

C O L U M N S



WHY ARE AMERICAN CITIES GETTING FATTER?

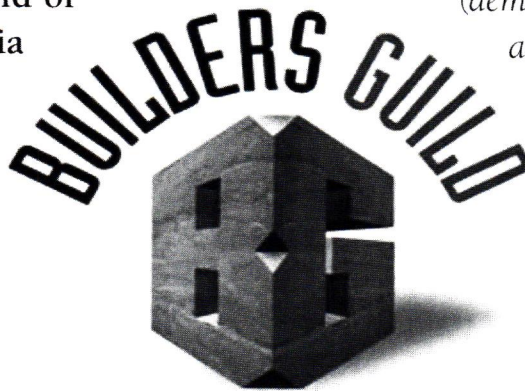
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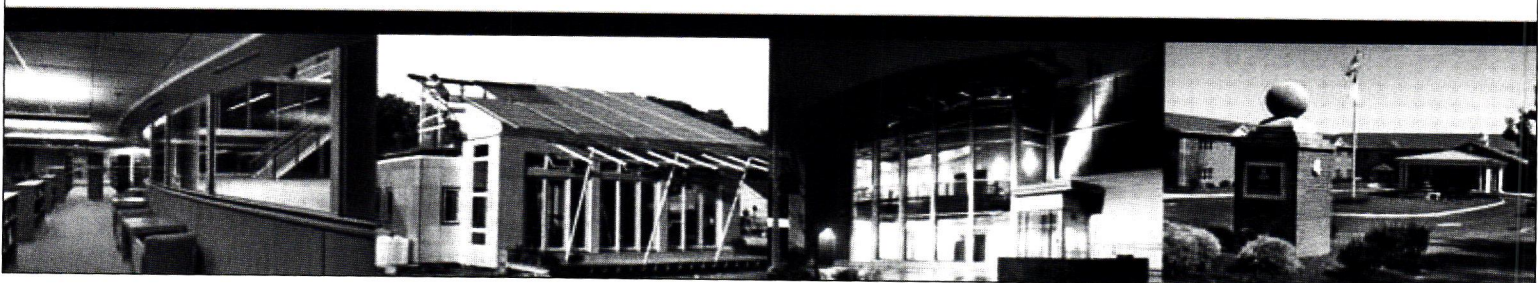
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Shaped By Our Surroundings

By Tracy Certo



For years we've made it difficult to make the healthy choice

According to a recent Rand study,

which tallied disease rates in 30 metropolitan areas based on the sprawl index, "Suburban disease may be an important new avenue for health promotion." Those who live in car-dependent areas aren't as healthy as those in more walkable communities, it concludes.

Good news for architects who are already involved in designing livable—read healthier—communities. "Every aspect of our lifestyles, what we eat, whether we smoke, how much we exercise—is shaped by our surroundings," reports the October 3rd issue of Newsweek. "People surrounded by bike paths and walkways tend to use them."

Music to your ears? It is for the people we feature in this issue who are also working toward healthier communities by tackling the growing (sorry, there is no avoiding these unintended puns so let me just apologize in advance) problem of obesity.

In a bit of a departure for *Columns* we decided to focus this issue more on people in the community—not all architects—who are behind some major initiatives. You'll meet Dr. Terence Starz, a dynamo of a leader who is involved in both obesity initiatives as well as the Western Pennsylvania Diversity Initiative. And you'll hear from Aaron Walton of Highmark, a company that knows too well the true and mind-blowing costs of obesity to society. We also feature attorneys Steve Spolar who with his co-chair Jaime Tuite could make a big difference through their work on the Diversity Initiative. These campaigns are indicative of a new trend that focuses on improving options for health—instead of just preaching for reform, a formidable challenge.

As I was starting this feature, I left for vacation to the fittest city in the country, according to *Men's Fitness*. Coincidentally, as I was finishing the feature, I went to a conference in Portland, Oregon, high on the Fittest List at #6.

If you provide opportunities for fitness, will people take advantage of them? Heck, yeah. With the exception of the visit to the new library (p. 5) and the Frank Gehry-designed Experience Music Project, our trip to the Pacific Northwest took place almost entirely outdoors: We hiked the well-groomed and easily accessible trails on Hurricane Ridge and the inviting paths of the rainforest in Olympic National Park. We strolled the state-owned undeveloped

beaches with their glorious sea stacks, kayaked peacefully in the scenic Strait of San Juan de Fuca, and walked all over downtown Seattle. From a speedy Zodiac, we saw dozens of Orcas off the San Juan Islands.

It was much the same in Portland. My friend, Rebecca, and I explored the very appealing Pearl District mentioned here in *Columns* in September, and then the beautiful Columbia River Gorge and Mt. Hood. At one point, watching salmon struggle mightily up fish ladders, the thought occurred to me that even the native fish are in super shape due to their environment.

In Seattle, train commuters haul their bikes onboard so they can pedal from their stops. On a super-sized ferry we watched dozens of cars pull out and then a semi-trailer with a full load of lumber followed by a young man in day-glo gear on a sleek bike. It was a good snapshot of the broad range in transportation. In Portland, so they say, 5,000 people bike to downtown every day.

Anything's possible, as Tom Briney, AIA said when we discussed this. And sure, Pittsburgh has a complicated geography with hills and rivers and bridges—but so does Portland which resembles our beautiful city in a number of ways.

Not that we're lacking in recreational opportunities. Inbetween my two trips I participated in the Dragon Boat race with the Green Team (p. 4). How many cities have a group like the Green Building Alliance let alone dragon boat racing?

But what about our own neighborhoods? Can we walk to the bank, to a healthy restaurant, to our kids' schools? Is it easy and convenient to choose healthy options or must we go out of our way? Now that the word is out, thanks largely (see what I mean?) to the Rand study, it could be helpful in creating more thoughtful community design.

For years we've made it difficult to make the healthy choice, says a doctor quoted in Newsweek. It's time to make it easy. And architects can lead the way.

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On the cover: Like many American cities, Pittsburgh struggles with obesity. Photo illustration by Joe Ruesch.

AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

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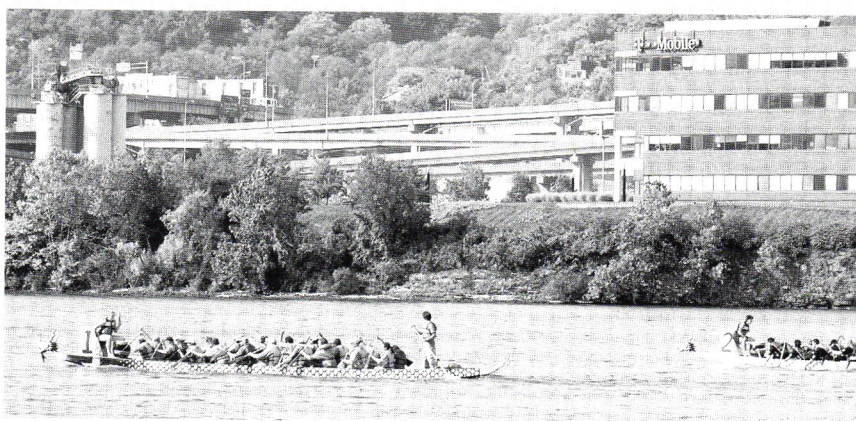
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New Staff at AIA Pittsburgh

Say hello at the next membership meeting!

BECKY SPEVACK (LEFT) is the new gal in charge of Member Relations. She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, holding a BFA in Glass. Before the AIA, she was production director for artist Robin Stanaway, working on a large scale sculpture which is now on display as a permanent installation at the State Museum of Pennsylvania. She likes buildings, preferably green ones.

QUINN FEDELE (RIGHT), special projects assistant, is a recent graduate from the University of Pittsburgh. When she "walked" this May, she received a BA in Humanities, a minor in Nonprofit Organization Management and a Certificate in Women's Studies. She's excited to work at AIA Pittsburgh after having experienced the new expansion project while working at the Children's Museum. She likes apples, preferably green ones.



MAKING QUITE A SPLASH

We won! Our heat, that is. And we are proud of it.

At the annual Dragon Boat Festival on September 17, The Green Team, which included AIA Pittsburgh's Maya Haptas and the editor of *Columns*, made an impressive showing. Kudos to the organizers, the Green Building Alliance's Rebecca Flora, Ryan Snow and Eamon Geary and Perkins Eastman's Lori Miller. Guiding and drumming our boat to victory was the awesome Kate Northway, 16, the daughter of Laurie Butler and Richard Northway, AIA of Perkins Eastman.

The Pittsburgh Dragon Boat Festival highlights Chinese and pan-Asian cultures in Pittsburgh, and promotes cultural understanding between the East and the West in a fun way. Dragon Boat Racing is a 2,400-year-old traditional Chinese activity known for its color and excitement. The ornately carved and brightly painted dragon heads and tails that adorn the front and back of each craft distinguish the 44 foot-long boat.

Care to join us next year? We might take the whole event.



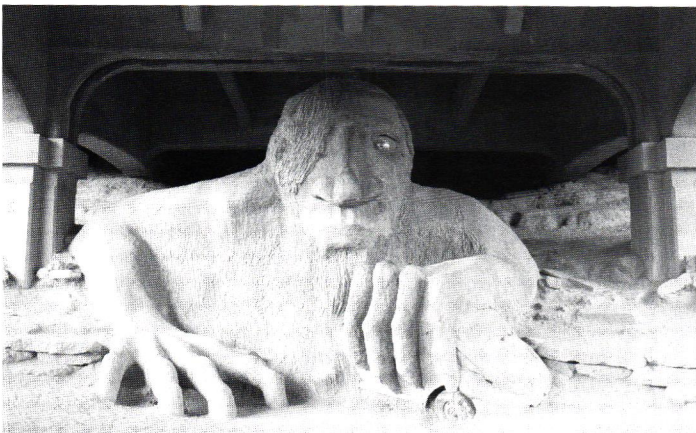
Columns is printed on recycled paper.

SEATTLE: *at-a-glance*

Since Design Pittsburgh 2005 lead juror David Miller, FAIA is from Miller Hull in Seattle, we thought we'd share a few photos of a recent visit to his very livable city. More about Miller in the December issue, including his new book, TOWARD NEW REGIONALISM which illuminates the history of the "green trail" in the work of key Northwest architects.



Rem Koolhaas's striking Seattle library has become to libraries what Bilbao has become to museums (*Library Journal*). Architecture critic Herbert Muschamp said it was the most exciting building he has reviewed in 30 years while Paul Goldberger called it "thrilling from top to bottom." Opened in May, 2004, the building won AIA's Honor Award for Outstanding Architecture and is attracting record crowds, both tourists and library patrons.



The Fremont Troll, a massive hulking creature that lurks under a bridge and devours Volkswagens, is the result of a design competition for the funky community of Fremont just north of downtown Seattle. The troll is just a few blocks away from the most popular public art in Seattle in the next photo.



The Train to Nowhere, which was installed after plans for transportation went...nowhere. Now Fremont residents take delight in dressing the figures. It appears somebody is having a birthday celebration.

Partnering for More Livable Communities

Working Together to Tackle Obesity
and Create Diversity

By Tracy Certo



If you are what you eat, maybe it's time we also start saying that you are where you live.

When it comes to obesity—a problem so widespread it's now referred to as globesity—researchers have shown a distinct correlation between your health and your built environment. A recent Rand Report spells bad news for those in car-dependent suburbs who don't fare as well healthwise as residents in walkable towns. "Other risk factors aside, people in densely populated places graced with sidewalks and shops had the lowest rates of diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases and stroke. And the rates rose steadily as communities became more spread-out and less walkable."

Where you live influences how you live. It's what architects have long known but now, thanks to scientific research, mainstream America is facing up to. And that means architects will be more in demand as communities, both new and old, try to become more conducive to healthier lifestyles. As the October 3rd issue of *Newsweek* blared, "We've had enough of good advice. The real secret to fitness is to live in an environment that encourages it."

During a visit with a patient, architect Stephen Quick, AIA, Dr. Terence Starz mentioned the Allegheny County Medical Society's Western Pennsylvania Obesity Task Force he had recently founded. Quick asked him if he was familiar with Dr. Richard Jackson, formerly with the National Institute of Health, who had spoken to architects at AIA's Grassroots leadership conference about the strong connection between community design and health.

"It was an epiphany," says Starz who is vice-president of the Allegheny County Medical Society (ACMS) and a Pittsburgh rheumatologist. Long story short: he asked Quick to help him with the Initiative which is based on the idea of partnering throughout the community to better achieve goals.

The real secret to fitness is to live in an environment that encourages it.

In 2000, a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey ranked Pittsburgh the ninth fattest city disturbed Dr. Starz enough to spur into action. In October, 2004, the University of Pittsburgh's Institute of Politics, the Graduate School of Public Affairs' Health Policy Institute, and the ACMS held a forum to address the obesity problem: How did Pittsburgh become the 9th fattest city in the country? Why is the U.S. the fattest country in the world? (The answer: Junk food, driving instead of walking, bigger portions and less activity) How can we make Southwestern Pennsylvania the healthiest region in the country?

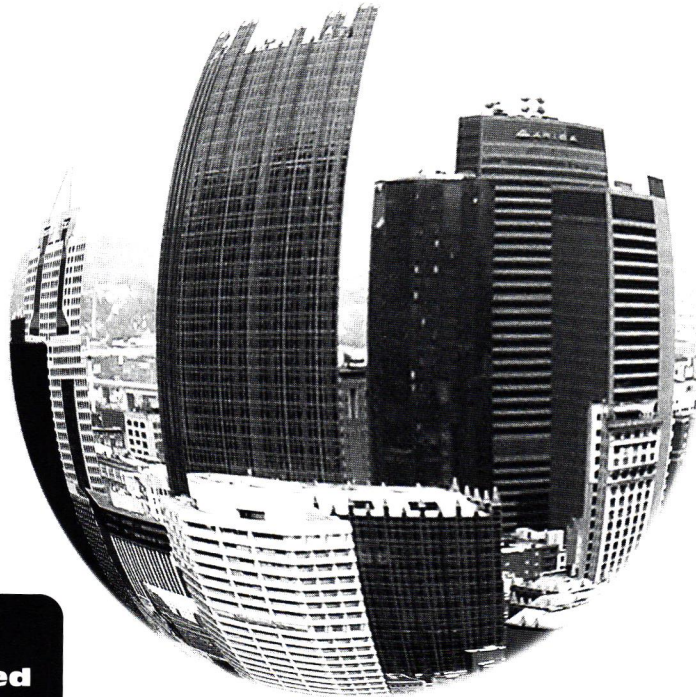
To start, the group reviewed how obesity is being addressed at the federal, state, and community level. And they examined the staggering costs of obesity in terms of economic, health, and social costs.

Starz shared disturbing trends that showed obesity was only getting worse: In the past twenty years, adult obesity rates more than doubled while children and adolescent obesity rates tripled. Obesity is now the second leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. "Because of the major health

consequences of obesity, we (the ACMS with 3500 doctors) chose to have healthy living as a public health initiative," Dr. Starz says. What's more, he is trying to get the state to do so also, as well as declare a goal of making Pennsylvania the healthiest state in the country.

Although many groups are addressing this problem, two groups in Pittsburgh are collaborating with others in different fields to address obesity comprehensively, which many believe is the only way to effectively tackle it.

Local architects are involved in both groups: 1) the Western Pennsylvania Obesity Task Force and 2) the Regional Strategy Group, an early childhood obesity task force comprised of leaders from businesses, foundations and the community, which was started three years ago by insurer Highmark. (Highmark's juvenile diabetes initiative is top-



People in densely populated places graced with sidewalks and shops had the lowest rates of diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases and stroke.

notch, says Starz, serving as a model across the state.)

Aaron Walton is senior vice president of corporate affairs at Highmark, where they have long been fighting obesity by promoting healthy lifestyles

for its members. Now he is also chair of the early childhood obesity initiative which has merited broad community support, including the mayor, school superintendent, medical directors and physicians—and architects. “If you want wide-scale change and impact you need to be as inclusive as possible in terms of people who contribute,” he says. “There’s a greater sense of ownership the more people you have involved. Architects are vital to this effort,” Walton declares, in creating “the built environment that supports active living.”

The problems resulting from obesity are rampant. It’s the root cause of diabetes, hypertension and heart disease and it results in other ailments as well. One of those is “presenteeism” the phenomena of showing up for work but with reduced productivity, says Starz.

The exorbitant costs of health care, including reduced productivity, are partly why industry has joined forces with both groups: U.S. Steel, PNC, PPG, UPMC and the Heinz Company are all involved in one or both of the initiatives. For architects, it’s a natural fit. “Architects are one of the few design-educated professionals that understand how the built environment affects humans,” says David Downey, Assoc. AIA, and director of the Center for Communities by Design of AIA National. “It’s a lending of the design expertise more to the public realm than the private.”

As keepers of the built environment, architects know that the foundation of livability, the quality of life which includes everything from traffic to health and safety, is good community design. That includes green spaces, wide, amply lit sidewalks for walking day and night, and bike and walking trails. Not to mention stairwells that encourage stairwalking—a good everyday component of keeping fit, says Starz who has already talked to architects about how to make stairwells safer and more inviting.

Partnering, he says, is extraordinarily important in the Initiative in getting different perspectives and working together to accomplish more.

"Now it takes on more relevance because it's much more than healthcare," says Walton. "It's community, health care, social services, all those sectors." His group has distributed community tool kits with resources to help people get healthier through better nutrition and exercise. "This problem is so universal it's going to take the collective energy of all the partners to have impacts. We need to work collaboratively so we're not at cross-purposes."

Many of the people involved serve on both initiatives, says Quick who happens to be one of them. "The Western PA Obesity Task Force is a very ecumenical group, each of whom is doing something very important," says Starz. "We serve as a forum to keep everyone informed on major projects. It helps us understand our common interests as well as our common goals."

So medical doctors are partnering with architects while medical students are teaming up with architectural students. At Carnegie Mellon University, Kristen Kurland, who teaches in the Urban Lab and is on the Obesity Task Force, insists that her architecture students incorporate healthy design into their work.

Kurland, a GIS (Graphic Information Systems) specialist, is studying how design and GIS mapping can contribute to healthy lifestyles, specifically walkability of neighborhoods. How can you get people to be more active in a community? she asks. One way is to collaborate.

She's encouraging the medical community, which has looked at this issue solely from a medical perspective, to

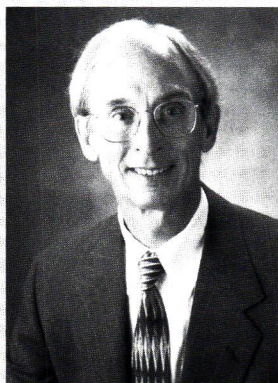
get more involved with architects. In a first, Kurland invited 20 medical students to Carnegie Mellon to her students' architectural critiques. And she, in turn, recently participated in a local hospital's "grand rounds" which focused on obesity—her perspective was that of an architect and how the built environment impacts lifestyles.

Kurland says a lot needs to be mapped out to look at the bigger picture and to pinpoint problem areas. One example is injury prevention, looking at where accidents are occurring, the conditions of sidewalks and what kids are doing when they get injured.

If there are other architectural programs doing this, Kurland isn't aware of them. The health focus in architecture, she notes, has been on internal buildings and building performance. Although she has been at Carnegie Mellon for 11 years, it's only been in the past two that she has focused more on community design and health issues.

For architects the next step, says David Downey, is "To really discuss elements of livability—density of street design and that nature. It's paramount that architects voice their opinion and be part of that discussion."

Locally the movement of architects building communities started with the appearance of Governor Tom Vilsack at Build Pittsburgh in February and architects' pledge to get involved. Tom Briney, AIA, who serves on the Obesity Task Force, says the goal is to re-orient the community toward pedestrian-centered activity, with less reliance on vehicles. "We're actually doing it in Oakmont," says Briney, who is



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— Dr. Terrance Starz, founder, Allegheny County Medical Society's Western Pennsylvania Obesity Task Force.

chair of the town's planning board. They have amended the zoning ordinance to create mixed-use segments and provide more access to outdoor amenities, including connections to the riverfront.

The idea is to get away from cars, to get people outdoors, to reinforce the notion that exercise is available, says Briney. One effort has already proven successful.

The Garden Club in Oakmont created a walking trail between Allegheny River and Allegheny River Blvd. which not only beautified the community, relays Briney, but also created what has become a whole new focus on outdoor recreation. And a bit of an economic boost as well with a new ice cream shop on it opening the possibility of even more.

All over Pittsburgh architects have participated in similar ventures. Jim Taylor, AIA of IKM Incorporated has spent years working on the successful reclamation of Nine Mile Creek. And architects are involved in the Riverlife Task Force which has made great strides in bike trails in the seven-mile loop around the riverfront.

It's a trend sweeping the country. Newsweek cites the city of Nashville which is three years into a 10-year, \$260 million project, seeded with a \$200,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Active Living by Design program, to expand parks and create a citywide network of bike lanes and walking paths.

The new kind of health campaign is also gaining steam in the workplace where companies are incorporating healthy



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living concepts. With good reason: healthier employees are more productive employees. PPG's Medical Director, Dr. Columby, serves on the Obesity Task Force.

There are four areas to focus on to improve health in communities: the workplace, families, community design and schools, says Starz. Families are paramount, says the physician, who cites mealtime together as one of many critical factors in achieving optimal health. In schools, due to recent legislation which made Pennsylvania only one of two states to mandate this, BMI (Body Mass Index) testing is now mandatory. Starz applauds this although the recommendation for parents if a child's index is too high—which is to see a doctor—is a pretty great challenge, he admits.

It's one of many, including how to address the "ethnic variations" such as the fact that as a group, African Americans weight tends to skew higher. "We're working with Steve Quick's input on two projects, in the Hill District and Beltzhoover, in how to incorporate healthy living in community design," he says. (The Regional Strategy Group is focusing on four communities through the United Way.)

As if that weren't enough, Starz is also working with the Allegheny County Bar Association (ACBA) and AIA Pittsburgh on the Diversity Initiative. (p. 12) In the AIA, diversity is a national priority, he points out. "I want the Pennsylvania Medical Society to decree that. How can you not?"

Noting the huge buy-in on diversity and healthy living, Starz says that when he becomes president of the ACMS in January, those will be the focus of the society next year.

As a teacher, he invites his students to take a minute and look at everything around them that is red. Then he tells them to close their eyes and list all the blue things they saw.

It's a lesson in perspective, that we just don't see the blue things very well because we're not looking for them. "Now recognize the importance of partnering together," he says. "In architecture, it's not a small deal, it's huge. The better we understand each other's perspective the more effective both groups can be in providing the best service for our clients and the people here in Western Pennsylvania."

For architects the benefits are many. As they take on more responsibility in building communities, it opens up more possibilities for making connections. "We need to start thinking a little differently," says Quick. "Projects in the future will reflect new perspectives."

And they will likely include partnerships. Since the effect of community design is so fundamental to health and livable issues, "You can't think in silos about communities," he says.

It's also important from a business and professional sense. As an involved community member, you build a sense of trust and understanding, Downey suggests, positioning yourself as a respected member in the community as you build relationships with leaders of the community.

And by doing so you become an asset in the community. Professionals who are actively involved in the community are the ones sought by private clients when it comes to hiring an architect, says Downey.

He experienced this in his last position in Michigan, noting a correlation in increased new work calls with the more his volunteer leadership became visible.

"Civically engaged architects are also fulfilling a professional aspect to ensure that the built environment is as strong and as vibrant as it can be. As keepers of the built environment it is an absolute appropriate role for architects to take."

**Architects
are vital to
this effort of
creating the
built environ-
ment that
supports
active living.**

— Aaron Walton

HarmoniZing!

Other architects are working building diversity in different—shall we say diverse?—ways. Architecture can be seen as frozen music, offers Mimi Jong, AIA. It too is an art. And if there are numerous ways to build a community, one of them is through art. Jong founded "HarmoniZing!" an organization dedicated to providing a "continuing context for sharing between cultures through the arts."

Now the board president, Jong says, "We envision a Pittsburgh that embraces the strength of diversity over that of exclusivity." She's been busy cultivating relationships throughout the arts community that help increase cross-cultural understanding in our region. Look for the Web site coming soon.

The Diversity Initiative

By Tracy Certo

There are aha! moments and then there are moments like this one: Four years ago, an administrator at the University of Pittsburgh Law School made it a point to tell Stephen Spolar, the newly-named director of recruitment at the law firm Buchanan Ingersoll, disturbing news. Fourteen third-year law students, all minorities, were leaving Pittsburgh and headed to other cities such as Detroit, Cleveland and New York. Of those 14, she said, only one had even interviewed at his law firm—and that one had not received an offer.

It was a light bulb moment, even if someone else turned on the switch. Spolar instantly resolved to correct the situation. "That wasn't right," said Spolar who is now head of Human Resources at the Post-Gazette and co-chair of the minority opportunities committee for the Allegheny County Bar Association. He is also an active member of the recently-formed Western Pennsylvania Diversity Initiative (WPDI), a group of Pittsburgh professionals who act as a resource to area employers on the benefits of the region in order to attract and retain professionals of diverse backgrounds.

WPDI is an integrated project of the Allegheny County Medical Society, the American Bar Association, the American Institute of Architects, the Urban League, Pittsburgh industry—such as Highmark, Pfizer, UPMC—and others.

And it's giving Spolar and other community leaders a forum in which to express the need for the city to be more diverse. "It's the right thing to do and an economic development issue. We can't get international without being more diverse," Spolar insists.

Across the country, cities that are growing are doing so in part as a result of diversification. In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia and Allentown have significant growth in minority populations but Pittsburgh is conspicuously lagging.

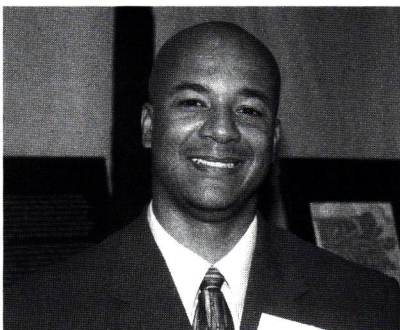
In an increasingly global marketplace, few companies will consider locating in Pittsburgh if the population isn't growing and diverse, says Art Sheffield, Assoc. AIA. Many employers believe that having a diverse workforce and talent pool creates a strong competitive advantage. Others have made diversity a core value of their business, says Sheffield who is a member of the Initiative. The group, he says, was formed out of a sense of urgency that was rooted in the city's declining population and stagnant economy.

Other cities such as Charlotte, NC, he notes, are overtaking us due to their gains in building a larger and more diverse workforce.

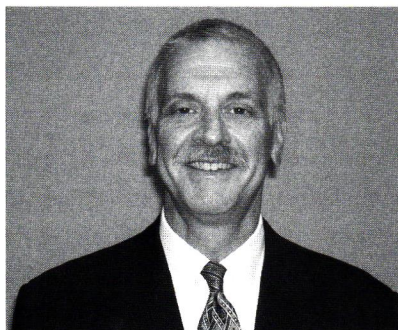
So what's holding us back? In a word, attitude. "The Pittsburgh region has developed a reputation nationally for being non-inclusive of minority professionals and racially polarized," says Sheffield. When he lived in D.C. and wanted to move here ten years ago, two white physicians, who lived there but were originally from Pittsburgh, advised him that conservative Pittsburgh wasn't the place for him. They also mentioned that they chose to relocate to the D.C. area because they did not want to raise their children in such a non-diverse environment. Despite the warning, Sheffield moved here anyway. Now he is working towards change along with the others in the Diversity Initiative.

"It's the right thing to do and an economic development issue. We can't get international without being more diverse."

—STEPHEN SPOLAR



Art Sheffield, Assoc. AIA



Stephen Spolar



Ken Lee, AIA

It's their goal to make it easier for professionals like Sheffield to locate here. The mission is to:

- 1) Start a dialogue about the challenges Western Pennsylvania faces in attracting and maintaining professionals from multi-cultural backgrounds
- 2) Educate the public about current efforts of employers, government, and non-profits in the region
- 3) Advocate for employers, government, and non-profits to collaborate to make Western Pennsylvania more attractive and
- 4) Measure and publicize Western Pennsylvania's success in these areas.

Once minority candidates are hired in the area, what then? "The need shifts from recruitment to retention, an even greater challenge," says Stephen Quick, AIA. "Maintaining strong networks requires healthy attitudes and strong

community acceptance. Diverse communities are healthy communities in the broadest sense of the term."

Nationally and locally, the AIA has made diversity a priority for that reason. Not only is it a community design issue, but it's also a goal in creating more diversity within the AIA membership, in color and gender.

Lawyers, too, are trying to increase the number of women in their profession. Jaime Tuite of Buchanan Ingersoll moved to Pittsburgh from Miami and was taken back by the lack of diversity in the workforce and overall. She now serves as co-chair along with Spolar on the outreach committee.

Last month, the group held a kick-off party at Dowe's on Ninth with County Executive Director Dan Onorato and various panelists. For architects, the goal is to not only achieve more diversity in the community but also within their local profession.

AIA Pittsburgh has made good gains in terms of attracting more women, but not enough in becoming more diverse

with minorities. "Our region needs to retain and attract a diverse population if it wants to be considered among the nation's exciting places to live," says Ken Lee, AIA.

There are obvious reasons why minorities would support this initiative through active participation but why is it important to Spolar, who is white and 51 and living in Squirrel Hill? Three reasons: his kids. "I would like my kids to come back to a viable Pittsburgh," he says. "I love this place. But I don't think a region is relevant until we become more diverse."

He is encouraged by the city's response. "This is another indicator of the greatness of this town," said Spolar. "People came out of the woodwork to do this."

Currently up to 20 people are part of WPDI and yes, they're welcoming new faces. "We're looking for help on how to position us strategically," Spolar says. That includes ideas for the next event, possibly in January, 2006, along with a strategy retreat for those involved in the Initiative in November.

PROJECTS OF MERIT



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Mistick PBT

*The Commons at North Aiken
Architects: Perkins Eastman Architects*

The Commons at North Aiken is a senior independent living community developed by Affirmative Investments and Presbyterian SeniorCare. The apartment building has 66 apartment units plus a separate manager's apartment. Five separate duplexes house ten, single-level bungalows. Amenities include a full service commercial kitchen, spacious dining and activity rooms, and laundry facilities on each level. Perkins Eastman Architects complemented their efficient and friendly building design with a circular drive and enhanced landscaping to create a strong sense of community for the residents.

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One More Chance to Meet the Fellows (Part One)

Fireside Chats at the Firehouse Lounge

The September membership meeting at the Firehouse Lounge proved to be a great hit as members of the AIA College of Fellows led small group discussions on community issues. Even if you were there, you couldn't participate in all the lively discussions so we asked Programming Committee members to take notes and update us. We're glad we did. Thanks to everyone involved for sharing these ideas and enriching us all.

DAVID LEWIS, FAIA CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

During the "Meet the Fellows" segment of the AIA Pittsburgh membership meeting, I had the pleasure of moderating (i.e. sitting back and enjoying) a discussion led by Fellow David Lewis. The focus of our far-reaching talk broached many subjects including urban design as an integral part of architecture, civic engagement, and increasing the level of ethnic diversity within the profession.

At the outset of our conversation, Mr. Lewis stressed the necessity for architects to view design at a macro level rather than just micro, so that they can have a better understanding of the surrounding context where their projects are located. He cited a few of Pittsburgh's urban design blunders in the past, specifically the destruction of a thriving African American community in the lower Hill District to make way for the Civic Arena. In the 1970's, as a founding member of Urban Design Associates, Mr. Lewis worked on a revitalization

proposal for the Hill District. We know that plan today as Crawford Square.

In addition, Mr. Lewis mentioned that he is originally from South Africa, and while in college he was exiled from his homeland for denouncing apartheid and attempting to integrate his school. Upon coming to the United States, he joined the AIA and became a core member of the Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT's) as well as chairman of the AIA's National Urban Design Committee. He stressed the importance of architects becoming active in their communities by participating on planning committees and design review boards.

Throughout our chat, Mr. Lewis openly questioned the lack of diversity within the architectural profession and challenged the AIA to create outreach programs and to provide scholarships for promising minority students. He noted that the AIA must become a reflection of society and begin to embrace people of all backgrounds.



Discussion group lead by David Hoglund, FAIA



Discussion group lead by Lou Astorino, FAIA

Although the subject of our conversation was intended to be the meaning of fellowship within the AIA, Mr. Lewis ventured into a spellbinding dialogue on the important role that architects play in helping to ensure that our communities are more livable through quality urban design, community service, and by embracing diversity. His knowledge and insight surrounding these issues is very broad and is only surpassed by his passion to address them. Fellow David Lewis is truly an asset to the AIA and the entire Pittsburgh region.

— By Art Sheffield, Assoc. AIA, WTW Architects

LOU ASTORINO, FAIA ASTORINO

Lou Astorino, FAIA, was generous in sharing some of the highlights of his long-storied career with our group, from his early days as the assistant office boy at the firm now known as DRS, to the halls of the Vatican, where his firm collaborated on the design of the hotel that houses the cardinals during a pope's election, and later completed a chapel. We talked about the original horseshoe design for Deeter Ritchey Sipple's Three Rivers Stadium, the complexities of the site for Astorino's City of Pittsburgh Municipal Courts Building,

and the pedestrian challenges of Rafael Vinoly's David L. Lawrence Convention Center. Several group members offered opinions and questions about these facilities, and Lou provided a unique perspective on each of the projects, as well as some of the idiosyncrasies of getting work in Pittsburgh.

Lou has been an active member of the AIA his entire career, and has given time to the local, state, and national levels of the Institute. While some of these roles have been very demanding, he feels that it has been an important part of his career success, offering networking opportunities and leadership development. He revealed that he would like for the AIA to focus more on better educating its members about business issues in the profession. Members of the group echoed that sentiment, wanting to get more experience in areas such as accounting, human resources, and marketing, whether in the interest of starting their own firms, or contributing more to the firm where they are employed.

As a tangent to the business issue, the group also discussed the importance of architects supporting each other in the public realm. We concurred that our profession must not sell itself short; rather, we need to work together to improve our image as a vital player in

Throughout our chat, Mr. Lewis openly questioned the lack of diversity within the architectural profession and challenged the AIA to create outreach programs and to provide scholarships for promising minority students. He noted that the AIA must become a reflection of society and begin to embrace people of all backgrounds.

The general consensus was that the professional community could do a much better job mentoring young professionals.

any project, be it a single building, a development, or a transportation project. A member of our group offered the opinion that the AIA should better engage other groups who can benefit architects, whether it be lawyers, engineers, or marketers.

A lifelong Pittsburgh resident, and a man who loves everything about the area, Mr. Astorino has also been an active volunteer in the community. He recommends that architects at all levels of experience get involved in their communities, whether it be on zoning boards, planning commissions, community groups, or organization boards. "Other people don't think about things that architects do," he says. Another group member added, "Architects are trained to be problem solvers," something she has realized in her own volunteer work. Lou added that he believes architects are also trained to be leaders.

For architects interested in pursuing Fellowship, Lou noted that one must make outstanding contributions to the profession. He felt it was important to point out that there are many areas in which one can achieve this highest honor of the Institute, and recommended that anyone interested should peruse the FAQ on the AIA website regarding Fellowship. — *By Jennifer Beck, AIA*

LAURA LEE, FAIA CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

The Laura Lee discussion group was a very dynamic group composed of architects, interns, an industrial designer, the president of AIAS at Carnegie Mellon, and the vice president of the National AIAS chapter. The first question presented to Laura was, "What are the current trends in the academic world of architecture?" Laura stated that Carnegie Mellon's program is emphasizing communication. Students are learning to clearly and concisely present their ideas to any audience. Verbal and writing skills are becoming just as critical to the design process as plans, sections, models, and renderings.

The conversation then turned to thoughts of how to better integrate the professional world of architecture with the academic world of architecture and vice versa. Andrew Caruso, a 4th year student and AIAS president at Carnegie Mellon, discussed an integration model for architecture students called 'The Ladder', which pairs 1st year students with 2nd year students, and 2nd year students with 3rd year students, and so on, creating a ladder of communication and knowledge connecting every academic level. The group noted that this type of model should not stop at the end of one's academic career, but should continue into the professional world.



Discussion group lead by Laura Lee, FAIA

We also discussed the importance of mentors to the development of young interns. The general consensus was that the professional community could do a much better job mentoring young professionals. By mentoring young professionals and academic students, veterans might be able to refresh their perspectives by listening to ideas that have not been diluted by real world budgets, poor clients, and lazy contractors.

As the discussion came to a close, the group recognized that a casual 45- minute conversation among a diverse group of people had already begun to extend the length of the communication 'Ladder'. — *By Tom Price, Assoc. AIA, Strada*

DAVID HOGGLUND, FAIA PERKINS EASTMAN

Our discussion was highly-charged with an active group that represented the diverse membership of the AIA community and related professions. Attending our group were AIA members from small firms to large firms, not to mention a student from the University of Pittsburgh, a manufacturer's representative, a member of 16:62 Design Zone, the former campus architect for Carnegie Mellon University, Paul Tellers, AIA now with WTW Architects, and of course, AIA Fellow David Hoggund.

The general topics we discussed were:

1. The AIA community
2. The AIA within the architectural community
3. The AIA in the community-at-large

We began with everyone sharing their background and experiences. It was particularly interesting to have an opportunity to hear David discuss the story of his journey from New York to Pittsburgh and the welcome he received into the local AIA community. David described a somewhat lonely experience in the AIA NY Chapter. But hours after his arrival in Pittsburgh, he was contacted by the local chapter president, and invited to lunch to find ways to get him active in AIA Pittsburgh. Some of us, including me, had similar experiences in our previous chapters.

We began within our first community- the AIA Pittsburgh chapter. We discussed means that the local chapter could be more engaging to create opportunities to form a more cohesive community. We agreed that the AIA is successful in doing so, and that creating more forums for discussion, like the one we were having, is a successful way to continue. It was a helpful reminder from the non-architects within the group who told us how well we are doing in that regard, and how unique that is among other professional organizations.

However, there was an interesting discussion that included both dissenting and consenting opinions on the role of the AIA within the architectural community as a whole. Although the AIA does not include the membership of all architects, it serves as the only nationally-recognized professional organization for the profession. The AIA serves to market architects, lobby for policy changes and protect architects in providing standardized contracts. We established that the AIA has room for improvement there, but how and the matter of investment of resources were of great debate.

In terms of marketing, toward increasing membership within the architectural community, we discussed the challenges of the cost of the yearly dues for a young or sole practitioner, spinning off a discussion of that cost versus long-term advantages and equity of a consistent member. One of the members of the group recommended the possibility of holding an annual AIA event specifically designed to bring together AIA and non-AIA members.

The discussion grew into the effectiveness and the role of the AIA in the general community itself including:

1. The AIA's marketing program for the use of an AIA member
2. Increasing the visibility of architects within Pittsburgh community
3. Means and methods to working within the community

There was clear agreement that as the AIA encourages work of practitioners in the community, it can be a very effective marketing tool.

There was clear agreement that as the AIA encourages work of practitioners in the community, it can be a very effective marketing tool, as opposed to any other campaign, in showing a group what an architect does. Part of this discussion was informative, a chance for David to share with us what the AIA has done in the past by facilitating charettes and linking groups with architects that are interested in a helping hand. Lastly, we all allowed for Dave to share with us what his firm and the AIA is doing to try to facilitate opportunities to help with displaced and architects affected by Hurricane Katrina.

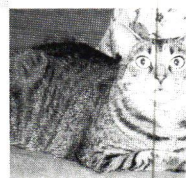
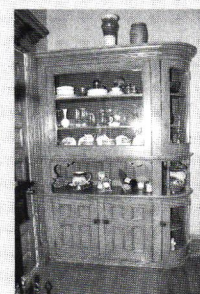
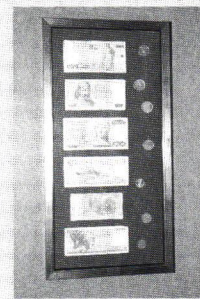
Overall, we left with a clearer picture of not only what the AIA is doing but also what we can do within our community. Since AIA Pittsburgh is an extremely diverse group, with disparate viewpoints and ways and means of practice, it was refreshing to find that we could all agree that we should be a part of the building of community.

— *By Eric Osth, AIA, Urban Design Associates*

In a future issue of Columns, we will present summaries from discussions lead by Syl Damianos, FAIA, Steve George, FAIA, Robert Dale Lynch, FAIA and Dick Rittelmann, FAIA.

HABITAT

Gwen and George Dakis / Friendship



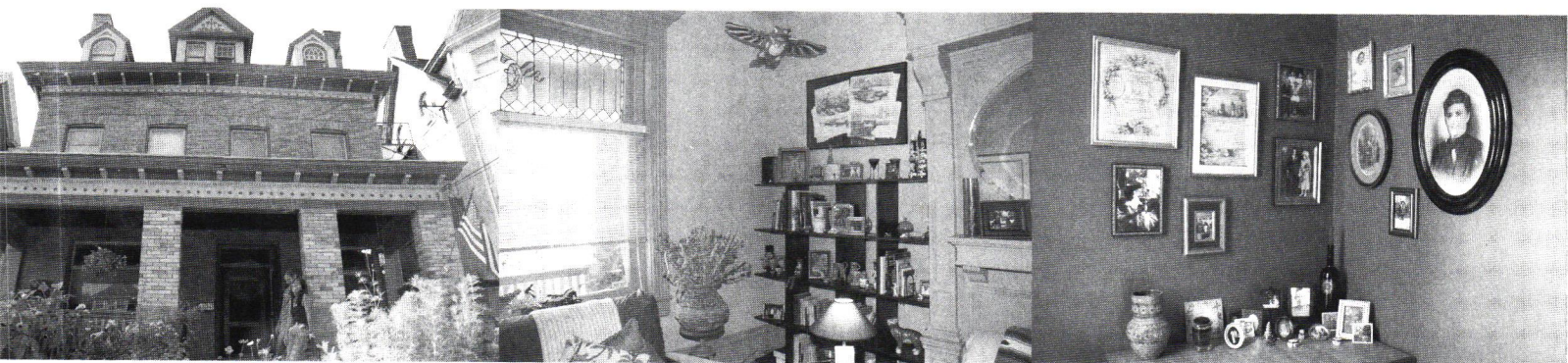


A GLIMPSE OF ARCHITECTS AT HOME

These are the kind of houses you rehab, not restore, says Gwen Dakis, AIA of her three-story, 3600-square foot modified four-square in Friendship. Eight years ago she and her husband George, a contractor, bought the place which was built in 1910. George then worked full-time for nearly five months converting it from three apartments with intensely green walls into a spacious single-family residence on the first two floors. (They rent the third floor). The result, as you can see here, is a wonderfully livable space that is filled with art—local artists such as David Lewis, FAIA and Cynthia Cooley hang on the walls along with many items brought back from Greece—and graced with rich architectural details throughout. In the living room, aged hardwood floors were lovingly refinished but instead of restoring the blue-painted mantle—which would have been insane, says Dakis—they opted to repaint it a neutral tone.

A number of architects live in the neighborhood, says Dakis who works at Berryman Associates (Doug Berryman, AIA lives nearby at the Lofts on Centre Avenue). The neighborhood is chockablock with older multi-storied houses with wide front porches. You can walk anywhere, they note, which suits them just fine.

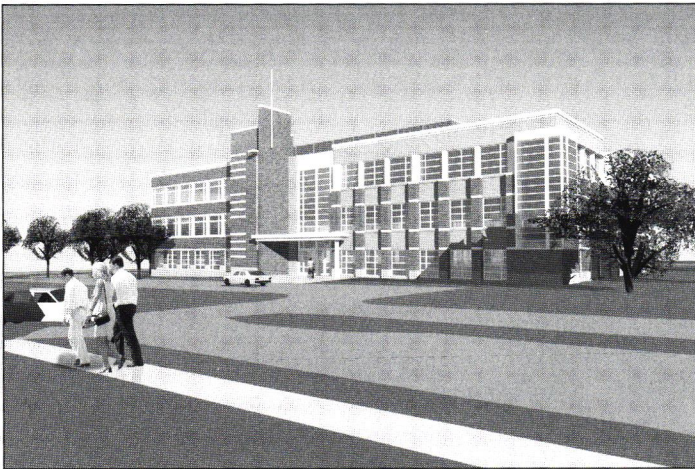
On this pleasant Sunday afternoon, the pair relaxed watching a romp of a Steelers game while two backpacks (and no other luggage) were ready to go for a three-week trip to Greece the next day. Life is good.



From the Firms

► **Hayes Large Architects (HLA)** announced that it has reduced its workforce to align its staff with client needs. The firm reduced overall staffing by a dozen employees, at least half clerical, creating smaller yet more efficient teams due to newer and more powerful software and technological abilities. It is part of the long-term plan to expand the organization, says Managing Partner **John Missell, AIA**. HLA currently has 100 people in five offices. Among the firm's current work are projects for the Harrisburg Public Schools, the Cleveland Municipal School District, the Loudon County, Virginia Schools, the Milwaukee Public Schools, the U.S. Department of Defense Educational Activity, Penn State University, West Virginia University and the Altoona Regional Health System.

Astorino has recently completed the design of a mixed use development project for Horizon Properties, which will be built at Southpointe II (pictured below). The project will include office, retail shops, restaurants, education, cultural district, and residential housing in a traditional neighborhood setting.

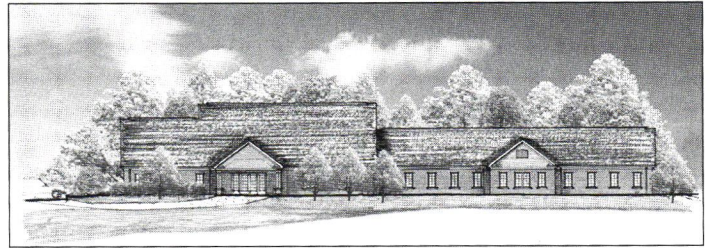


EDGE studio has teamed with Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects of Atlanta to design the Carnegie Mellon University Gates Center for Computer Science, a new campus facility. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2006.

JSA was recently selected by Douglass National Bank & the CDC of Kansas City for a new 30,000 sf branch bank to be located in Kansas City, Missouri. The building will include banking facilities on the ground level and corporate office space on the upper two levels.

Baker and Associates completed design for the U.S. Army Reserve Center in Greenville S.C. Construction of this 85,000 sf building will begin late 2005. Additionally, construction is underway on the General Aviation Terminal for Connellsville Airport, designed by Baker and Associates. This 6,400 sf terminal building plus covered parking area is projected to open in late 2005.

General Industries of Charleroi, Pennsylvania joined the Mental Health Association of Washington County to break ground and begin construction on the new Stepping Stone Residential Facility in Bentleyville, Pennsylvania. **Valentour English Bodnar & Howell Architects** of Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania are the designers of this project. (Facility and ceremony pictured below).



Business Briefs

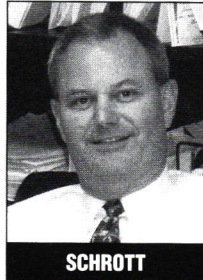
► **Glen A. Schultz, AIA** a principal in **WTW Architects** of Pittsburgh, was promoted to vice president of planning for the firm. In addition, **Paul J. Tellers, AIA** joined WTW as director of planning following 19-years as University Architect for Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

JSA is pleased to announce the addition of new intern architect Michelle Botelho, who will be responsible for work with retail, commercial, educational, and financial clients. Also new to the firm is Rae Dawn Plance, hired as a CAD Draftsperson.

IKM Incorporated is pleased to announce the appointment of **John C. Schrott, III, AIA**, to the position of President. With this change, **Mihai Marcu, AIA** becomes Chairman and CEO of the corporation and Schrott assumes control of business operations. In addition to Mr. Schrott's elevation, IKM has formed an executive committee composed of **Marion Zentarsky, AIA**, Schrott and Marcu to advise on management issues.

Mr. Shrott has been with IKM for 25 years and is a member of the American College of Healthcare Architects. He has spoken at numerous healthcare conferences and seminars regarding the current state of healthcare design.

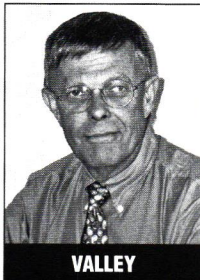
"We continue to search for quality individuals who share our vision to augment our dedicated staff," says Shrott. "We have recently been awarded several key projects including a new \$36 million addition to St. Clair Hospital and a Health Services Classroom Building for Lock Haven University's Clearfield Campus. In addition, we are teamed up with another locally-based firm to provide professional design services to the Army Corps of Engineers for advanced prototypical specialty healthcare projects."



SCHROTT

Baker and Associates

has hired John R. Valley, Jr. as senior architect, **Dawn R. Cindric, AIA** as architect, and Renz A. Weinmann as design associate. The firm also announced that Jason E. Bischoff has recently obtained his license to practice architecture in the state of Pennsylvania.



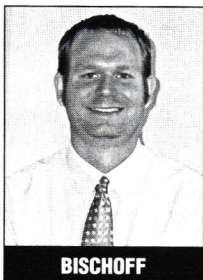
VALLEY



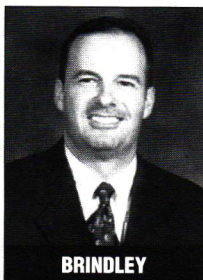
CINDRIC



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The Society of Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) Pittsburgh Chapter is proud to announce its 2005-2006 Board of Directors. Members include:

President—Gilbert Brindley, P.E. (Dick Corporation)—*Vice President / Programs Chair*—Terry Caywood (The Sextant Group) *Past President*—Elizabeth Bowers (Elizabeth Bowers Construction Services) *Treasurer*—Rochelle Stachel (HRV Conformance Verification Associates, Inc.) *Secretary*—Jackee Ging (JPCL/Paint Square) *Sponsorship Chair*—Mike Doerfler (Wellington Power) *Membership and Retention Chair*—Alyssa Pike (Dick Corporation) *Communications Chair*—Carl Hunt (Trans Associates) *Coordinator's Club Chair*—Beth McClaine (**Desmone & Associates Architects**).

Massaro Corporation recognizes the growing demand and need for environmentally friendly and energy efficient building techniques and design. Ten members of the Massaro Team have recently achieved LEED® Accredited Professional status: Peter Bizic III, project manager; Daniel Dick, project manager; Christopher Fink, project manager; Mark Hartman, senior project manager; Daniel Kiefer, director, construction; James Saxon, project manager; Michael Stimpson, lead estimator; Patrick Stone, senior project manager; Joseph Switala, Jr., senior project manager; Michael Tarle, director, pre-construction services.

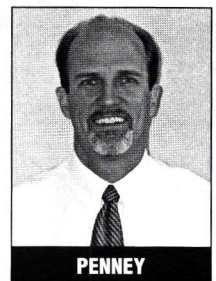
Beth Cheberenckich recently joined Crawford Consulting Services as marketing director. Crawford Consulting Service, located in East Pittsburgh, is a Woman-Owned Business Enterprise and provides cost estimating, project management and CPM scheduling services. Ms. Cheberenckich has more than eight years experience in the design/build industry.

Kudos

→ Swee Hong Ng of **EDGE studio** and Architecture for Humanity were recently awarded the INDEX Design Award for their innovative work with the Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies in South Africa to design and build a soccer club that will double as a health outreach center.

Renaissance 3 Architects P.C. had two of its principals present papers at national conferences. In May, **Mark S. Weber, AIA** presented "Regional Learning Alliance Building Model, an analysis of LEED costs and investments" at the PCIE Conference in Philadelphia; **Deepak Wadhvani, AIA** presented "Regional Learning Alliance, a New Paradigm for Collaborative Learning" at the SCUP-40 conference in Washington, D.C.; Mr. Wadhvani was also recently interviewed on WPXI's "Our Region's Business" by Bill Flanagan about green building trends in the industry.

Duncan M. Penney, AIA a senior architect at **Baker and Associates**, recently coordinated, moderated, and spoke on a panel presentation held at the Conference for the Keystone Chapter of the Eastern Region of the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers (KAPPA) at the University of Pittsburgh in Johnstown.



PENNEY

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CALENDAR

AIA ACTIVITIES

NOVEMBER 2, WEDNESDAY

AIA Communications Committee Meeting.
Noon at the Chapter office. All members are welcome. 412-471-9548

NOVEMBER 8, TUESDAY

AIA Pittsburgh Board Meeting. 5 p.m. at the Chapter office. All members are welcome. 412-471-9548

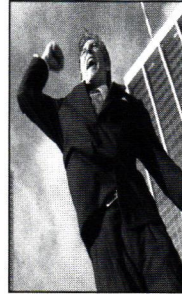
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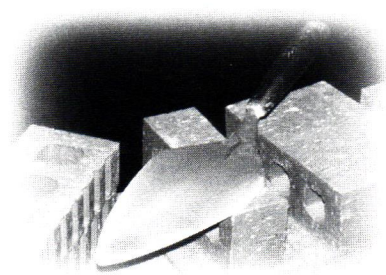
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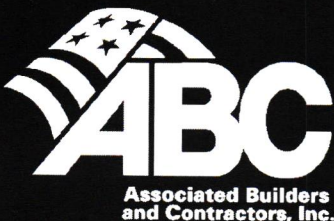
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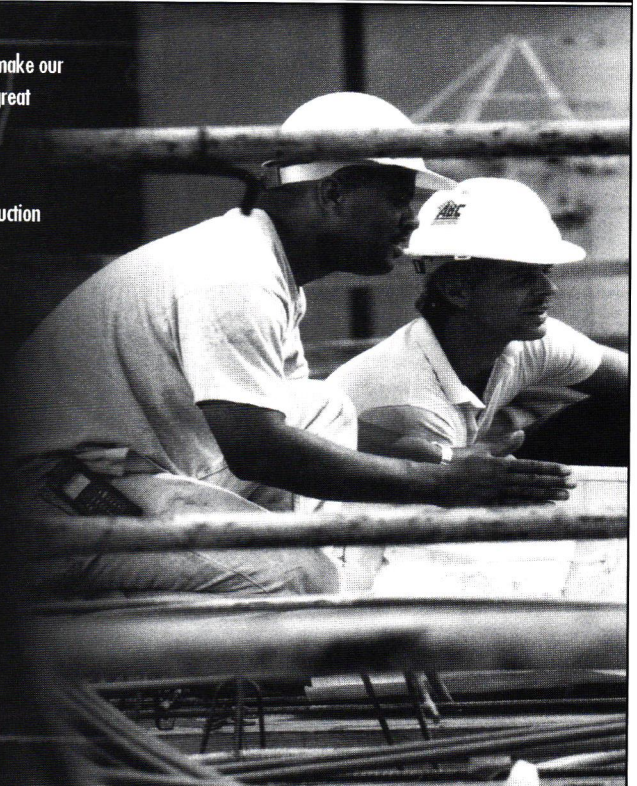
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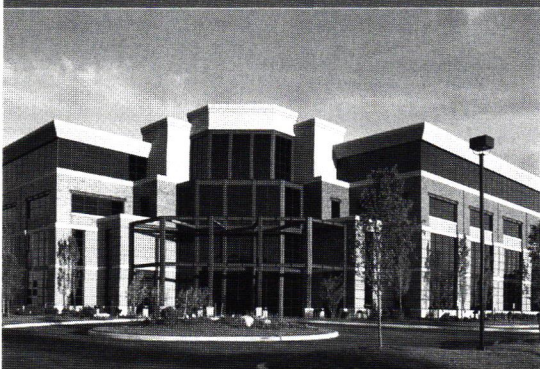
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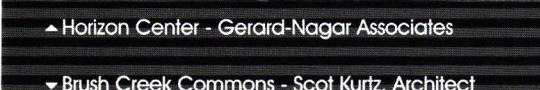
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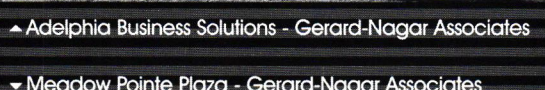
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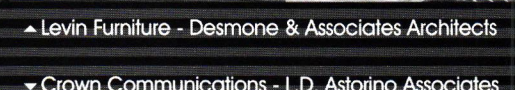
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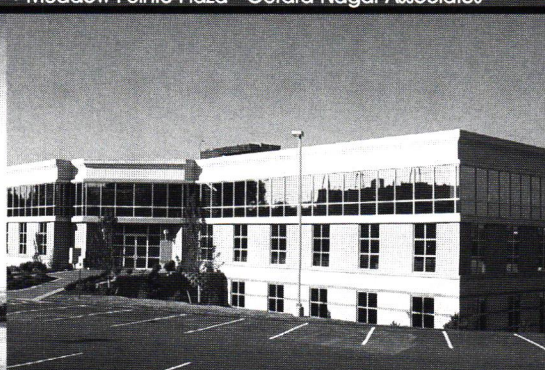
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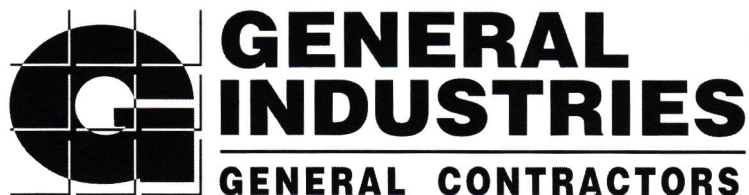
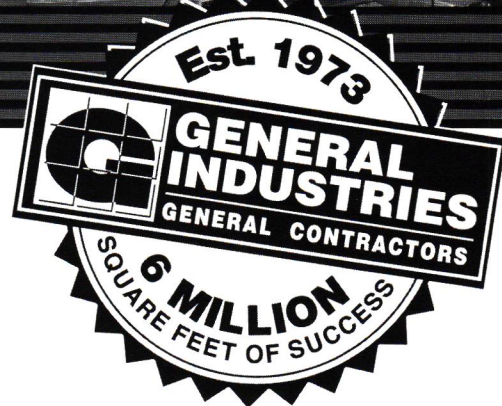
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