016: Speed Talks on Mentoring (fee charged) (88 RSVP's)

This tri-sponsored networking event was put together by AIA Women in Architecture, AWA+D and NOMA at Perkins+Will on Tuesday, August 30th. Presenters represented the architecture field from recent graduates to principals / partners of firms throughout Los Angeles and Orange County. Each presenter took a personal approach to the topic of "My Favorite Mentor," and shared a myriad of personal tips, hardships, stories and achievements gathered through the years in the design profession within a 2 minute time limit. It was great to see, hear and relate to those in the industry we may not have met before, but felt a connection through similar experiences. It was also a good opportunity for the three groups to commune and future cross-collaborative/cross-promotional events are planned.

September 2016: Managing Principals Gender Equity Survey (sent to 273 people, 36 responses to date)

To better understand the gender equity issues faced in architectural practices in Los Angeles, WiA prepared a short survey for Managing Principals and Firm Leaders to complete. Ultimately, the committee would like the survey to serve as the impetus to reveal the best practices to promote gender equity. The survey results will be anonymous with only general data and information being shared.

September 2016: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (26 RSVP's)

The discussion covered: Sexual Harassment Defined, The Business Imperatives of Addressing Sexual Harassment, Responsibilities of Employers in Addressing Sexual Harassment and Practical Steps for Individuals to Address Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. A question and answer followed the discussion to address individual questions and comments.

The interactive discussion was led by two presenters, Janis Barquist and Petrina KM Gooch. Ms. Barquist joined the City Attorney's Office in 1999. Over the course of her 18 years with the City Attorney's office, Ms. Barquist has represented and given advice to numerous City of

Los Angeles departments, including the LAFD, LAPD, General Service, Animal Services, and Personnel Departments. Ms. Barquist's specialty is labor relations and employment discrimination and harassment. Petrina joined Harley Ellis Devereaux in 2008 and serves as a Principal of the firm and Corporate Human Resources Leader. For the past 25 years, Ms. Gooch's career in Human Resources Management and Leadership has spanned the private and public sectors, including the government, professional service, and labor industries.

October 2016: Powerful 3 Symposium (fee charged)

The Powerful III Symposium was a full day event with over 280 attendees at SCI-Arc. It was a huge success, was backed by a strong fundraising effort and sold out 2 months prior to the event. The conference showcased women in the design profession from LA as well as from afar, including three inspiring key note speakers: Justine Clark of Parlour (Australia), Julie Snow of Snow Kreilich Architects (Minneapolis), and Annie Chu of Chu Gooding Architects (LA). Interactive breakout lunch sessions focused on topical small group discussions. A live stream of the event was made available to those unable to attend in person. The evening concluded with a networking happy hour.

A survey link was distributed to attendees to gather feedback from the event to improve future symposia. Bound copies for sale of the Parlour Guides were published in commemoration of the event.

November 2016: Post Powerful Recap Session / WiA 2017 Planning Session (64 RSVP's)

The WiA November event will provide an opportunity for further participation, offer feedback, and learn more about the Women In Architecture committee hosted by Gensler.

December 2016: Co-sponsored Holiday Mixer (with AWA+D) (fee charged)

AWA+D and WiA:

In addition to the Monthly Events listed above, numerous meetings occurred between AWA+D and WiA leadership to coordinate event schedules, discuss opportunities to collaborate (Powerful and the mixers), cross-promote and to avoid redundant efforts.

Committee Chairs:

Past Chairs 2016: Tania Van Herle, AIA--HED
Ashley Perkins, AIA--Smith Group JJR
Past Chair 2017: Patricia Rhee, AIA--Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects
Current Chair 2017: Pooja Bhagat, AIA--MRY Architects
Vice Chair 2017: Jenna Knudsen, AIA--CO Architects
Melanie Freeland, AIA--Gensler