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Architects Support Development of Equity in Architecture Commission at AIA National Convention



2015 AIA President Elizabeth Chu Richter, FAIA, announces that Resolution 15.1 passes with overwhelming support at the Annual Business Meeting during the AIA National Convention in Atlanta.

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) May 21, 2015 | Voting members of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) responded with overwhelming support for [Resolution 15-1](#) in support of Equity in Architecture at the AIA National Convention in Atlanta on May 16, 2015, with 4,117 delegates of the Institute voting in favor of the resolution. The resolution calls for AIA and architects to realize the goal of equitable practice to retain talent, advance the architecture profession, and communicate the value of design to society.

“The Institute has long identified diversity and inclusion as a strategic goal for the profession, however, the rate of impact has not been significant enough to advance the ratio of underrepresented populations within the profession, with the greatest disparity being evident in leadership and ownership positions,” AIASF President Irving Gonzales, AIA, stated. “The astounding support of the resolution by voting members of the Institute demonstrates that we as a profession are ready to lead in the area of equitable practice.”



Resolution 15.1, cosponsored by the American Institute of Architects San Francisco Chapter (AIASF) and the American Institute of Architects California Council (AIACC), calls for the AIA National Board of Directors to establish a Commission on Equity in Architecture. This Commission will be charged with utilizing metrics-driven knowledge, collaborative discussion, and definitive action to develop specific recommendations that will lead to equitable practices, investing in a diversity that mirrors society at large within all levels of the Institute, academia, and the profession of architecture.

“Women of all races and ethnicities represent 18% of licensed AIA Architect members and only 17% of AIA members in firm leadership, while minorities regardless of gender currently represent 13% of licensed AIA Architect members,” said Jennifer Jones, Executive Director of AIASF. “Equity is everyone’s issue, and achieving equitable practice has a direct impact on the relevance, economic health and future of the Institute and the profession.”

The Equity in Architecture Resolution was drafted by AIASF Assistant Treasurer and Equity by Design Committee Chair Rosa Sheng, AIA; Julia Donoho, AIA, co-founder of the Julia Morgan Foundation; and AIA National Vice President Frank Pitts, FAIA. Boston Society of Architect’s Emily Grandstaff-Rice, AIA, and Julia Donoho, AIA, of the Redwood Empire Chapter/AIACC spoke from the floor of the Annual Business Meeting in favor of the resolution. The Equity in Architecture resolution also received support from the AIA National Board of Directors, AIA National Strategic Council, AIA Diversity Council and AIA Big Sibs.

“Until the architecture profession reflects the demographics which it serves, we will not have reached our fullest potential for impact, meaning and influence,” Rosa Sheng, AIA, commented. “The presence of both men and women with different backgrounds at the Equity by Design convention workshops and networking events affirmed the desire to discuss equity in the profession. It’s not just for women’s sake, but also for talent retention to sustain the profession and connect with the diverse population that we serve.”

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Serving the Bay Area for more than a century, the American Institute of Architects, San Francisco Chapter, one of the largest of the AIA’s nearly 300 chapters, represents more than 2,000 members in San Francisco and Marin County. As a resource for our members and the general public, AIA San Francisco strives to improve the quality of life in the Bay Area by promoting architecture and design. We further this goal through community involvement, education, advocacy, public outreach, member services, and professional excellence.