The business of architecture is more than how you do what you do. It's also about making a living while enhancing the structured world around us. Let's face it; while it's about aesthetics and profitability, it's also about compensation and benefits. According to Colorado's Board of Examiners of Architects, there are approximately 5,600 licensed, active architects in the state. Half live out of state and are licensed simply so they can practice here. More than half of the balance of licensed architects who live and work in the state are AIA members.

I took a look at the most recently available information (1996) from AIA Colorado and compared how AIA Colorado members stack up to nationwide figures. Here's what I found. 

**Nonarchitects' Salaries**

Nonarchitect areas are worth noting, too. For example, an office manager in Colorado earned nearly ten percent more than colleagues throughout the country. A Colorado office manager earned $32,400 compared with the national mean of $29,500. Conversely, marketing staff—perhaps one of the most important functions of any company, because hey, without clients there'd be no work for anyone—earned about $33,900 or 10 percent less than the nationwide mean of $37,400.

**Benefits**

Nearly all firms reported that they offered medical insurance to employees. Sadly, a separate 1995 AIA Colorado salary survey showed that at least 17 percent of Colorado firms did not offer medical insurance to its employees. Since there aren't more recent figures to reflect today's economy, we can only hope that the situation has changed for employees working in these firms. Truth be told, many people are just one major illness away from bankruptcy. Medical coverage goes a long way toward helping people stay focused on their work.

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| contents |
|-----------------
| Lines & Columns | PAGE 3 |
| Denver Apogee | PAGE 7 |
| North Chapter | PAGE 11 |
| 109th Meridian | PAGE 13 |
| President's Message | PAGE 2 |
| Continuing Education | PAGE 4 |
| Knowing When to Say When | PAGE 5 |
| Owner's Perspective on Business of Architecture | PAGE 6 |
| Members in the News | PAGE 7 |
| Emerging Trends in Single-Source Project Delivery Systems | PAGE 9 |
| Membership Forum 4 | PAGE 10 |
| AIA Denver State Council | PAGE 10 |
| Keystone's River Run Resort | PAGE 14 |
| Government Affairs Brief | PAGE 15 |

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_**Survey Says There's Good News for Colorado's Architects**_

Kim Jackson, FAIA
Editor, Colorado Architect

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_**Nonarchitects' Salaries**_

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_**"Defender of AIA Colorado's Balance Sheet"**_

Henry Dubroff
Editor, _The Denver Business Journal_

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When Ron Abo asked me to join the AIA Colorado board as its public representative at the beginning of the year, I was prepared for a lot of things. So far, I've met some very bright people, learned a lot about the profession and watched AIA Colorado grow as an organization that's focused on the future.

I was not, however, prepared for a role that seems to have followed me around from meeting to meeting—defender of the AIA Colorado balance sheet. When I first looked at the AIA Colorado books I was rather surprised to learn that the organization had a reserve of slightly more than $5,000 in a money-market fund.

I recall saying something like this: "I know that you've just put several organizations together under one umbrella but you simply must have more money set aside for a rainy day. Times now are as good as they get and if you do not have a reserve that's significantly larger, you will not be able to keep your level of services up when the economy slows down."

At the time, I felt every bit the part of the dear business editor. Subsequently, I've been slightly cheered to note that Steven Levey, the CPA with Gelfond Hochstadt Pangburn & Co. who's been helping AIA Colorado with its financial reporting and the CAT team of AIA National staff members and out-of-state architects, have made the same point.

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See DUBROFF on page 15
Through the year, I have tried to keep you informed about the restructuring process and, I am pleased to report we have made great strides. AIA Colorado and the local chapters wanted an impartial third-party opinion as to how the restructuring was succeeding. As a direct result of our restructuring effort, we requested a Component Assistance Team (CAT) from AIA National visit AIA Colorado to evaluate our operations. The members of the CAT were made up of an architect, a component executive and three members of AIA National staff. They were here for a total of five days meeting with the AIA leadership, staff, individual members and firms.

Although I was a bit apprehensive just before they gave their verbal report, I was pleasantly surprised by their comments. I first want to thank them for the professional way they conducted themselves and their task. Second, their report hit all the marks that have been troubling me for the past year.

In the space of this column, I would like to address some key points from their findings. Their entire report is available for you by calling the AIA Colorado offices. The staff will be glad to make a report available to you.

Membership

Even though we are enjoying good economic times, the CAT report reveals that AIA has very poor market penetration in Colorado, compared with the rest of the country. About only half of the architects that reside in the state are AIA members. One of the recent initiatives of AIA Colorado is to increase membership recruitment and retention at the local chapter level. By the time you read this, we will have initiated the CAT recommendation to develop a membership recruitment package and conduct firm visits.

Government Affairs

The CAT stated that the greatest asset to AIA Colorado by far is the Government Affairs Committee (GAC). This committee has been working, mostly silently, for the past 15 years, protecting our interest at the State Capitol. This last year, if it were not for the GAC, the licensing law could very well have been sunsetted. This would have affected every architect in the state, not only AIA architects. Your state chapter pays for a lobbyist to look after our interests and work closely with the GAC to develop the language in bills that affect the business and practice of architecture. However, CAT said the GAC needs new blood. Some of the founding members of the GAC are still the leaders. Fifteen years is a long time for anyone to sit on an important and time-consuming committee. The committee noted that the "hot issue" in Colorado is rapid growth and that AIA members should be at the table discussing these issues on planning and zoning boards, special task forces, and committees that address growth.

Continuing Education

AIA Colorado is in danger of losing 20 percent of our members this year because they will fail to have the required mandatory continuing education learning units. The CAT report stresses the positive value of continuing education to elevate the status of AIA membership. By requiring ourselves to be current in our profession, our clients and the general public can better trust that an AIA architect can do a better job than a non-AIA architect. Also, as a point of membership retention, the CAT suggests that members be afforded ample opportunity at all levels of the AIA component chain to obtain learning units. The state chapter provides most of the yearly required LUs at the annual design conference. The local chapters provide opportunities for LUs at lectures, seminars and tours. There is also self-reporting credit available through programs at AIA National and by simply reading the Progressive Architecture magazine that AIA members receive as part of their benefits.
The business of architectural practice has interested me for the last 40 years. During my apprenticeship in the offices of James Sudler, Mark Musick, and Ray Erwin, I served as draftsman, designer, project architect, project manager, and client manager—and experienced the impact of the business side of the practice on these functions. The culture of the office was entirely different in each one. I think that, while we work in any office, we observe processes we want to remember, both good and bad. You know, “I’ll remember this because it worked well or because it did not work out as desired.”

Most of us learned what we know about the business of practice by trial and error and by retaining expensive consultants. Therefore, during the three years I served as an Executive-in-Residence at the University of Colorado, Denver (UCD) College of Business (93-95) for Dean Gupta, I proposed a business course in the Business School as an elective for Masters of Architecture students. In 1995, the new College of Architecture Dean, Patricia O’Leary, and Dean Gupta approved an experimental course, “The Business of Architectural Practice,” to be taught by Dr. Larry Johnston, professor of Finance at UCD College of Business. The course began in the fall of 1996. I have worked with Dr. Johnston each year developing the syllabus and arranging for speakers from the profession’s architecture work, including architects in practice.

Beginning this third year, it has now become the professional practice course required for graduation. The class has grown from 29 the first year to 34 the second year and when we began the first class this fall, in came 33 students.

We use the student edition of The Architect’s Handbook of Professional Practice and the Supplementary Education Handbook: An Intern’s Companion to the Architect’s Handbook of Professional Practice as text books (obtained from AIA Colorado). Students are required to complete the IDP application regardless of whether they apply at this time. Reading and homework assignments are taken from these reference materials. Dr. Johnston has established a virtual classroom where students get assignments, make appointments, turn in their homework, and chat with Dr. Johnston, guest speakers, or each other.

The term project, now three years old, is the development of a business plan for an architectural firm, presented in writing and verbally to a jury of practicing architects and business people for the purposes of obtaining financing for their growing practice. Students are asked to form teams of three or four to write and present this business plan based on the classroom work in finance, accounting, marketing, and management. Minimally, the plan will include sections on organization, experience, clients, owner’s training and capabilities, finance, accounting, and marketing.

Visiting speakers for this semester include the following:

- Steven Walsh, AIA: Intern Development Program
- Cherri Gerou, Assoc. AIA: Architectural Career
- Michael Barber, AIA: Proforma and financial focus on Design to Build
- Ty Holt: Law, AIA Documents, Risk Management, and Insurance
- Rich Von Luhric, AIA and Dick Anderson, AIA: Hard and Soft Sides of Project Management

We continue to look for ways to make this classroom experience realistic. We solicit suggestions from the profession and welcome volunteers who wish to participate. Just call me at 303.295.1717.

John Rogers, FAIA
Marketing Architectural Services

Katie Novak: Human Resources, Job Interview, Myers-Briggs
Dave Einfeldt: Cost Estimation and Control
Jim McGinnis: Design/Build Concept

Letters Policy

The Colorado Architect welcomes all letters. Letters must be signed with name, street address and daytime phone number. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the opinions of the AIA Colorado Board of Directors or its membership.
DENVER ARCHITECT

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Denver Chapter CSI Presents BURSI Roofing Seminar

The Denver Chapter of Construction Specification Institute (CSI) is holding a BURSI Roofing Seminar (The Better Understanding of Roofing Systems Institute) to be held on Nov. 12. This educational/technical program meets the AIA/CES criteria for Level 2, and AIA members will earn 14 LUs. Space is limited. Contact the Denver Chapter CSI at 303.940.9007 for reservation forms and more information.

AIA Denver Fall Breakfast continues through November

The AIA Denver Fall Breakfast Series will continue to run each Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. through Nov. 24. The series are held at the Denver Design Center, 595 South Broadway Street. This season's theme is set to Hollywood's magical movie world as it relates to Denver's architecture. Topics in November include selling techniques for Design Professionals and designbuild. Registrations must be made no later than one week before each seminar. Cost is $13 for AIA members, $30 non-members, $9 associates. Students are free. Each lecture is worth up to four LUs. For more information or to make reservations, call at 800.628.5398.

Architectural Woodwork Institute to hold round table

The Colorado Chapter of the Architectural Woodwork Institute invites architects and designers to take part in a round table discussion with a panel of woodworkers and architects/designers entitled "From Documents to Successful Completion." The roundtable includes displays of the latest architectural woodwork materials and technology. It will be held Thursday, Nov. 12, at Diversified Millwork Inc., 3556 Quentin St., Aurora. Dinner will be held from 5:30-6:30 p.m., and the meeting will be held from 6:30-8:10. The cost is $15 per person. For more information call Mike Kuiches at 303.341.6456.

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Thank You, Sponsors!

A sincere thank you is extended to the following Corporate Sponsors for supporting AIA Colorado and our four local chapters in 1998.

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[ CAT REPORT, from page 2 ]

Staffing/Organization

The CAT reports that we have a great asset in our staff of six. They suggest that the lines of authority be drawn a bit clearer with the Executive Vice President as the CEO. Also, the Director of Local Chapters (recently filled by Susan Buchanan), who in effect has four bosses and boards to deal with, should have a better defined and clarified role. As you know, the Director of Local Chapters is an ongoing experiment in providing staff support to all chapters.

Mentor

The CAT recognizes the tremendous wealth of experience of senior members of AIA Colorado. As a part of their visit, the CAT met with the past presidents of AIA Colorado, and it was very heartwarming to see the room filled with people that have taken the time and effort to lead the AIA and then care enough about their participation to share their thoughts about the future of the organization. The CAT suggests that AIA Colorado develop mentor and intern development programs.

Although the report goes into considerable depth and includes many additional housekeeping suggestions, I have tried to give you a snapshot of what I consider to be important issues facing us today. To address the issues brought out by the CAT report, I have established a task force of leaders from the state and local chapters. The observations and recommendations of the CAT put into perspective what we have been trying to accomplish the past several years. The task force will be charged with establishing a concrete plan of action, and I'm confident that these efforts will lead to a stronger, more unified AIA in Colorado.

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**The Business of Architecture: The Owner’s Perspective**

When I was asked to write this story I was at a loss as to what exactly I could contribute since I am not in private practice. As a result I do not have much to do with the “business” of architecture.

But then I started to think that some aspects of public sector work are business-oriented. Public sector agencies own large facility assets. The Federal government is the largest owner, developer, and constructor of facilities in our country. We all know that the public sector can build some pretty bad facilities and it would take a lot of imagination to call it architecture.

On the other hand, some organizations are very concerned about the image they present via the buildings they build. School districts, universities, municipalities, and even some Federal projects can be as architecturally competitive as any private sector endeavor.

I can only write about my experience within DoD, and building an architectural program at the Air Force Academy, but I do have some points to make:

First of all, business administration does not exist. Public administration does. Although very similar in technical areas like budgeting, there are distinct differences in administrative approach. On the one hand, there is a need to be responsive to the taxpayers that are the “investors” in a project. On the other hand, there is a responsibility to maintain a standard of “appropriate” image.

That image might best be served by a prefabricated building that has no architectural involvement. Or it could be an addition to a building in the Academy Cadet Area, or in Washington DC’s Federal Triangle, or at many complexes that are high-visibility, image-oriented facilities that define the look of the United States Government to ourselves and the rest of the world. So there is a strong stewardship/heritage aspect to our business that may or may not exist in the profit oriented private sector.

There appears to be two mindsets on how we organize ourselves to create buildings. One says that no one can do a better job than the government itself. That resulted in large facility management groups that did a lot of in-house design. The other says that the government should not be involved with any endeavor that can be provided by the private sector. Only in the case of market failure to provide required services should the government be involved (with the exception of oversight to protect government interests). So a popular approach is to outsource many functions done by the government in the past.

Given that outsourcing is the wave of the future, I believe there is a very important administrative function that needs to be considered: how do we select architects to do our work and what kind of firm do we need?

Our normal process involves advertising for an architectural firm through the Commerce Business Daily. With that solicitation, a ridiculous amount of paperwork is required from each firm. The irony is that all the paperwork is time consuming and expensive for both parties to prepare and little of it makes any sense to the selection committee during the review process. That is especially true since each project is specific in its parameters, yet the background required by the solicitation provides only marginal evidence of a firms qualifications. Doesn’t make much sense to me.

The other issue is what kind of firm is needed. My experience shows that some firms are very good on the technical side of the project while others are good at design. There are some firms that will offer the government both equally well. Those that provide modification-free construction documents are obviously valued by the construction group yet they may not be a firm that is capable of good design. Those that are good at design sometimes get so wrapped up in theory that it becomes a negative. The goal is to provide balance and seek firms that respond well on a number of levels. It is not only accuracy and not only design. It’s both.

In closing, I think that an owner of facility assets has a large stake in the “business of architecture.” It is not the same as “business” at a firm. It is public administration aimed at finding the best way to build good architecture given the constraints that public agencies deal with on a day to day basis. That includes getting the best product for the tax payers “investors,” and looking toward the future to determine how the entire design program will respond to inevitable changes effectively while still keeping quality at the appropriate level.

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*Duane Boyle, AIA*
I suppose there are many reasons for an architect's innate reluctance to decline new commissions. The most simplistic surely reflects the basic law of survival. Only those a few years out of college can't remember a time not long ago when work wasn't so plentiful, and our marketing activities were a little bit more desperation tinged.

Another aspect is the knowledge that even in a growing healthy market, there will always be a line of firms very willing to pick up anything you may have declined, for whatever reason.

They may see the project your firm has passed on as the chance of a lifetime to benefit, if low fees, bad schedules, selection processes that just don't make sense, and concerns about staffing projects appropriately held more weight in the marketplace.

I believe that we as individuals would have a lot more fun, and the reputation of our profession as a whole would benefit, if low fees, bad schedules, and other reasons to subject every project to an aggressive "go no go" process wherein workload is only a minor part of the equation.

Unfortunately, market-driven decisions of the "good times" may be getting pushed aside by concerns of a more unpleasant variety. A recent issue of the Design Firm Management and Administration Report newsletter reports that in a recent poll architectural firms indicated they had turned down 75 percent more work in 1997 that 1996, "simply because of the potential threat of liability." I think you'll agree this is a sad commentary on both our profession and the state of litigation in our society.

On the Boards

Howell Construction recently completed a $4 million restoration for the Denver Country Club. Work in the 1920s building included extensive structural repair and remodel of club rooms, hallrooms, kitchen, and offices. An elevator was installed, and the mechanical and electrical systems were upgraded. The architect was Davis Partnership of Denver.

Members in the News

Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture has hired Popporn Isaza as an architectural intern and Susan Pratt as a project architect. They are both working on the $25 million North Jeffco Community Recreation Center, which will be located in Arvada.

Liz Biondi, an architect with Barker Rinker Seacat has been named to the Development Review Committee for the Highlands Ranch Community Association.

William D. Pryor, PE., has joined Gordon, Gomerson and Associates, Inc., mechanical and electrical consulting engineers, as Director of Mechanical Engineering.

A member of Reno-based Worth Group Architects' Denver operations, Lance Shephard, AIA, has been appointed to the firm's Board of Directors as Director of Architecture.

Jerry J. Jeter, AIA, has joined Lantie-Boggio Architects, P.C. as a principal with the firm. He will be responsible for the management of commercial, industrial, and military projects.

G. Thomas Taylor, AIA, has joined the national consulting firm of Carter & Burgess Inc. as senior project manager and Architectural Group leader for the Facilities Division in Denver.

OZ Architecture has added five new employees. Sylvia Roth joins the firm as an architect and Leighann Markalunas, Rebecca Ruecco, Paul Cuiller, and Kitty Yuen join as CAD/CADD designes. This group will be working on OZ projects that include the Copper Springs Lodge, the new Copper Village, the Winter Park pedestrian bridge and the Rainier Inn.

Survey Says, from page 1

Speaking about peace of mind, the 1996 survey showed that almost all architecture firms provided paid vacation for employees. Interestingly, firms with five to nine employees had the highest percentage (97.6%) of firms that provided paid vacation. Regardless of size, firms generally provided ten paid vacation days, five sick leave days, and three personal days a year.

The national survey didn't reflect any profit sharing/reirement plan figures, however, the AIA Colorado 1995 Salary Survey Results showed that nearly 38 percent of respondents offered some type of profit sharing or retirement plan. Surprisingly, of those firms with 20 or more employees, 62 percent did not offer any sort of profit sharing or retirement plan.

This is a relatively easy benefit to offer because the cost may not be as great as you think. And in this competitive market, it may be worth it to keep employees through a retirement plan than it would to retrain new people.

What's more, according to Darrell Kinchelow, financial advisor with Waddell & Reed, your company's costs are also tax deductible.

Many retirement plans can be contributed to by employees only. All an employer needs to do is select a plan where employees can save, tax deferred, until their golden years. As a firm becomes more lucrative, it can offer a shared contribution for participating employees. The tax benefits to employees is tremendous, to say nothing of the future value of money. Remember the time-value of money principle we all learned in college?

AIA Colorado intends to publish a 1999 AIA Colorado Salary Survey that more accurately reflects our economy today.

Demographics

On a national level, African American architects made up 1.3 percent of all AIA-registered architects. Hispanics represented just over 2.3 percent, while sub-Continent Asians and Native Americans accounted for less than one percent. Asians, the third largest group, represented 3.7 percent of AIA architects, while whites made up more than 91.5 percent. Women represent 12.2 percent of all registered architects; minority women account for 1.2% of all women.

Regardless of all the numbers say, I imagine there's a great deal of satisfaction in watching a building come to life. From a small idea to an elaborate office building that houses thousands of workers, to a home that meets owners' every need and whim, there has to be a real thrill in watching it all come together—and knowing you had a big part in that event.
Emerging Trends in Single-source Project Delivery Systems

What an exciting time to practice architecture! Exciting, because today's market offers the architecture profession an opportunity to provide clients with a single-source project delivery system.

Why, you may ask, is there a need for single-source project delivery systems? There are several reasons. First, clients are operating in competitive markets with fewer and fewer resources in terms of "in-house expertise" and budget for facilities capital expenditures. Although that sounds like bad news, it's actually on the contrary.

Our clients now need more outsourced help with better solutions and that's where we come in. Architects are positioned perfectly to provide their clients and potential clients with "new and improved" project delivery solutions to address these staffing and budget hurdles. Architects are positioned perfectly because of our "owner's agent" relationship. Clients look to us for guidance, protection, and advice about all of the new and emerging project delivery systems they so often hear about.

Your clients want to understand the design/build, construction management, and design/build/project delivery—"mission out" on the cutting edge of our industry. Are these approaches better? Will I save money? Can we complete the project faster? What about quality control and risk management? These are all issues that are of concern to clients and you need to know the answers. Strategically, you need to know the services you will provide to clients and how to fill in the gaps of any skills lacking in your practice.

Why should you be thinking about this? To begin with, survival. The amount of project budget being spent on the design phase is shrinking and beyond this, because of the many single-source project delivery firms and joint venture groups, the level of construction documentation required is lessening as well. So we are either forced into fewer business opportunities and smaller commissions or have to seriously consider adding new services to your firm's marketing package.

The "world of architecture" as we have known it is disappearing. Single-source, design-led project delivery is the trend in architecture for the future. They yield greater quality and customer satisfaction and I base this statement on more than my opinion. It is proven!

A study completed in 1998 by the University of Reading Design and Build Forum at the Centre for Strategic Studies in Construction reviewed 500 clients, 330 projects, 150 interviews, and 700 individual responses and came up with some interesting data points. The study compared design/build with traditional project delivery systems and the categories, the design-led teams were the only ones that showed increased scores over traditional delivery systems. The study, "Designing and Building a World-Class Industry," is available by calling +44.118.931.8190.

At this point, you either agree my positions or you have skipped to the next article because you believe this will never apply to you. If you're still with me, you may be wondering what your first step toward becoming a single-source project delivery system should be. Consider beginning by offering construction management services to "add on" to your standard scope of services.

AIA and the AGC. 303.861.4600 or e-mail me at bbuchanan@bygroup.com.
no "excess" profit to compensate for inefficient business management. Some professionals seem to feel that the market should be willing to pay whatever they ask because they are professionals, but that works only under a monopoly.

Suppose it costs you $100 to make something, and you think you are entitled to a one percent profit margin so you price it at $101. You're even proud of yourself that you are willing to work for such a low profit margin, unlike those other who seek "obscene" profits.

Your "greedy" competitor makes an identical item. He is able to make it for $90, but since you're pricing yours at $101, he decides to price his at $75. What will they do? What can customers choose to buy yours at $101 or his at $75? What will they do? What would you do? Do you care how much it actually costs the producer to produce the product, or will you shop for the lowest price for an identical item?

With professional services we perceive the "price/quality" we desire and from the competitive suppliers of that quality service, we try to select what we perceive will be the best price/quality combination. With professional services, however, the customers may not really be able to judge ahead of time the optimal "price/quality" supplier, yet they still will try.

It is well documented by researchers that if the seller does not price the product or service high enough, consumers tend to perceive that the producer lacks confidence in the quality of the service of the ability to deliver it efficiently.

Most of us want to buy under pure competition, but sell under pure monopoly. We like the shopping center where we can find the same or similar products at a variety of stores, and shop for the best price. But in our own business, we are constantly stressing our uniqueness and that "we're worth the difference." But whether we like it or not, increasing competition seems to be the rule.

Two common strategies for price setting include "cost plus" or "what market will bear." Most consumers don't know or don't care what it costs you to produce your product. If you set your price high too high, competitors will enter the market and drive down the price. Then only those who are able to produce the product more efficiently can survive and ultimately prosper.

Several years ago, an veterinarian association asked me to look into the business issues of providing professional veterinary services. I talked with a large number of veterinarians who owned professional service firms. In almost every city, I heard very similar comments. "We can't make the money we deserve as professionals." "There's too much competition in our profession." "There's too much price resistance from customers." (I've heard more than a few architects make similar comments, although I don't remember hearing similar comments from physicians, dentists, lawyers, or accountants.)

Yet in each city, I found a few veterinarians who had highly successful firms and were making plenty of money. They shared a common and important perception: "I'm a businessman in the business of veterinary medicine." Their firms shared two other characteristics: they charged as much as the market would bear, and they managed their firms very efficiently.

So I decided to look at publicly available financial data from a fairly large number of similar-sized professional service businesses in a variety of professions, and then to compare the results of architectural firms with other professional service firms.

The data I examined is published by RMA, which is an association for commercial lenders, primarily commercial bankers. One of its publications, Annual Statement Studies 1997, provides aggregated financial statement information by occupation for a large number of firms who have applied for credit to one of the RMA member firms. When you apply for a loan at your bank, your banker is likely to use its information as a reference source in evaluating your financial statements. A copy of RMA can be located at a university library or a large public library.

For comparison purposes, I used data for six categories of professional service firms with annual net sales (revenue) between $1 million and $3 million with fiscal year ends from 4/1/96 through 3/31/97. The six categories and the number of financial statements from each are shown in Table 1.

The information in RMA is presented in the form of common size financial statements. To convert your own financial statements to a common size for comparison purposes, set your "net sales" equal to 100%, and express each item of your income statement as a percentage of net sales, and set your "total assets" equal to 100%, and express each item of your balance sheet as a percentage of total assets.

The income statement for the "average" firm in the category of engineering, architectural & surveying services looked approximately like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage of Net Sales</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Net sales 100.0%
Total expenses 95.6%
Net profit before taxes 4.4%

Architects kept about 4.4 cents of each dollar of revenue as profit before taxes. Lawyers kept 15.2 cents, accountants kept 9.2 cents, physicians kept 7.1 cents, dentists kept 6.9 cents, and veterinarians kept 4.8 cents.

The balance sheet for the "average" firm in the category of engineering, architectural & surveying services looked approximately like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Assets
Cash 10%
Accounts receivable 50%
Other current assets 30%
Total current assets 70%
Other assets 30%
Total assets 100%

Liabilities
Current liabilities 40%
Other liabilities 30%
Total current liabilities 60%
Equity
Net worth (equity) 40%
Total liabilities & equity 100%

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Professional service companies are usually owned by some or all of the professionals who actually provide the services. Owners can pay themselves, within limits, higher salaries (which are included in "total expenses") and show higher firm profits. Therefore, a more indicative indication of how well the owners are really doing might somehow demean the profession which they openly shared to an enthusiastic audience. The popularity of the architects' styles, as well as the thirst for seeing new works, proved that the Denver Chapter will host more of these events in 1999.

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balance sheet summary</th>
<th>Architects</th>
<th>Lawyers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other current assets</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total equity</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profit before taxes as % of sales</th>
<th>Architects</th>
<th>Lawyers</th>
<th>Physicians</th>
<th>Accountants</th>
<th>Dentists</th>
<th>Veterinarians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Profits</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner's compensation as % of sales</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit plus owner's compensation as % of sales</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It's easy to dismiss these observations by saying that numbers can be made to say almost anything. Numbers certainly can be selected and arranged to try to prove a preconceived conclusion, but that was not my intention.

All the categories of professionals do business with each other. In today's competitive marketplace, customers seem willing to pay a price for other professional services which is high enough to allow efficiently managed professional service firms to compensate their owners rather well. If the fees paid to architectural firms are already "what traffic will bear" then could better internal cost controls improve the performance sufficiently?

Why does it appear that the owners of professional service firms in most other professions are able to keep as compensation two or three times as much out of a dollar of revenue? Do the owners of architectural firms view themselves more as architects than as business people? Do they think that making as much money as other professionals might somehow demean the profession of architecture?

Do they think that the best way is to pay as little as possible for their employee architects, and then use the "cost plus" approach to pricing? I don't know the answers to these questions, or even if these are the right questions to be asking.

What do you think?

---

The projects were wildly different, from futuristic (and soon-to-be-built) bridges, to 21st-century religious community centers, to reuse projects. Each of the architects has a distinct philosophy which they openly shared to an enthusiastic audience. The popularity of the architects' styles, as well as the thirst for seeing new works, proved that the Denver Chapter will host more of these events in 1999.

### DAC Names D.A. Bertram Volunteer of the Year

D. Bertram, Esq., AIA was named Volunteer of the Year by the Denver Athletic Club (DAC), for his countless hours serving on committees and contributing his expertise and energies for the improvement of the DAC. He was selected by the chairs of various DAC committees and received his award at the Annual Meeting on Sept. 15 from DAC President (and former AIA Colorado president) Dennis Humphries, AIA. Before joining the DAC in 1991, D.A. worked with the architectural firm responsible for the design of the gymnasi-um/squash court addition. Recently, his assistance in closing out construction on a fitness center addition was invaluable to the DAC.

---

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Studio 1818
Vesta Dipping Grill

Golfers chew down on rib eyes and corn!

AIA Denver State of Candidates Announced

Associate Director:
TBD
TBD

President-elect (2000 President):
♦ Joseph Pahl, AIA
♦ Jeffrey S. Reddy, AIA

Vice-President:
♦ John Williams, Jr., AIA
♦ John Yonushewski, AIA

Secretary:
Lauren T. Ferris, AIA
Paul R. Jeselnick, AIA

Treasurer-elect (2000 Treasurer):
♦ Michael Murphy, AIA
♦ TBD

Director (for three-year term):
♦ Eric A. Bartczak, AIA
♦ Roy Perlman, AIA
♦ Robert C. Schmid, AIA

AIA Denver bylaws require a 10-day period whereby nominating petitions (signed by not less than five eligible voting members) may be returned to AIA Denver placing one or more candidates other than those listed above.

For information on filing a nomination petition, please contact AIA Denver President-elect, James Pauli, AIA at 303.607.0977.

An outstanding success, the 6th Annual Golf tournament was held on September 11, 1998 at the Canetberry Golf Course in Parker, Colorado, which provided for 18 holes of beautiful competition for golfers and their guests. Both architects and sponsors turned out at the event, which was managed by Tee-Time Reprographics, offering the fastest scanning speed available in the industry.

AIA Denver is pleased to announce its slate of candidates for 1999 offices:

President-elect (2000 President):
♦ Joseph Pahl, AIA
♦ Jeffrey S. Reddy, AIA

Vice-President:
♦ John Williams, Jr., AIA
♦ John Yonushewski, AIA

Secretary:
Lauren T. Ferris, AIA
Paul R. Jeselnick, AIA

Treasurer-elect (2000 Treasurer):
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♦ TBD

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In other categories: most accurate drive—Wayne Hendrix; men's longest drive—Kris Beller, AIA; women's longest drive—Linda Svege; Closest to the pin (two holes)—Fred Fisher and Von Fransen, PA. See you next year!
Ecological Design as Good Business

Whatever possibilities business once represented, whatever dreams and glories corporate success once offered, it now takes a moment to acknowledge that business as we know it is over. Over because it failed in one critical and thoughtless way: It did not honor the myriad forms of life that secure and connect its own breath and skin and heart to the breath and skin and heart of our earth.

—Paul Hawken, The Ecology of Commerce

El Viento, a celebration of wind.
This eco-tourist windsurfing retreat on the Isla de Margarita, Venezuela is inspired by the biologic of the desert island cactus.

Ecological Roots
Founded in 1977, Barrett Steele Architects has evolved from a firm rooted in an ethic of ecologically intelligent and socially compassionate design. Architecture inspired by Nature's lessons result from asking such questions as: What inner components give this thing its form? Of what larger forms or patterns is this thing an element? Out of this dialogue comes a greater understanding of not only where we are, but who we are. Sustainability and organic architecture are the result of the creative participation in the patterns of the living. In this way, we seek to contribute places of spirit and beauty.

The business of ecological design can be seen in the multiplicity of what constitutes good business in today's world. On the planetary scale, we must recognize the precarious position humankind finds itself in as we enter the new millennium. The well documented culmination of overpopulation, climate change, depleting resources and environmental degradation is not just an abstract argument. The circumstances we are passing onto the future, the public will resort to the gridlock of "not in my backyard." An empowered profession can use its vision of choices, and thus hope.

Nature's model for what we might offer as an alternative of livability and sustainability might be described as contained, yet interrelated, complexity. Simplistic patterns of segregated development would be replaced with richer, denser, diverse mixes of use. This urban effect that concerns itself with the community's human interaction will also find form from the physicality and spirituality of climate and place. Barrett Steele's current work with the Boulder Housing Authority on an urban village on the 27-acre site of the old Holiday Drive-In anticipates just such a lively mix of affordable living and working space in North Boulder.

Creating from Waste
Many of our projects explore the potential of "creating from waste," or finding ways to utilize products that reconfigure waste into second generation materials. The Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Sanctuary, which will be a healing place for injured wildlife, literally spirals out of the earth, allowing animals to recover in familiar habitats that range from subterranean, to surface, to lofted nests. The facility utilizes recycled Glu-Lam beams and decking from an auto dealership's past life, as well as straw-bale infill from local agricultural waste. Passive solar, earth integration and photovoltaics as integrated building systems would contribute to the sustainable palette.

Barrett Steele is also working closely with environmental builder Steve Loken and the Center for Resourceful Building Technologies of Missoula on the Frittscher family retreat in St. Ignatius, MT. We are utilizing recycled timbers and slate from demolition in Missoula, "Energized" panels of recycled polystyrene and cement.
Photovoltaics and earth integrated passive solar design. The retreat is a demonstration of the collaborative power of sustainable design and construction practices used in concert.

Learning Communities
In 1992, Barrett Steele embarked on a six-year relationship with the American Honda Education Corporation to design a residential high school for at-risk teens. The school was to challenge the dominant American educational model and explore the possibility of a learning community that would interweave experiential learning and self-esteem-building through participation in a functional living/learning community, with an architecture that facilitated and nurtured these intentions. The product is the Eagle Rock School and Pedestrian Mountain Village. Simple, regional architecture provides a backdrop for community life open to the sun and protected from the winds. Interior spaces encourage interaction with each other and the learning environment, as well as contact with nature.

Eagle Rock, recently featured in the New York Times Magazine, is an example of corporate philanthropy that funds exploration and excellence. This gesture should challenge both corporate America, as well as the public, to invest in meaningful educational architecture to educate the whole of our children and provide for them the opportunity to realize their incredible potential.

Current educational projects Barrett Steele is involved with include:

- The conversion of a 250,000 s.f. failed shopping mall into a "high-tech, high-touch" open campus for the Florida Community College of Jacksonville, with Thompson Ventulett and Stanback of Atlanta.
- The renovations, additions and new dormitories for the territorial adobe campus of the historic Fountain Valley School in Colorado Springs.
- The expansion of the Bal Swan Children's Center in Broomfield.
- Community Architecture
  "Each man (woman) must give power over his (her) own life. To place this in a context we must cease to plan for people. We must begin to plan with people."
  — Robert Thorvald

The role of architect, and with it the business of architecture, has been altered drastically in recent years by the rediscovery of relating buildings to existing communities that are under the stress of rapid growth, as well as drawing collective needs and visions from an involved client body. The day of the heroic figure designing in the ivory tower studio is over. What is called for is architects who orchestrate an increasingly interdisciplinary team. The complex nature of today's projects calls for us to ask the right questions, stimulate the discussion, become exceptional listeners, facilitate hands-on group processes, and convey clearly in public hearings. Such a role is more analogous to part weaver, part educator than the Ayn Rand model of the broad- ing individualist.

Participatory design is a way of life at Barrett Steele. With philosophical underpinnings in social architecture, in the late '90s at Kent State University, David Barrett and Gary Steele are committed to a visible, accessible design process in the studio as well as with the client/user.

Recent co-housing projects in Ft. Collins and Lyons have used these take-part methodologies with collective clients that make decisions by consensus. Current work on the new Benedictine abbey for the Sisters at the Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, CO, brings a contemplative tradition dating back to the 7th century into alignment with the realities of sustaining such a lifestyle in the contemporary world.

Such projects offer the gift of learning the ways of others and attempt to draw through a vanishing cultural thread in an ever-more chaotic world. The architecture of community asks us to celebrate our connections. Can form express our higher ideals? Might public spaces give us the opportunity to observe and interact with our diversity while glimpsing the underlying patterns that suggest our unity?

The Studio
Good design begins, as Wendell Berry states, by asking, "What is here? What will nature permit us to do here? What will nature help us do here?" At Barrett Steele, exploration in an open studio environment is initiated by just such questions. Though the results possess the inevitable imperfection, contradiction and periodic frustration, satisfaction comes from the quality of the search and the possibility of "making a difference."

We must envision an architecture that is so intelligently designed and constructed that it mimics nature at every step and in this way sustains the most precious systems that we and our children so depend on.

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Steamboat Springs, Colorado—

THE STEINBERG PAVILION

There was something very reassuring about the hand-painted sign tacked to the post that stated, “No services for 43 miles.” Of course, there were no services at the road junction either. To travel to Steamboat Springs today is to step into a different direction. A step away from the mad-cap world of the I-70 corridor.

The first time I traveled through Steamboat Springs was in August 1971. I was traveling to the Flattops with my father for a backpacking expedition. I distinctly remember the image of the clad-in-black members of the band “Aphrodite” unloading their equipment and preparing to play for the long-haired locals wearing cowboy boots. High culture for a teenage mind didn’t get much better than this.

Steamboat Springs. This campus has evolved into the Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp, which has achieved international acclaim because of the artists that have trained and taught there.

The east and south walls are composed of a series of hinged patio and sliding doors set within a framework of wood columns. The tallest windows in the glass assemblies above the doors are divided into groups of small divided lights that act as a symbol of the forest.

Little did I know that by that time, Steamboat Springs already had a long tradition of supporting various groups of artists and venues. The longest-lasting group was formed by Charlotte Perry and Portia Mansfield in 1913 when they started a dance camp at Strawberry Park three miles north of Steamboat Springs. This camp has become quite apparent on the short drive out of town to the camp. One enters a world of fertile fields and aspen forests that frame the views to the peaks beyond. The campus itself is a collection of rustic dormitories, a theater, and two dance studios that are wood and glass pavilions in the forest. Most of the campus is tucked out of sight from the county road.

This pavilion is a reflection of its surroundings and of the school. Mr. Robbins worked with the restraints of a tight budget to create a building that grows to meet the sky and still remains rooted to the forest. This was accomplished with a limited palette of wood and glass. A large variety of materials would not have allowed the building to remain true to its roots. It is located at the end of a quarter mile dirt drive means that it is a destination that will not be attained by everyone.

The newest structure on the campus is the Steinberg Pavilion completed in 1997, which is used for dance classes, performances and meetings. It is the result of a challenge grant that Perry-Mansfield met. The architect was Steamboat Springs’ own Joe Robbins, AIA.

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The west side of the building has a solid exterior wall and is comprised of support spaces and rooms. The fir and pine forest grows up to the building’s edge. The exposed structure at the corners of the building represent this encroaching forest. As the building ages, the color of the exposed timbers will take on the darker colors of the forest.

This is an essential building that didn’t start out as such but has become a symbol for life in the Yampa Valley. In an understated manner, it encompasses people, the land, and the wide open spaces.
River Run Resort in Keystone

Let me see if I understand this concept correctly. An area with marginal ranch or mining structures is bought out by a developer, who proceeds to tear down the original buildings to build new superstructures that are reminiscent of the old. Then the resort is marketed to people who can now own part of the historic west.

Keystone ski resort has been in existence for approximately 30 years. It is bigger in area than many towns, and on a typical weekend during the ski season there is a larger population than many towns on the Western slope. Keystone has never incorporated into a village or town. Currently, there are several distinct groups of buildings or villages that stretch for several miles on each side of U.S. 6.

This decade the resort has embarked on an ambitious expansion to develop a town center and focus. This new village is called the River Run. Upon its completion, it will exist as its own entity, connected by a series of secondary roads, public transportation, and bike paths to other parts of the resort along the highway and Snake River Valley. Ultimately, village center and open space surrounded by mixed-use commercial space and condominium housing will be created, which will become the new focal point of the resort.

For years, I thought the center of Keystone was the Snake River Saloon, where a person could choose down a greaty burger with several adult beverages and solve the area's problems through friendly conversation with the locals. The growth of Summit County, as well as visitors' expectations, has led to River Run.

A consortium of architects and planners including Cottle, Graybeal Yaw of Aspen and OZ Architecture of Denver, were involved with the design of the resort. Elden Beck completed much of the early master planning over a year's time. His planning included sun angles, people spaces, the building, and street footprints, as well as massing and model studies.

Many early architectural concepts were developed during a three-day charrette. Intrawest, the resort's owner, participated in this charrette. It was decided that the architectural guidelines would be based on the early completed structures. John Cottle thought that written guidelines would limit the architectural potential for the village, which could lead to a theme village rather than a living, viable new community.

Several important architectural concepts and issues at River Run need to be discussed further. These include the master plan for the village layout, and the specific forms, materials, and style of some of the buildings.

The concept of an Italian hill town village is used as the model for its overall plan. River Run is still under construction, but several characteristics of such a village can be readily seen. A series of public spaces are connected by streets that undulate per the footprint of the buildings. Underground parking blocks streets off so they can be used only by pedestrians and emergency vehicles. Exterior passages through buildings connect one open space to another. Streets lead to important landmarks. If there was a full-time population, the built area would be very dense. The main square is dominated at its northern edge by the tallest structure of the resort—a metal and wood tower. The forms are loosely based on a mine tip, but not one that you've seen before. This is the anchor for the Silver Mill buildings by Cottle Graybeal Yaw, and it acts as a beacon for the main pedestrian street that leads up from the gondola terminal. This tower can be seen from most parts of the village.

There is a formal master plan for the village at River Run. Yet the physical expression is that of exuberance and a love for the landscape. The buildings are much more refined than one would first expect. They're not quite like a mine building or a ranch head quarters, but these modern buildings are rooted in our Western traditions.

The Buffalo Lodge by OZ Architecture, adjacent to the Silver Mill, is still under construction. This building features a smaller private plaza that one passes through from the village square on the way to the building's entry. The space appears that it will work well in the future, but it begs the question: where is there a large interior public space? Italian villages have a church, town hall, or even a theater for people to gather. What will serve as the interior focal point or icon for this village?

All the buildings in this ensemble express this exuberance. The two structures that best demonstrate it are the Jackpine Lodge and Silver Mill buildings by Cottle Graybeal Yaw Architects. Each received an Honor Award by AIA Colorado.

They're both large, but their mass has been broken up by setbacks, dormers, and decks. The use of different sizes and types of wood siding, logs, and vertical metal siding accent different parts of the building exteriors. This use of materials softens the overall appearance and scale of the buildings. These rough materials have been detailed in a very formal manner so the buildings are much more refined than one would first expect. They're not quite like a mine building or a ranch head quarters, but these modern buildings are rooted in our Western traditions.

The master plan calls for a community building away from the central square. How will this building function and what will it be its purpose? The climate at Keystone demands that there be such a space for people to gather. The master plan does call for a future church and library in the village.

This leads into the important issue of a permanent community that is the bedrock for any discussions about resort villages such as River Run. The village at River Run is an effort to create a focus for Keystone, but in many ways it is a new town. There has been quite a bit of housing built or planned. But many of these houses will be second homes or investments for part-time residents. Can this lifestyle develop a story line that eventually becomes the life blood for a town? This is an issue that goes beyond the traditional role of an architect, but it is a dilemma facing many towns in the West and it will be a determinant for the future.

The village's architects and planners have created a superb ensemble of buildings and spaces. They have met or surpassed Keystone Resort's requirements. River Run can also be used as a model for how large development projects in other areas of the state can be approached. But it ultimately comes back to the concept of how to build on the historical and traditional values and roots of Western Colorado and not sacrifice them in the name of progress that result in part-time communities.

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B y the time this is printed and in your hands, the election will have been held and the new state and local government members and representatives will be known. Hopefully, the election will bring (or keep) the legislators, council people, local representatives, senators, and I encourage you to call your state and that ran, anyway) to let them know voted, you should remember the ones council members (now that you've just of legislators we feel are key individu­

In this light, we at the Government Affairs Committee have initiated a legislative session are: listing—listing of license numbers in advertising, initiating the renovation of the state capitol building, the tax rebate debate/infra­structure and school spending, design/ build of state projects, sustainable commu­nities and smart growth.

We thank Erik Hartroft, AIA, and his firm in Louisville for hosting the first legislative “Champion” program with representative Terry Phillips. A special thanks to Marvin Martin, FAIA, for heading up the subcommittee. Erik showed Terry around his office; spent the morning with him; showed him a project under construction; and then with a number of other architects who were also constituents, took him out for lunch to get a chance to express specific interest and concern, along with general topics as both architects and community leaders/members. We planned a couple more before the election within the Denver metro area, and plan to continue it throughout the year and the state.

Please call Marvin (303-447-8570), or me (303-607-0977) if you want to become involved with this Champion program. We need volunteers for hosts, as well as lunch participants. State-funded projects in your office are a plus, as well as practicing in the same district as you vote, although this is in no way mutually exclusive. We need a diverse group of people active in this program across the state to cultivate a broad relationship and to help lend our expertise in a diverse way to our state and local government. Also, if you would like to find out who your state and local representatives are, call the County Clerk and Recorder for the area in which you live.

One last note. All interested new Government Affairs Committee mem­bers are welcomed to attend our monthly meetings—held the second Friday of every month at 2 PM at the AIA office. Please join us!

[ DUBROFF, from page 1 ]

AIA Colorado does need to increase its reserve and I applaud Joe Jackson and Ron Aho for paying attention to this important objective. Raising a reserve will mean increasing revenue and watching expenses. With a little creative thinking, revenue can be raised from a number of places—events, the sale of the energy-conservation guide, perhaps advertising and corporate part­nerships. Among other benefits, having $35,000—a rough approximation of what might be desirable—in a simple money-market fund would generate $2,500 a year or more in interest to fund your ongoing AIA programs.

AIA Colorado is a not-for-profit orga­nization. Even so, most non-profit experts will tell you that having a healthy, but not excessive reserve, is essential if the organization is going to survive the tough times and grow now, better programs.

In your business, the cash that’s left over when expenses are paid is called a profit. And in business, of course, hav­ing a buffer of cash or shareholder equity is what enables companies to survive bad times and invest in the future. It strikes me that maybe it would be worth taking a look at your company and wondering if there is enough reserve for a rainy day. Maybe you want to find your own “defender of the balance sheet” or take on that role yourself.

CANSTRUCTION™
EVENT AT PARK MEADOWS TO BENEFIT FOOD BANK OF THE ROCKIES

A pproximately a dozen teams will build “structures” from canned and boxed foods at the Seventh Annual CANSTRUCTION™ Design/Build competition on Saturday, November 7 from 10-12:30 PM at Park Meadows on the lower level near Dillard’s. This year’s theme is Wheel’n Past Hunger.

The event is a coordinated effort of the Denver Chapter of the Society of Design Administration, as well as the AIA Colorado and AIA Denver to ben­efit the Food Bank of the Rockies. Food Bank of the Rockies is a not-for-profit organization that currently distributes more than 12 million pounds of food annually to more than 800 hunger-relief programs in Colorado and Wyoming.

The purpose is to collect and donate food to the Food Bank of the Rockies. Since its inception, CANSTRUCTION has accounted for nearly 46,000 pounds of food to help the needy. After bring constructed, the creations can be viewed through Wednesday, November 11, when they will be torn down and the food will be donated to the Food Bank of the Rockies.

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