

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MINORITY ARCHITECTS SPRING 2015

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NOMA

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Photo credit belongs to the Official 2014 Conference Photographer: Fernando Gaglianese Nando Photography www.nandopics.com Cover: Pascale Saint-Louis' new School plan in Haiti for the rebuilding of that new school post earthquake

NOMA Magazine | Nº 12 | Spring 2015 | Edited by: Devanne Pena, Assoc. AIA, NOMA | Designed by: Lou Moriconi



## Editor's Message

Editor-in-chief Devanne Pena, Assoc. AIA, NOMA magazine@noma.net devannepena.com

want to talk a little about my experience as the 2015 editor-in-chief of NOMAmag, and some of the changes we have implemented in this Spring 2015 issue.

#### My experience:

Before fully taking on the role as editor-in-chief, much coordination was to be made to insure that my ideas aligned with the marketing goals of the organization, and to minimize overlap from our digitally published information. Let me just say, it is especially validating to be able to have influence on such a potentially effective marketing tool for our organization, and to be given full control and responsibility in which to work on the design of its overall structure, advertising model, and graphic representation.

This has been an especially important experience, being that I graduated from 5th year and became involved in NOMA only 3 years ago; it is fascinating where saying 'yes' will take you. By extreme brainstorming, and in-depth discussions with our president Kevin Holland, our marketing chair Lew Meyers, our past president Kathy Dixon, and our past editors Steven Lewis and Katherine Williams, an outline of the 2015 issues was designed.

I would like to take this moment to give 'mad props' to Katherine Williams, who held this position before me for 5 years. I was an assistant editor along side her for those last 2 years, and have learned a great deal about leadership, organization and therefore my own capabilities. She even trusted me to co-create/cospeak in our seminar at the 2014 NOMA Conference. She is a force to be reckoned with (I refer to her, personally, as an architectural goddess, but I'm keeping it professional). From Day 1, I knew I had some big shoes to fill.

#### Implemented changes

I believe that structure, transparency, support and incentive are important in creating and continuing spirited participation in anyone. Once the volunteer team was selected, I organized their contacts for communication fluidity, shared the working structure of the magazine and gave an overview of expectations. There was a finalization of ideas and some trial-and-error, so I truly am grateful of the team's flexibility and dedication. I would have not been able to pass my first ARE exam, if it had not been for these awesome people sharing the work load.

The Content Volunteers created a consolidated Top NOMA News graphic article. Because we publish biannually, it was practical to leave the extended news updates to the digital outlets. In this issue, we found it important to give a glimpse into the 2014 NOMA

Conference by newly incorporating Paola Moya's powerful keynote address, and a few Stand-Out seminars. The Marketing Volunteers round-tabled to create a marketing message and supporting promotions catered to design competition organizers, universities, and product/material vendors. Although this issue did not secure advertisement, we now have a structured model and created the resources to obtain them strategically in the upcoming issue and beyond. Last, for transparency's sake, here are a couple of lessoned learned: Doubling the amount of volunteer-power equals doubling the correspondence; be ready. Finally, write your editor's message sooner. The start-up of this 2015 volunteer experience has been a large contribution on my part, but totally worth it, and I am confident that it will only continue to streamline and advance.

#### **Final thoughts**

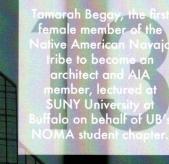
An issue of NOMAmag is something to save (and put at the top of the pile of architecture magazines in your living room); it is something to share among professionals to spread the word about our capable, comparable, and colorful organization. Along with retaining membership, sharing this magazine is a contribution to the success of minority architects, and students and designers on their paths to licensure. To request additional copies (with a modest publication fee), or advertising and subscription information, please email advertising@noma.net.



## NOMA SPRING 2015 3

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NOMA Membe Vergel Gay, Gabrielle Bulloc Robert King, and Anthony Floyd obtain Fellowship in AIA



**ReGenesis** Environ mental Justice Partnership **Receives National** Planning Excelle Award



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**NOMA** launches newly-designed Career Center for job seekers and employers in the architectural community.

I have this ambitious theory that there is going to be a surge of licensed AA members in the next 5 years. None of this thinking is substantiated, and is actually opposite of your numbers, but I can only hope that my absolute enthusiasm to become licensed is shared with my AA architectural peers. I think that it is. Also, the incorporation of the 5.0 exam may elicit this surging.

-Devanne Pena, Assoc. AIA, NOMA Austin, TX

According to the June 2014 NCARB by the Numbers report, 3,153 people completed their ARE in 2013. The report does not give a breakdown of gender for those completing, but it does say that about 35% of test takers were women. The report does not have any data on race or ethnicity.

The recent press on Public Interest Design has changed the potential pathway for many recent graduates to pursue jobs outside of traditional architecture firms.

The question will be, is the training at community design centers & Public Interest Design firms for these recent graduates the same, inferior or superior to traditional firms in preparing them to pass their licensing exams.

> -Prescott Reavis, NOMA , LEED AP, SEED Oakland, CA

Interns can now earn credit for volunteer service with organizations on NCARB's Community-Based Design Center Collaboration list. This will give interns another vehicle to complete this step toward licensure. Many of these centers have architects on staff or as consultants who can help ensure interns are getting a quality experience.

I feel like I'm the reason why those numbers are so low. On the one hand, I encourage architectural professionals to get licensed, however, I'm unable to obtain licensure myself. The main reason is lack of motivation. My job doesn't support me in the way I need supporting and the work/life balance hasn't been mastered.

> -Melissa Daniel, Assoc AIA, NOMA Washington, DC

I am sure so many people are in this boat. I was there. At some point, I just buckled down and did it. I started a Yahoo group with others who were also taking their exams. It may sound cliche, but we do "have to be the change we want to see." Those numbers are not going to increase if we are sittinnnnng on sideline.

As I continue to mentor the next generation and cultivate their interest in architecture, I emphasize the value of an architectural education as a solid foundation that can support many other career choices. The more people we can get into the pipeline, the greater the opportunity to increase our numbers. If we are to be included among those who would create the legacy of our time in the built environment, we must be present and accounted for within the profession.

#### -R. Steven Lewis, NOMAC, AIA Altaden, CA

This is why many of us continue to mentor, teach youth programs, cajole and nag those who are taking exams: we want to see more in the pipeline.

What are your thoughts on the statistics of licensed architects and its affect on the profession? Email magazine@NOMA.net to continue the conversation, and your thoughts could be included in the response article in our next issue.



Katherine Williams, AIA, NOMA the former NOMA magazine editor, is the current chair of the AIA Housing Knowledge Community advisory group. She has worked in community development and was previously an Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellow in San Francisco. She has presented at numerous conferences and served on several non-profit boards. She currently works for a general contractor in Northern Virginia. She writes at katherinerw.com.

## NOMA

"

For me, the NOMA conference has been a metaphorical respite and revival for a decade. I have walked the conference in search of knowledge, mentorship, friendship.....and a dance floor, all of which I have found in excess. The Philadelphia NOMA conference was particularly special to me for a few reasons. This was the first time in over a decade that the conference was held on the East Coast, which made it easy for my family to come join the NOMA experience. Beyond proximity, my NOMA chapter (NOMA Louisiana) and I were honored to receive co-chapter of the year and member of the year during the proceedings and I was pleasantly surprised to be asked to join the board. All of this culminating with an amazing brass band introduction for the 2015 NOMA conference to be held in New Orleans! It truly was a fantastic conference and a terrific way to celebrate 10 years in the organization. I'm looking forward to the next 10!

-**Bryan C. Lee Jr.** New Orleans NOMA blee@nomala.org

My name is Edward Senatus I am a fourth year Architecture student at Hampton University. NOMA 2014 was the first time I had the opportunity to attend the national conference. In short, it was amazing it blew me away. I was able to attend multiple seminars and meet important people in the profession. I enjoyed the lecture series, "The Steve + Jack show" which discussed the black aesthetic and whether or not it existed in architecture. Afterwards I had the opportunity to meet both Jack Travis and Steven Lewis. NOMA gave me the opportunity to meet HU Alum, Network, and learn what goes on within and beyond the profession of Architecture. -Edward Senatus edward.senatus@yahoo.com

NOMA SPRING 2015 9 The 2014 NOMA Conference in Philly was yet another great conference. Although there were many excellent seminars, the ones that I personally found very interesting we're the Hip Hop in Architecture seminar and the always fascinating Jack and Steve Show. The Hip Hop in Architecture seminar exposed some very interesting facts that I had not heard before, such as Le Corbusier being the father of hip hop. I never really thought about that fact, but he was quite the revolutionary designer, and who knew that he really valued African American culture! It was thought provoking and actually showed some examples of hip hop inspired architecture such as a building that included graffiti designed in its exterior elevations.

By contrast, the Jack and Steve show exhibited a wide variety of Afrocentric inspired architecture and design from Jack Travis combined with the insightful commentary and design examples by Steve Lewis. Always a big hit at every conference, Jack and Steve engaged the audience with great imagery and design principles that tend to push the envelope of traditional architecture. It was a standing room only crowd, and the students were particularly captivated. Some of my other favorite highlights were the Loews Hotel itself, the lecture at the Philadelphia University, the Bros Arts Ball, and of course the Awards Banquet. Sunday was great because a small group of us went on a guided tour led by Joel Avery through the courtyard of Philadelphia City Hall, and on the train to the University of Philadelphia's Architectural Library. We were treated to some fantastic historic preservation, while getting to see some of the archived drawings of Louis Khan.

All in all, the Philinoma really out did themselves with that conference, which set the bar for what should be another fantastic conference in New Orleans in October 2015.

> -Erroll Oneil INOMA rktec84@gmail.com

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> -Edward Senatus edward.senatus@yahoo.com

## Chapter of the Year and Member of the Year



## Professional Chapter of the Year

There was a tie this year for efforts well achieved from both NOMAtlanta and NOMA Louisiana. Congratulations!



## Member of the Year

The start of

Bryan Lee, NOMA Louisiana Congratulations!

### Stand-Out Seminars



reat design isn't the domain of the architect- it's something every single one of us can deliver. What's more, it not only looks great, but enhances the experience of everyone who uses it, resulting in a true return on investment for your client. But if that's true, why are there so many mediocre buildings out there? When we do a post-mortem analysis of process for several recently completed projects, looking at everything from marketing, to proposals all the way through construction and occupancy, certain patterns begin to emerge that separate great architecture from the merely serviceable. What we learned is that great design isn't happening just because some architect got lucky and landed a visionary client. It happens when architects help their client to feel at ease with taking risk and to imagine the possibility of transformation.

This starts with changing the way we look at architectural services. So much of our time is spent on the design and construction phases, when those represent only a small fraction of the life of a project. That life begins during a time called organizational readiness, when a client begins to

the photos are taken, the design team walks away and never discovers if the space is truly being used as intended, or if some of their design gestures had unintended consequences. This broken old design process risks the client trying to treat a symptom of their problem with the project and unsuccessfully impacting the culture of the space. When this happens - and it does far too often- the real loser is the people that have to live work or play in that space.

To remedy this, we recommend adding more rigor to the design process in the form of an evidence-based approach. Simply understanding what a client is really trying to improve, what metrics they will use to measure success and how they will see your design solution as adding value sets up a framework that takes the mystery out of design and begins to make it a more transparent, and engaging process for your clients. This provides access to more complete information making it easier to work with them and helps your design to be more responsive to their needs, instead of designing around assumptions or bad habits they may not even realize they are

realize that they need to reconfigure or construct new space. In those moments, they are defining the problem that they want to solve, However, rarely are they consulting with a design professional. Likewise, after the project is completed and



bringing with them into the space. The value of this approach is that it helps shatter dysfunctional silos; introduces "what if" thinking; and provide a more agile design that is responsive to change over time.

#### **Getting started**

First, make no assumptions. This means undertaking preliminary

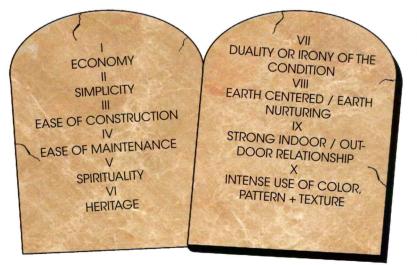
## NOMA

#### **Stand-Out Seminars**

## NOMA's "Jack and Steve Show"

R. Steven Lewis, NOMAC, AIA, LEED AP

egend has it that during a NOMA Conference some years ago when one of the schedule presenters failed to show up, Jack Travis and Steve Lewis were drafted into service to fill the void. With no formal preparation, the two did what came naturally and simply set up shop in front of those in attendance and embarked on a broad ranging exploration of design, practice, and the unique challenges and opportunities confronting architects of color in today's world. At first the banter was confined to each other, but soon the audience became actively involved. At the conclusion of the session, people were either agitated or excited, but in all cases, they clamored for more. Since that inaugural year, the two have presented their seminar, which has come to be known as "The Jack and Steve Show," every year at the NOMA Conference. The seminar follows a "call and response"" format during which Lewis plays the role of provocateur, challenging his colleague Travis to make a case for a so-called "Black Aesthetic." Over the years, Travis has continued to evolve what he calls the "Ten Principles of Black Cultural Design, which consist of the following:



It should not be lost on the reader that Black architects are by no means a monolithic block that would subscribe to some universal set principles and/or values, but rather are as diverse a aroup as might be found among any defined cohort of architects. Consequently, this forum allows for the free exchange of ideas and attitudes about design and the role of the "minority" architect, as differentiated - if at all - from that of the majority culture. Because racism today is far more embedded in the structure of society than it is overtly displayed, to claim that Blacks and other minority practitioners no longer face discriminatory treatment would be symptomatic of one who suffers from the illusion of inclusion. One need look no further than the current statistics on the number of licensed Black architects. As of the date of this writing, there but 1,956<sup>2</sup> - 324 female and 1632 male - out of more than 100,000 total licensed architects in North America.

With the plethora of rich subject matter that is presented annually at the NOMA Conference that is focused on professional awareness, technical development, and career advancement,

> YOU, the members, have made it clear that there remains a healthy appetite for not only exploring cultural heritage, but for inventing ways to exploit it for good of the built environment of our time, which should reflect the best of segments of our society.

<sup>1</sup>Call and response is a form of "spontaneous verbal and non-verbal interaction between speaker and listener in which all of the statements ('calls') are punctuated by expressions ('responses') from the listener." - Foster, Michèle (2001), "Pay Leon, Pay Leon, Pay Leon, Paleontologist: Using call-and-response to facilitate language mastery and literacy acquisition among African American Students", in Lanehart, Sonja, Sociocultural and Historical Contexts of African American English, Varieties of English Around the World, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company

<sup>2</sup>The Directory of African American Architects, Dennis Mann and Bradford Grant, February, 2015

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OMA's keynote speaker for its annual conference in October 2014 was Paola Moya, CEO and Principal of Marshall Moya Design. She received a standing ovation for her inspiring speech, and attendees left motivated to better themselves, enhance the profession, and contribute their talents to better our world.

Paola began her speech by sharing a dream she had as a young child growing up in Colombia. For as long as she can remember, she thought about owning her own company after receiving an advanced degree. Throughout her youth, she was a very strong student and even began law school in her native country. But for many years, her dreams seemed unattainable. However, her journey to realize her full potential began with a plane trip to the U.S. in 1999.

With a "bag full of dreams," she joined her parents and younger siblings migrating from Bogota to Miami. As soon as they arrived, she began working. "In my culture," she explained, "the oldest

sibling is expected to contribute to the livelihood of his or her family." Over the next three years, she worked several jobs - at a dog kennel (despite having a fear of dogs), delivering pizza while learning stick-shift, and at a day care center, language school for adults, and law firm as a legal assistant. She worked two jobs at a time, seven days a week.

It was during these years that she learned the importance of perseverance. Money was tight, and she contributed to her family's finances before saving for college. But she was determined to go to school, working hard to keep her grades up and applying for scholarships wherever possible. Deciding to veer away from a law degree to pursue her passion for design, she began studying architecture at Montgomery County Community

College. In 2005, she transferred to Catholic University's school of architecture, earned her Bachelor's degree and began studies to earn her Master's degree, also at Catholic.

It was at this time, she recounts, that she began thinking seriously about how she could use her craft to do something meaningful." I knew right



...my goals are still focused on helping others through design. away that I wanted to do something that would help others," she said. The idea of using design as a tool led her to focus her thesis on designing housing for internally displaced people. Internally displaced people are among the most vulnerable of the world's population. Essentially, they are victims within their own countries, displaced and homeless as a result of internal war, natural disasters, famine or human rights violations. Today, there are 40 million such people in the world.

She decided to focus her thesis on internally displaced people in her home country of Colombia, specifically Cartagena. She travelled to Cartagena and began

her research, interviewing activists, developers, representatives from political and philanthropic organizations and members of displaced families. "The more I researched and understood the topic," she recalls, "the more my passion grew," It was at this precise point in her career that she really began to understand the power of design and its potential to change lives.

Her urban design and mixed-use building for Internally Displaced People in Cartagena, Colombia was beyond the scope of her required thesis. Her plan includes the beneficial components of a contemporary, mixed-income housing intervention by establishing an appropriate development density and diverse income mix, as well as leveraging public/private partnerships. Her plan provides a means for social reintegration by design, estab-



Paola's keynote speech ended with a call for self-reflection and an invitation to act, to use one's talents to better the world and solve a problem:

"I encourage each of you today to reflect on what you are truly passionate about and define your long-term goals. What is your calling as a professional? What is the purpose of your actions? My advice to you is to celebrate your short term goals and stay committed to your long terms goals. Appreciate life to the fullest, and make something meaningful of your profession. As architects and designers, we can contribute to other people's quality of life through the built and designed

environment...and *that\_*is a gift. Giving back to your community develops you as a professional but also as an individual. Understand the needs and challenges of other people, and brainstorm how your talents can help others. NOMA attracts and cultivates talented architects and designers like you all, and we have the expertise to create solutions to some of the greatest challenges and needs in our society today.

So my invitation to you is: Dig down and find what is the fire that ignites your drive? What motivates you? Cultivate and grow your interests and talents. Create a plan to achieve your dreams. Be focused, and set high standards for yourselves. As

minority architects we all have labels, but don't let labels constrain your professionalism, use it as an opportunity to be more creative. Your work will speak *louder* than words. Be creative, think outside the norms. Society needs *more* of your creativity. And finally, be competitive. We are competing with designers around the globe to solve the world's greatest challenges. Become the first one to solve an issue. Be an *outlier*, and *challenge* the way things are being done. Once you do so, we will all get closer to improve the world we live in."

#### About the keynote speaker:

Paola Moya is the CEO and Principal of Marshall Moya Design. She manages the firm's executive responsibilities and is actively involved in the design and development of all firm projects. In 2011, Moya and partner Michael Marshall initiated a product design firm called inNuevo, and in 2014, they joined with digital expert Trevor Nesbit to form a creative studio called inNuevo Digital, which leverages strategy, design and technology to bring people and brands together. Moya is the CEO of the three companies.



What is the purpose of your actions?

Moya was named the 2014 "Minority Business Leader" by the Washington Business Journal, 2013 "Young Entrepreneur of the Year" by the D.C. Chamber of Commerce, 2013 "Rising Star" by the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. and one of MEA Magazine's "25 Influential Women in Business." Her work has been recognized by the The American Institute of Architects, The National Organization of Minority Architects, the National Housing & Rehabilitation Association, Graphic Design USA, International Design Awards, and more. She has been featured on a variety of local, national, and international media including CNN, Español, Telemundo, Caracol Television

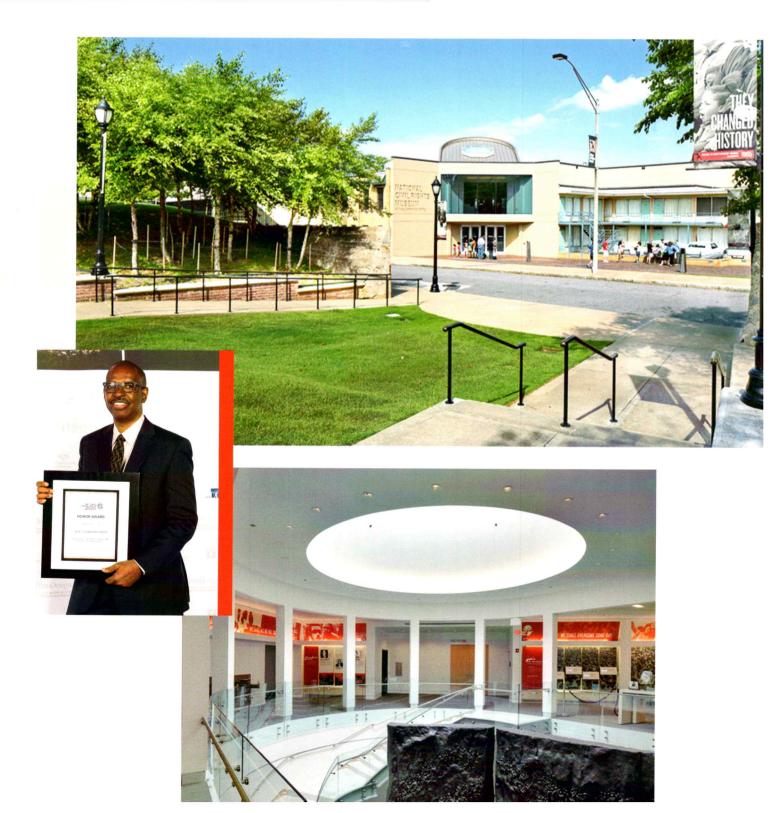
and Radio (Colombian National Broadcast), NPR's Tell Me More, FOX News Latino, Radio America, The Washington Post, Architect and others.

Moya earned a Finance certification from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania's Executive Education program. She holds a Master's degree in Architecture and a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture from The Catholic University of America. She was born in Bogota, Colombia and holds a Colombian architecture license. She shares her architectural expertise throughout her community, volunteering as a guest critic at local universities, and offering career advice to students. In particular, she enjoys sharing her personal success story to inspire young people to pursue education as the pathway to accomplishment.

## NOMA

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**BUILT** Category: National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel Self Tucker Architects Member: Jimmie Tucker, NOMA, AIA, LEED AP BD+C



## **2nd Place** — Washington University of St. Louis



## 3rd Place — Drexel University



The design engages history at three telescoping scales: the scale of the larger city; the scale of the urban block; and the scale of the building. At the scale of the city, the original plan of Philadelphia, as drawn by William Penn, was used to develop plans within the project, as well as to inform the geometries of the park space in the interior of the site. At the scale of the urban block, the Sanborn fire insurance maps were used as the framework for the organization of the site elements. The site design not only reintroduces Potts Street and Wheelock Street (two streets that had since been overgrown), but uses these two streets as pedestrian elements that organize various programmatic elements. The design also reintroduces the multifamily row-houses on the eastern portion of the site; however this housing has been repurposed as transitional housing which complements the youth housing of the Divine Lorraine and creates a complete generational range of residents living in this urban block. At the scale of the building, original plans of the 1892 Divine Lorraine Hotel were used to inform the regulating geometries and structural grids of the new building proposals on the site. In an effort to strengthen community, social interaction, and self-reliance, the residences reject the traditional dormitory style arrangement and instead opt for a series of 'family units'. This community-within a-community' philosophy contributes to the project's goal of fundamentally changing lives.



the semester and was to be installed as an art garden on the day of service. Temple University architecture, landscape architecture and facilities management students, faculty and administration, along with PhilaNOMA, drove the process, facilitating summer and fall surveys, charrettes and pre-construction efforts. The Temple students worked across disciplines to design and pre-construct the framework and plantings for the children's acrylic artwork, painted on 12"x 12" plywood panels. They created signage for vegetable identification and learning. The projects were "phased" or prioritized for the six-hour period and teams were designated. Truckloads of plants, soil and tools were scheduled for early morning delivery.

On the day of the project, with gorgeous October weather, the energy was on fire! The work began with a massive clearing effort. It progressed as projects ran concurrently, then began overlapping and intersecting. There was plenty of work for over 100 college students, architectural professionals, teachers and Lighthouse staff. The children had created over 60 art panels and arrived at the site midday, full of joy at seeing their work installed and eager to help with weeding and planting.

There was something powerful and enriching about seeing the collective energy of such a diverse group and witnessing how much was achieved in such a short time. From the Lighthouse director and staff to the NOMA volunteers from around the country, everyone played a vital role in the success and fulfillment of the work. The experience reminded us as professionals that both love and light shine both ways if we take the time to share them.



## The National Organization of Minority Architects

biannually publishes a print magazine, with the purpose of recognizing diversity in the field of architecture. This is achieved by promoting the architectural works of our members, and all minority architects, to the greater design community.

By providing NOMA magazine at no cost to over 2,000 architects, design professionals and students, we are a premier periodical for this group to share their contributions in built and non-built projects, community development partnerships, professional perspectives, and much more.

This magazine has been in print for 10 years, and we are now opening up our publication to include advertisements to further mobilize our nonprofit organization.

NOMA

Interested in advertising a design competition(s), university program, or product in our magazine?

Request the NOMAmag Media Kit for pricing by emailing <u>magazine@noma.net</u>

## 2015 VOLUNTEER STAFF



National Organization of Minority Architects