

# COLUMNS



AIA

JUN/08

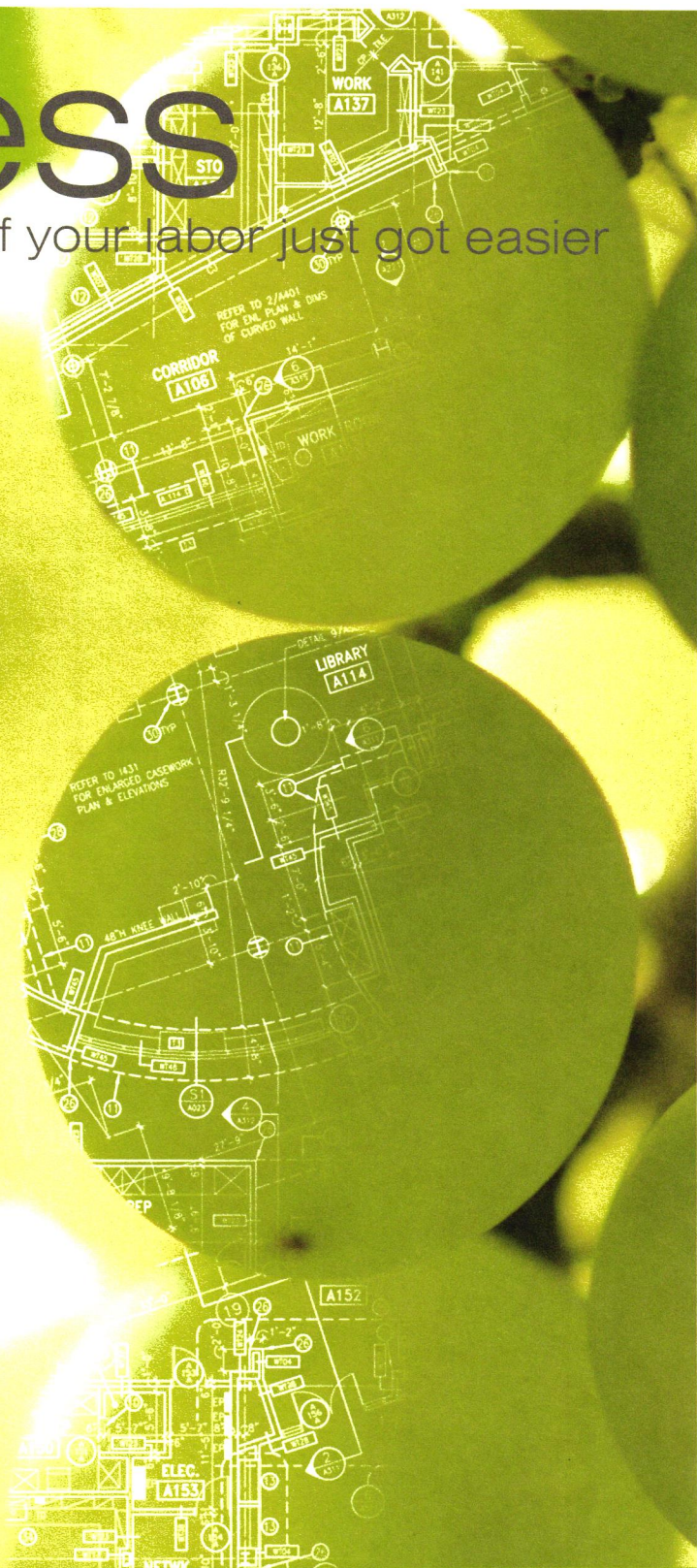
It's a Wonderful Life: Building new careers from a foundation in architecture | Dream Office: Imagining a future home for AIA Pittsburgh | Diversity Now: Steven Lewis, AIA | AIA Pittsburgh, a chapter of the American Institute of Architects

# COVER

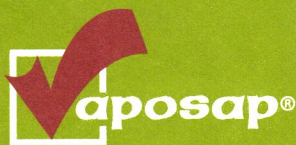


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# HOMEFRONT

BY BECKY SPEVACK



**I have a confession to make.** I love *Dancing with the Stars*. I don't watch a lot of television, but this program is one of my guilty pleasures. The show pairs actors, musicians, and athletes with professional dancers, and each week they present a new dance – foxtrot, quick step, tango, samba, and on and on. They are judged and voted on, and each week, the weakest dancer goes home. It's a crash course in dancing, and is often a bit of a train wreck. But as the contestants with two left feet are sent home, those remaining start to show grace and elegance in their movement. It is a fantastic transformation to watch and as someone who spent 12 years studying classical ballet, I've always been drawn to dance, of any style.

After years of pliés, relevés, and grand jetés, I was introduced to a new dance, one that consisted of blowpipes, jacks, glory holes, and a furnace. Shortly after I came to the understanding that ballet would only ever be a hobby (I peaked at 5'4"), I was introduced to the material of glass, and I soon realized that glassblowing was the dance for me. The act of blowing glass involves a series of repetitive motions – heating and reheating in the glory hole, blowing, shaping, standing up, sitting down, all while continually turning the blowpipe so that the hot glass stays on center – motions that are done in a small space, designed specifically for the task at hand, in which smooth movement is key. The choreography of glassblowing is centuries old, but there is nothing worn-out or tired feeling about it. Even though it is potentially an extremely dangerous environment, it is easily the one in which I feel the most comfortable. My body is at the point where it knows precisely how to move in a hotshop, it anticipates each step before I ever consciously think about it. The steel and wooden tools become extensions of my hands, the blowpipes extensions of my arms. Each opportunity in

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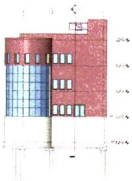
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the hotshop is one filled with excitement, anticipation, wonder, and sweat.... A lot of sweat. The furnace is kept at about 2100 °F and the glory hole, which is used to reheat the glass to keep it soft and malleable, is maintained at 2500 °F. Standing in front of these monstrous pieces of equipment throughout the day leaves one feeling exhausted and sweaty, but completely satisfied.

So what, you may ask, am I doing here, editor of a small magazine geared towards architects? Like many of the participants in our main feature *It's a Wonderful Life*, I have not followed the obvious or conventional path that my education and training would imply. But

that training has granted me a large knowledge base from which to draw, has influenced many decisions, and ultimately impacts the way I do my job. I have found a position that compliments my skills, interests, and creativity. Working as an editor is just another dance, a series of steps and motions to learn and develop. At times it feels more like a juggling act – balancing writers, photographers, and designers, with ads, ideas and writing – but it always feels like a good fit, the right fit for where I am in the here and now. Just as I found this niche, many formally trained in architecture have gone on to contribute to a vast variety of professional fields, pulling their creativity and love of design into positions completely their own. I think you'll enjoy reading about the four professionals profiled by writer John Altdorfer. Each one has certainly found the dance uniquely for them. I have not retired my Carhartt's and blowpipe, and similarly, our interviewees have not permanently set down their drafting pencils. They continue to think outside the box, be it as a community leader or a needlepoint enthusiast. 



Scene from the Pittsburgh Glass Center, where editor Becky Spevack practices her craft. Photo by Nathan Shaulis.



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# LET'S DISCUSS IT!

BY PAULA R. MAYNES, AIA

I am always amazed how the seemingly random events of everyday life can coalesce into an overarching theme. If I am paying attention, repetitive messages often bombard me. I interpret this phenomenon as the universe's attempt to get me to pay attention and to focus on an important idea. The spring of 2008 has presented me with numerous lessons about the need for and value of an open and healthy dialogue.


I am composing this column on the weekend following Build Pittsburgh. Our keynote speaker was R. Steven Lewis, AIA, practitioner, Loeb Fellow, and incoming president of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). Mr. Lewis spoke on the subject of *Diversity Now: Architecture's Quest for a Fair, Just, and Equitable Profession*. While pointing out that all people have much more in common with each other than that which separates us, Mr. Lewis cautioned the audience against a polite silence. He pointed out that the traditionally black colleges that supply our profession with 40% of its African-American practitioners are under-equipped to serve their students fully. Mr. Lewis enjoined us to mentor our young interns, to provide them the constructive criticism that they need and deserve to develop and grow into the challenges and the opportunities of the profession. Mr. Lewis, in his demeanor and message, fully embodies the idea that an open respectful dialogue is essential for growth in our society.

The following evening, I attended an alumni event with my husband, Bob, who is a graduate of Wabash College, one of the two remaining all-men's colleges in the United States. The honoree of this event was the president of the college, Patrick White, serving his second year at Wabash. President White shared with his audi-

ence, the essence of his inaugural address entitled *Wabash Men Always Talk*. He observed that Wabash students engage in lively discussions and share ideas. Moreover, the faculty, staff, and student body value and encourage diversity amongst their ranks and in their debates. (Whether one supports the notion that a single-gender college can be inherently diverse, it can be argued that young men and women alike

may learn more in an environment that removes the distraction of social posturing.) As published on its website, "Wabash College educates men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely." If you speak with any alumni or student, you

will hear that fostering an inquiring mind and encouraging a healthy debate are at the core of achieving this vision.

In 2008, the emerging theme for AIA Pittsburgh is the question: What are our policies on public engagement? It is a big question. Do we serve our community through our work alone or through advocacy and relationships with other organizations? I expect that the response to these questions are as diverse as our membership, and I urge our membership to remember the importance and value of a lively and respectful debate. I believe that, as a profession, we wish to see an appreciation for "quality design" raised within the social consciousness. If so, we must be prepared to engage in discussion of what "quality design" means. This dialogue may be with fellow architects, other building-industry professionals, our business associates, our governance bodies, or our friends and neighbors. Through a healthy discussion, we have the opportunity to learn and to be challenged to become better practitioners, better citizens, and a better organization. 





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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Volume 22, No. 3



## CHANGE IS NOW: INTEGRATED PROJECT DELIVERY

**Integrated Project Delivery (IPD)** is a project delivery approach that integrates people, systems, business structures and practices into a process that collaboratively harnesses the talents and insights of all participants to optimize project results, increase value to the owner, reduce waste, and maximize efficiency through all phases of design, fabrication, and construction.

IPD principles can be applied to a variety of contractual arrangements and IPD teams can include members well beyond the basic triad of owner, architect, and contractor. In all cases, integrated projects are uniquely distinguished by highly effective collaboration among the owner, the prime designer, and the prime constructor, commencing at early design and continuing through the project handover. To learn more about IPD, visit [www.aiacontractdocuments.org](http://www.aiacontractdocuments.org). 

## AIA CONTRACT DOCUMENTS: INTEGRATED PROJECT DELIVERY

The American Institute of Architects has launched two new types of Integrated Project Delivery Agreements. The new IPD contracts will provide two levels of design and construction integration. The first type is transitional, and, as such, may be a comfortable first step into integrated project delivery; and the second type introduces a fully integrated way of delivering a construction project.

The IPD Agreements support processes that build upon the expertise of architects, owners, and contractors and rely on transparency and full collaboration. The more transitional agreement being released by the AIA is intended as a comfortable first step into IPD, providing for early collaboration of architect and contractor in an arrangement modeled after existing construction manager agreements. The second type of agreement allows for complete sharing of risk and reward in a “one-for-all-and-all-for-one” approach. With this type of agreement, owner, architect, and construction manager work together from the beginning to design and construct the project with mutually agreed upon cost goals and target cost. Both types encourage the parties to implement Building Information Modeling (BIM) and other technologies to achieve efficiencies, increase collaboration, and maximize sharing. The new agreements are:

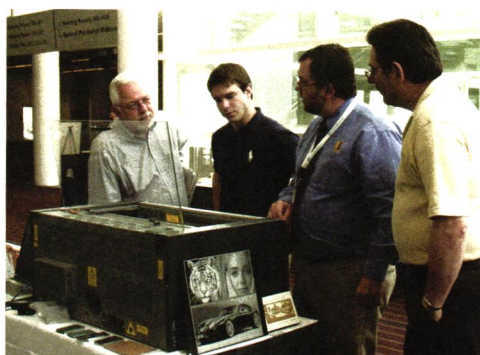
- **A195-2008** Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor for Integrated Project Delivery
- **A295-2008** General Conditions of the Contract for Integrated Project Delivery
- **B195-2008** Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect for Integrated Project Delivery
- **C195-2008** Standard Form Single Purpose Entity Agreement for Integrated Project Delivery 



## BUILD PITTSBURGH 2008



AIA Pittsburgh president Paula Maynes, AIA, introduces AIA Pennsylvania president Elmer Burger, AIA.



Sponsor Jeff Aichinger (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), of Epilog Laser, gives a demo to attendees.



Sponsors Michael Brunner and Touf Hassoun of CASE Technologies and Pete Murray of IES talk with attendee Domenic Corso of Flynn Construction and presenter Mark Dietrick, AIA of Burt Hill.



Grant Scott, AIA of KSBA, Douglas Berryman, AIA of Berryman Associates, Anne Swager, Hon. AIA, and Tom Briney, AIA of Perkins Eastman share a chance to talk.



Jamie White of LLI Engineering, Caroline Boyce, executive director of AIA Pennsylvania, and Chip Desmone, AIA of Desmone & Associates Architects.

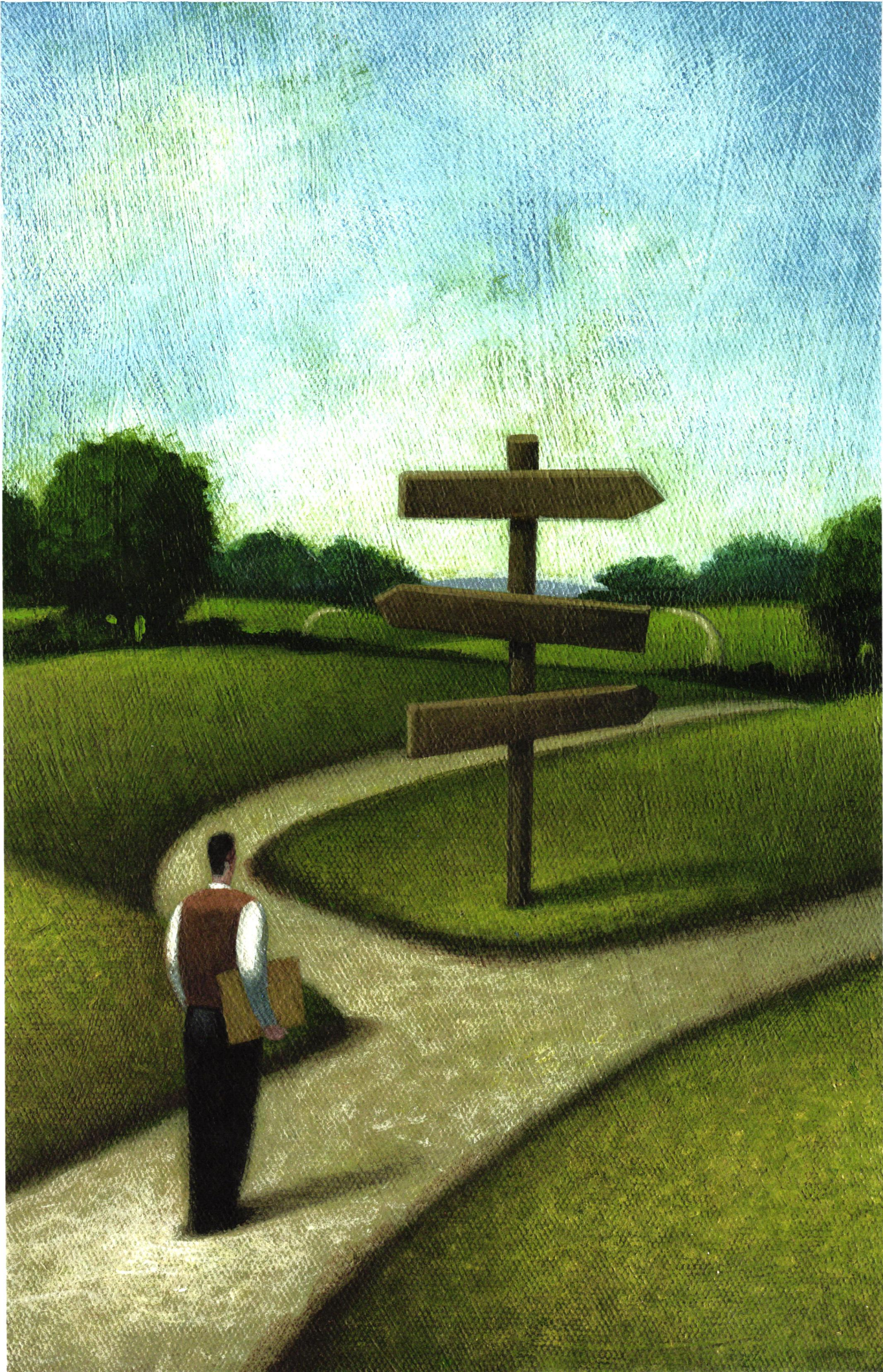


Attendees take a break for lunch.



Keynote speaker Steven Lewis, AIA, William Bates, AIA of Eat'nPark Hospitality Group, and Noel Kennard, AIA of The Design Alliance Architects.







# it's a wonderful life

After architecture, some professionals choose another path

BY JOHN ALTDORFER

**As the star of** some of the world's most beloved classic films, Jimmy Stewart enjoyed a big-screen career that spanned six decades. Yet, when he left his hometown of Indiana, PA, Stewart enrolled at Princeton University to study architecture. According to an online biography on the Jimmy Stewart Museum web site, the future actor proved good enough at his studies to earn a post-graduate scholarship to continue his pursuit in the field. But when a former college classmate invited Stewart to join a Cape Cod summer theater group, he left architecture behind to build an enduring and legendary Hollywood career.



Locally, more than a few architects have discovered their life's calling led them along a different path than their original course of study. For some, economic factors were the signpost that pointed them in an unforeseen direction. In other cases, a lifelong passion pulled them toward a new profession. Discover why a quartet of area architects put down their drawing pencils to design unique careers that rest on a solid foundation of architecture.



## TEARING DOWN WALLS

Eve Picker doesn't let boundaries stand in her way. As the owner of no wall productions inc. and an innovative developer of neglected and underused properties, she's created a series of unique living spaces in Downtown and around the city – despite a host of bankers who turned down her requests for loans. From her first job as an architect in her Australian homeland to her current role as a “thought leader” in her adopted home city of Pittsburgh, Picker continues to expand her frontiers. Yet, no matter how far she seems to move from her architectural foundation, Picker says there is a common building block.

“In my mind, it's all tied together,” she says. “I was always fascinated by cities. My degree in architecture taught me how to design buildings in isolation. But I was really interested in understanding how they worked in a three-dimensional way. I enrolled at Columbia University to learn about urban design, which probably shaped the way I think about development now.”

In Pittsburgh, her first professional stop was Urban Design Associates, a stint she calls “a rite of passage” for many local architects. Picking up some experience there, she also realized that her personal and career aspirations might come to a standstill if she didn't find new creative outlets.



“I found myself unhappy because architecture then wasn't – and probably isn't now – kind to women. I thought I would spend too much time doing a lot of drudgery for years before I was allowed to do anything interesting. I wanted more control. So I made the very difficult decision to leave architecture without really knowing what on earth I was going to do next.”

Coincidentally, as she was moving out of the profession, Picker was moving into the Friendship neighborhood in the city's East End. At the time, Friendship, as she describes it, was “on the verge of going either way.” Banding together with a group of neighbors interested in revitalizing the community, Picker found her new love.

“We started the Friendship Development Association, and I discovered development,” she says. “I fell in love with the process because I could make something happen from the beginning to end. Even if it was a small project, it was mine.”

As she was buying and renovating homes in the neighborhood, Picker worked for a time as an urban designer in the city's planning department – a role she calls part of her “wandering education.” There she gained an understanding of how the city worked, including the nuts and bolts of obtaining funds for development projects. That knowledge led to her next career step.

“After I left the department I was doing some consulting work when I discovered a building on First Avenue. It was eight stories tall. It had a hole in the roof. And when it rained, it went all the way through to the basement. But I couldn't begin the project right way because it took me a couple years to arrange the financing.”

One reason for the problems in putting finances in place was that Picker encountered resistance from the area's male-dominated banking establishment.

“It took a couple of women bankers to get me started,” she says. “That's the only reason I'm in business today.”



930 Penn Avenue, photo by no wall productions, inc.





After more than a decade of success of reinvigorating Downtown Pittsburgh with unique loft projects, Picker took yet another new career step as publisher of an online site that promotes the virtues of Pittsburgh.

“I started Pop City because I was frustrated by the inability of the city to talk about itself in a positive manner,” she says. “Last year, I started CityLive!, which give people the opportunity to congregate and discuss issues that are important to the city.”

While she admits to taking a break from development for now, Picker doesn’t rule out a return.

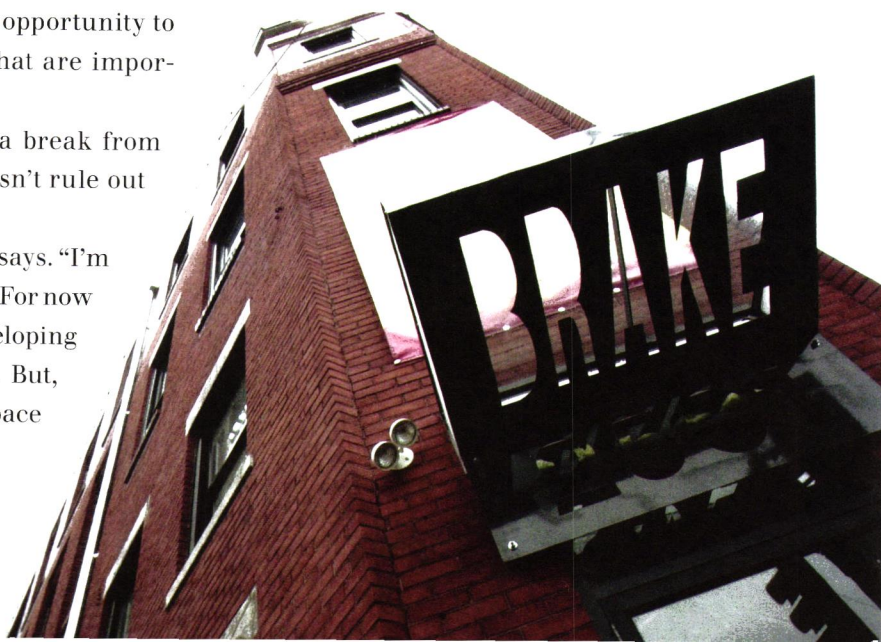
“Anything could happen,” she says. “I’m having a real blast with CityLive!. For now it feels more relevant than developing another loft. I love development. But, for now, I’m just making some space to see what will happen next.”

I fell in love with the development process because I could make something happen from the beginning to end. Even if it was a small project, it was mine. EVE PICKER

Opposite: Eve Picker, photo by John Altdorfer

Above: Bruno Building interior, photo by David Aschkenas

Below: Brake House Building, photo by no wall productions, inc.





## A COMMON THREAD

Jessica O'Brien likes to say that she "retired" from architecture when she started having babies. And she'll quickly add with a laugh that her husband prefers to call the hiatus from the drawing board an extended sabbatical. However you look at it, O'Brien's life is abuzz with a new kind of activity that mixes architecture, motherhood, and a lifetime pursuit.

Along with her mother and two sisters, O'Brien operates the Beehive NeedleArts store in Mt. Lebanon. Open since October 2007, the business is a mecca for local needlepoint enthusiasts in search of creative and unique designs – a niche market that O'Brien stitched up herself.

"Needlepoint's always been a passion in my life," she says. "But for years I was always looking for something different to work on. I would get an idea but could never find a canvas that matched what I saw in my mind. So I started designing my own patterns."

Today, O'Brien creates all the store's custom work, an activity that puts her architectural talent to good use. Recently, she designed



a purse based on the home of a client's mother. She also creates belts, Christmas stockings and other handmade items. Not surprisingly, she can follow this thread back to her days at Penn State University, where she earned a degree in architecture.

"Recently, I was talking to a roommate, who now teaches architecture there," says O'Brien. "She pointed out that needlepoint is a fiber art and how I always used fiber arts in my architecture projects in school. So it's been a part of what I do for a long time."

Despite the lifelong connection to the art, O'Brien claims that the transition to needlepoint from architecture wasn't defined by any one particular moment.

"I loved architecture school," says O'Brien, who also studied at McGill University in Montreal. "I worked at Burt Hill in Pittsburgh for five or six years and enjoyed every moment. But when my first son was born I realized that I wanted to spend more time with my children while they were young. Opening the store was a way to make the different parts of my life work together."

With her two-year-old daughter often napping in the store's backroom, O'Brien helps customers select patterns that belie needlepoint's reputation as an antiquated pastime.

"Needlepoint really is a high-end art," she says. "There are so many more fabrics, colors, and designs to work with. This is a fashion forward activity. It's not just for your granny in her rocking chair."



Jessica O'Brien, photo by John Altdorfer





## BETTER COMMUNITIES THROUGH DESIGN

Architects have roles to play beyond their everyday jobs. That's the message that Anne-Marie Lubenau, AIA wants to deliver. As president and CEO of the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh (CDCP), she believes that architects can help educate the public on the role design plays in creating better communities.

"I'm going to get up on my soapbox for a moment," she says. "I think it's critical that as architects we get involved in helping people and communities become better consumers of architectural resources and engaging them in the process."

During 10 years of traditional practice with Landmark Associates and Perkins Eastman, Lubenau was involved with a combination of residential planning and design, building rehabs, and historic renovations, not to mention her fair share of work with community-based, non-profit organizations and social services. In addition, she taught classes at the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation and developed and taught classes aimed at getting school children interested in architecture.

"I've always had a strong interest in connecting people with architecture and its value in the community," says Lubenau, a CMU grad. "Through my work, teaching, and consulting, I realized that I was a little more interested in doing something broader and working with people."

As a way to expand her reach beyond the region's architectural circles, Lubenau volunteered to sit on the CDCP board of directors. A few years later, she joined the organization full-time as its associate director. Three years later, she stepped into the top position. After 10 years, she knows the move was the right one.

"It was a big decision," she says. "But I'm glad I made it. I didn't want to reach a point 20 years later and say, 'What if?'"

Leaving the profession didn't mean that she abandoned the skills she developed as an architect. As the CDCP's president, Lubenau says her



My experience of being on the other side of the table helps me because a lot of the work we do here at CDCP is as a service translator. We help people in the community understand what architects do and how to negotiate the process of planning and designing. ANNE-MARIE LUBENAU, AIA



Above: Anne-Marie Lubenau, AIA, photo by John Altdorfer  
Right: CDCP's Pedal Pittsburgh





Seeing buildings materialize out of the ground, that made me happy. I didn't get that satisfaction from drawing designs. So around 1983, I switched my architect hat for a construction hat. JEFF ANDERSON

background is integral in helping her execute the organization's mission.

"My experience of being on the other side of the table helps me here because a lot of the work we do here is as a service translator," she says. "We help people in the community understand what architects do and how to negotiate the process of planning and designing."

As head of the CDCP, Lubenau appreciates the opportunity to influence a broader number of projects in the community, but she admits that there are smaller joys of her former life she misses.

"I love the diversity of what I do now," she says. "But I do miss the design and drawing part of architecture. But, by the time I left I really wasn't doing much of that. I'm so involved in more projects now."

But let's get back to that soapbox where we started.

"Sometimes, I don't think that the opportunities to work within the community are promoted as much as they could be in architecture schools," says Lubenau. "I know there are architects who have the skills and desire to help people in the community get involved in the conversation about the role of design. It's important that we do that."

## BRIDGING THE GAP

No one needs to tell Jeff Anderson that being an architect is a hard job. After graduating from the University of Cincinnati, he started working almost from the day he left college. Though he enjoyed the design side of his job, Anderson discovered a different satisfaction in supervising the construction of buildings – and learned that he could provide a vital link to help designers and contractors work together to better satisfy the client.

"Working in the field really whetted my appetite for what I do now," says Anderson, vice president of construction for Mistick Construction. "It was seeing buildings materialize out of the ground that made me happy. I didn't get that satisfaction from drawing designs. So around



1983, I switched my architect hat for a construction hat.”

Fortunately, a shift in the way Mistick was doing business made the transition a smooth one for Anderson, who started at the company as an in-house architect. In the role he’s occupied for the past 25 years, Anderson relishes being the conduit that allows designers and builders exchange ideas.

“I really enjoy helping people on both sides organize and optimize what they do,” he says. “Especially since every new job comes with a new set of challenges in the form of satisfying the customer’s requirements, meeting code restrictions, working within budgets, and other issues. That makes coming to work each day worthwhile.”


When asked about his “unusual” career path, Anderson claims his move wasn’t that much out of the ordinary. He points to another Mistick architect who works as a project manager and explains that architects of the past also were in the construction business. Still, he finds that his knowledge of both sides of the process provides him with not-so typical insight.

“Architects will tell you they’ve never seen a perfect building,” he says. “And builders will tell you that they’ve never seen a perfect drawing.



But having worked on both sides, I know how to get everyone involved with a project focused on the same goal – pleasing the client. When that happens, you often get second and third jobs from the customer.”

Along with satisfying the customer, Anderson says that a good working relationship can help a builder advise a designer on a project’s constructability and durability, how systems will age and other pertinent issues.

“It’s a constant intellectual challenge,” he says. “An architect has to know so much about a lot of things. That’s a big responsibility. My job is to help designers be aware of how even a small change can make a big difference in a project. One stone can cause a lot of ripples in a pond.” 

*John Altdorfer is a writer/photographer who lives in Pittsburgh.*

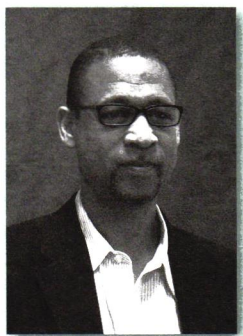


Top: Sunrise of Upper St. Clair, Above: Fairfield Apartments, East Liberty.



# diversity now:

Architecture's Quest for a Fair, Just, and Equitable Profession



**Build Pittsburgh's** Keynote Address featured Steven Lewis, AIA, NOMA. In his speech, he addressed the often-controversial topic of diversity, with the focus on how to create a more diverse profession of architecture. Printed here is an excerpt of his speech, with reactions from those he addressed.

Why are we having a conversation on diversity in 2008? Because there are issues. Historically, architecture is the poster child, and took great pride, in being characterized as the white gentleman's profession. It was created, in a sense, to provide an avenue to a particular part of our population to do particular things and be empowered in certain ways and didn't imagine itself growing to what it is today.

The changing nature of the profession is a reason we're having the conversation today. There is a business case, and the AIA is a symbol for pushing diversity forward for the business case. We're in an ever increasing global economy, and clients, here and abroad, are looking more diverse by the day, and are going to be looking for firms to hire who reflect their makeup and composition.

We need to view the glass as half full in the context of architecture. Along with this (diversity in the field) comes a richness, a richness of ideas, cultural ideas, cultural identity as it might be expressed through architecture and design, a richness of thought, or culture, and of food. Potlucks! I had an office that looked like the UN, and every week we had a potluck, and that was one of the best parts of the practice.

How does a group of largely white males get into this subject of diversity? What can you do? Make it personal. Make diversity personal. There's no greater feeling of satisfaction and gratification that I ever experienced, then being part of uplifting someone or some group that has been disenfranchised or under represented.... whatever comes before you and catches your attention, at that moment of choice, if you choose to jump into that abyss, I believe that the abyss is a warm and fuzzy place.

We don't have the answers to all the questions; we're just trying to figure it out like everybody else. That's a great part of this discussion – it really brings a familiarity among us as people, with each other, that we are so much a like, and so much more alike than we are different.



### PAULA MAYNES, AIA

*Maynes Associates Architects, LLC*

*AIA Pittsburgh President*

Steve Lewis is an engaging and articulate fellow professional. He calls upon us to recognize that minority practitioners are motivated by the same goals and aspirations as any architect, to have the opportunity to create and contribute to our communities. He simply advocates that we be inclusive: by challenging and mentoring minority interns, by observing the dynamic and substantive work of minority architects, and by joining the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) where all are welcome as members. Mr. Lewis reminds us of how very much we can choose to share with each other.

### WILLIAM BATES, AIA

*Eat'nPark Hospitality Group, Inc.*

His [Lewis] remarks and insights were helpful in highlighting the big issues as well as the subtle points of professional discrimination. My observations of the Pittsburgh architectural community since the mid 1970s leads me to believe that we have made strides in diversity during those 30+ years but still have a long way to go toward a more representative professional demographic. I have seen a change in the number of women in the chapter and hope that begins to happen with minorities. The minority architect still has an uphill climb toward winning respect and equity in practice. This is somewhat due to the whole environment in which we work starting with employers, contractors, clients, and the community. This is a subject deserving of more sincere discussion and a concerted effort to foster a more diverse chapter and profession.

Many of the minority architects I've spoken to feel a sense of isolation even if they attend an AIA event. We need to invite minorities to AIA meetings and introduce them to our organization, its members, and associates. We need to encourage our member firms to provide well-rounded learning opportunities for summer minority students and IDP interns. Over the past few years Art Sheffield, Assoc. AIA, and I have hosted regular meet and greet gatherings for minority design professionals. The high attendance suggests an opportunity for us to build stronger ties within the profession. We have been talking about the formulation of a Pittsburgh NOMA Chapter, however I believe the AIA must stay involved to make change happen.

### KENNETH LEE, AIA

*MacLachlan Cornelius & Filoni, Inc.*

To me, as a baby boomer Asian American, his message was especially relevant. I have come to believe few people can ever understand a minority architect's experiences about practicing and being accepted in our field. Steven Lewis conveyed similar experiences to what I have known. In some ways this message is somewhat a reflection of our presidential campaign with Barack Obama and his message to unify our country.

Ultimately the most encouragement for me was not only his message, but the positive reaction from his audience.

### STEPHEN QUICK, FAIA

*Perkins Eastman*


The topic was very appropriate for Pittsburgh, particularly at this time. We have not met the challenge of diversity and inclusion as well as other cities, largely because we have difficulties attracting minority professionals and, once they are here, retaining them for any length of time. As a result, we have a dearth of minority professionals in Pittsburgh and this has a direct impact on our economic development and our role as a regional center. Cities which have opened their arms and embraced diversity have found that a diverse population increases opportunities for everyone, not just minorities.

AIA Pittsburgh recognizes this is a major issue for our members and, along with the legal and medical professions, helped to found the new Western Pennsylvania Diversity Initiative (WPDI), whose purpose is to help employers recruit minority professionals to the Pittsburgh region and provide them with networking opportunities so they become long-term members of this community. I would hope the architectural community is one of this region's leaders working towards a more open and inclusive future.

### DAN SCHNEIDER, AIA

*Boulder Associates*

I had always thought of "diversity" on a broader scale. The future of architecture is a global market, and to have a global staff just makes sense. I've been working within my firm to try to bring in more international/foreign architects and designers, to bring a more global viewpoint. But it's a struggle – the money, effort, and time involved to be able to offer employees citizenship – a struggle to open others' eyes to the value of international designers.

After hearing Steven Lewis speak, I've been thinking about diversity on a more local scale, and trying to figure out what I can do. I passed the list of websites (that Lewis provided) on to members of my firm, to try to pass on that knowledge, let others know that those organizations exist as a resource. 



## BREAKING

## FROM THE FIRMS

**Burt Hill** is working on a \$29 million project with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, VA. The firm, with extensive experience in the design of college and university buildings, will be designing a new Academic and Student Affairs Building. The building will integrate classrooms with dining facilities in an environmentally responsible fashion, as the building anticipates a LEED Silver certification. The firm has also been recently chosen to design the new student centers at Armstrong Atlantic State University (Georgia) and Carthage College (Wisconsin).

#### JSA Architecture Planning Engineering Interior Design

has been selected by American Eagle Outfitters to provide architectural services for their American Eagle Outfitters and Aerie retail stores at various locations within the United States and Canada. JSA project team includes **Mark Lighthall, AIA**, team leader; Juan Duque, project manager and Mark Cunningham. JSA has also been selected by the Michael Baker Corporation of Moon Township to provide interior design services for three new Armed Forces Reserve Centers for the US Army Corps of Engineers to be located at Camp Bullis, TX, Fort Lewis, WA, and Grand Prairie, TX. JSA project team includes Anita Myers, director of Interior Design and Natalie Buches.

**lee CALISTI architecture + design** is working on a concept design and feasibility study for the Discovery and Interactive Science Center in Greensburg, PA. The Center's (DISC) mission is to be a



Discovery and Interactive Science Center

hands-on science center with permanent, interactive exhibits. The project is a 15,750 sf adaptive reuse of a 1928 bank building.

The administration and student leaders of Valdosta State University, located in Southern Georgia, have chosen **WTW Architects** and Ellis Rickett & Associates to develop a signature building as the focal welcome and front door for visitors and students on the campus. The design intent is to not only beautify the campus entry adjacent to the Interstate, but also to bring together student services to a centralized location as the new Student Center. Construction of the new \$26 million, 120,000 sf student center should begin this summer and be completed by the fall of 2009, replacing the original student center which was constructed in 1968.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

**Design 3 Architecture** has elected new officers. **William**



Wright

**O'Brien Herr Architects**. He joined the firm in 1997 and served as Project Manager until he moved to Pittsburgh in 2005. In 2006 he opened the Pittsburgh satellite office. In his role as Managing Director, Loren oversees all activities of the Pittsburgh office including operations and marketing. A graduate of the University of Florida, he earned a Masters degree in Architecture in 1997 and Bachelor of Design degree in 1994.

**Snyder, AIA** was elected president, **Michael Moyta, AIA** was elected vice president, and **Anthony Scruppi, AIA** was elected secretary. Don Lightner, who served as president of the firm from its inception in 1982 thru 2007, was elected treasurer.

Pieper O'Brien Herr Architects is pleased to announce the promotion of **Loren C. Wright, AIA** to senior associate. Loren serves as the Managing Director of the Pittsburgh office of Pieper

## KUDOS

The AIA Housing and Custom Residential Knowledge Community has announced Boston's Macallen Building Condominiums as the recipient of the 2008 AIA Housing Award for Multifamily Housing. The AIA Housing Award was established to empha-



Boston's Macallen Building Condominiums





Lee Calisti's private residence. photo by Craig Thompson

size the importance of good housing as a necessity of life, a sanctuary for the human spirit and a valuable national resource. Pappas Properties commissioned **Burt Hill** as architect of record and Office dA as design architect for the design of the 11-story, tiered structure, which features 140

condominium units ranging from studio to three-bedroom layouts. The Macallen Building incorporates the principles of sustainable design and will be the first LEED Gold rated residential building in Boston.

**lee CALISTI architecture + design** has been featured

in the March 2008 issue of *Housetrends Magazine* for design of Calisti's own private residence. The project has also won an Award of Merit from the 2007 Associated Builders and Contractors of Western PA Excellence in Construction competition.

**L. Robert Kimball & Associates** continues to be named among the nation's top engineering companies. The *Engineering News Record (ENR)* lists Kimball as number 166 for 2008 among the Top 500 Design Firms, up 15 spots from 2007. The company was also ranked 13 on the Top 20 Telecommunications Firms List. *Engineering News-Record*, published weekly by The McGraw-Hill Companies, reports on the engineering, architecture, and construction industries. Firms are ranked according to revenue for design services performed in 2007.



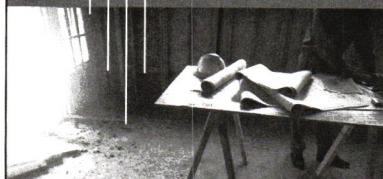
Carnegie Library Squirrel Hill, photo by Massery Photography, Inc.

**Lubetz Architect's** Carnegie Library Squirrel Hill has been selected for inclusion in the 183<sup>rd</sup> Annual Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary Art, "a forum of innovation that brings together the finest artists and architects in the country". The exhibition is at the National Academy Museum, New York City from May 29<sup>th</sup> through September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

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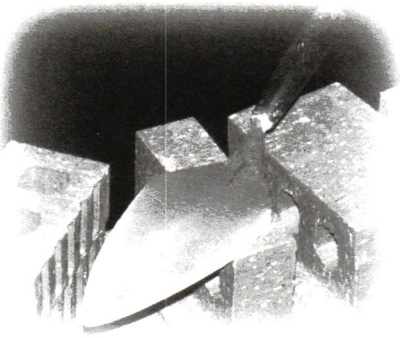
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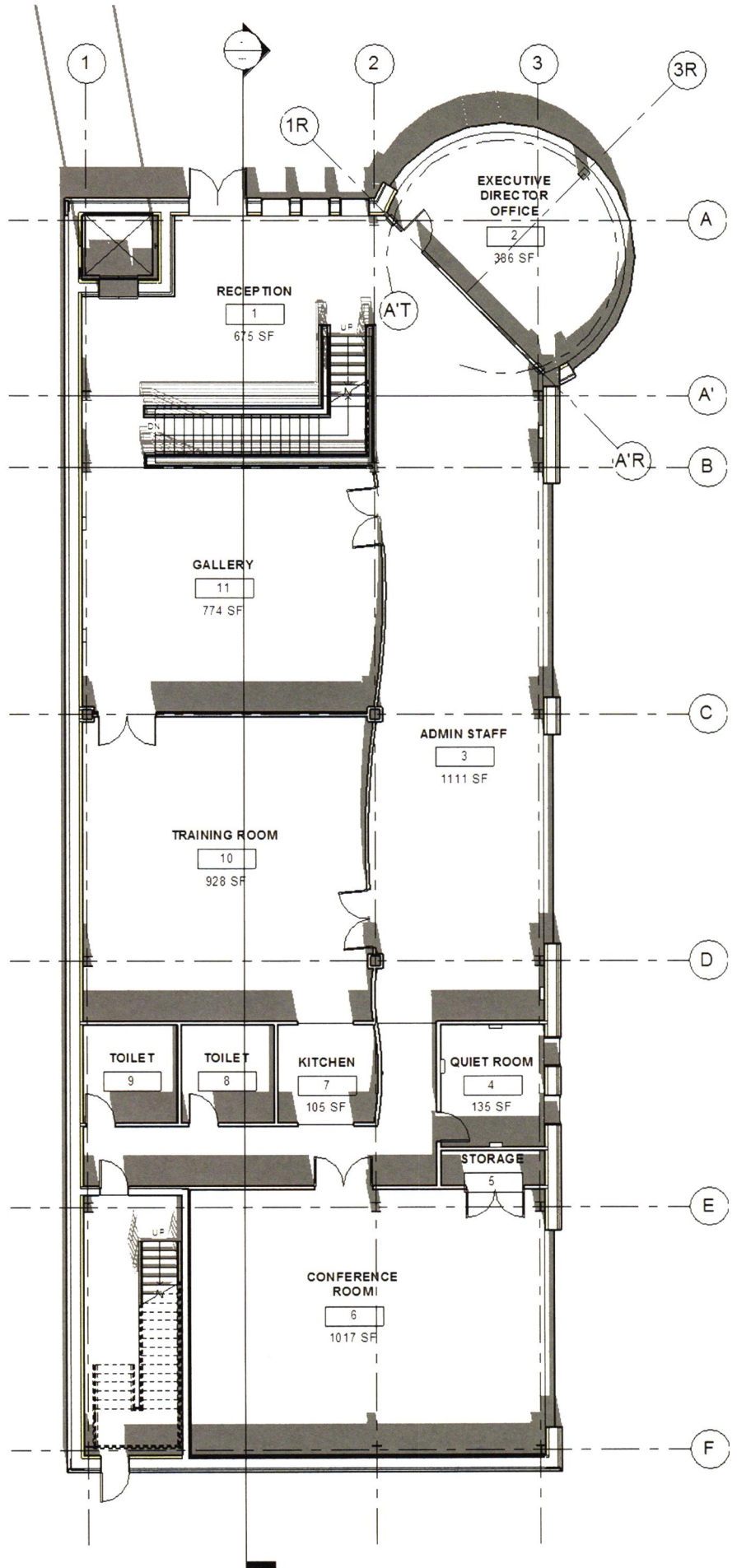
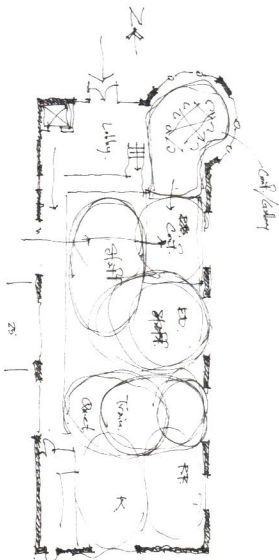
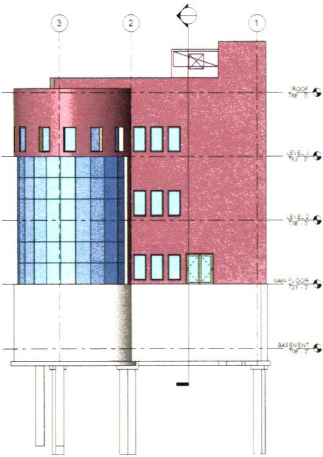
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MAIN PLAN





# the aia dream office

Imagining a future home for AIA Pittsburgh

BY BECKY SPEVACK

**While we work** with architects every day of the week, rarely do we experience first-hand what it is like to interact with the profession from the client's viewpoint. Build Pittsburgh created a situation in which the staff of AIA Pittsburgh played that role.



Michael Warren, Assoc. AIA and Mark Dietrich, AIA have found themselves in the center of AIA Pittsburgh's push to educate architects about BIM (Build-

ing Information Modeling), presenting at Build Pittsburgh 2007, and again in 2008. Along with sessions at Build Pittsburgh, the chapter has reported on BIM in *Columns* (June 2007), following this new trend and its impact on the practice of architecture, both regionally and on a broader scale. This year the focus at Build Pittsburgh was a three-part interactive workshop, starting with our daydream. We met with Warren and Dietrich on a sunny afternoon in early April to identify what we thought of as the ultimate office space.

Opposite: Various sketches and renderings from the Build Pittsburgh session.





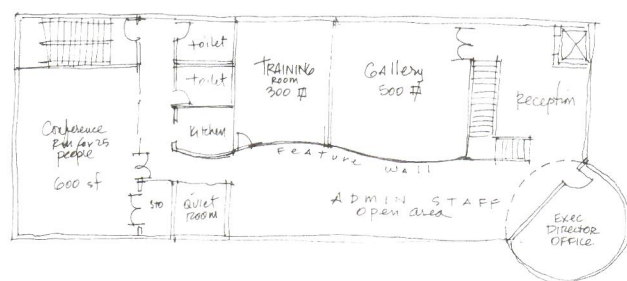
A few weeks later at Build Pittsburgh teams of architects would collaborate to interpret our needs into sketches and digital renderings. Once the basic renderings were created, issues such as materials, budgeting, energy analysis, and daylight simulation modeling would be explored over the course of the day.

The laundry list wasn't short. We were given the task of defining what our perfect workspace would be, and we wanted to make sure we didn't miss any little detail. Rarely does the opportunity present itself to start from scratch and day-dream the ideal, but as the stepping-stone for the Build Pittsburgh interactive BIM sessions, the AIA Pittsburgh staff discussed the desired features to be incorporated into the design for a "Center for Excellence in Design".

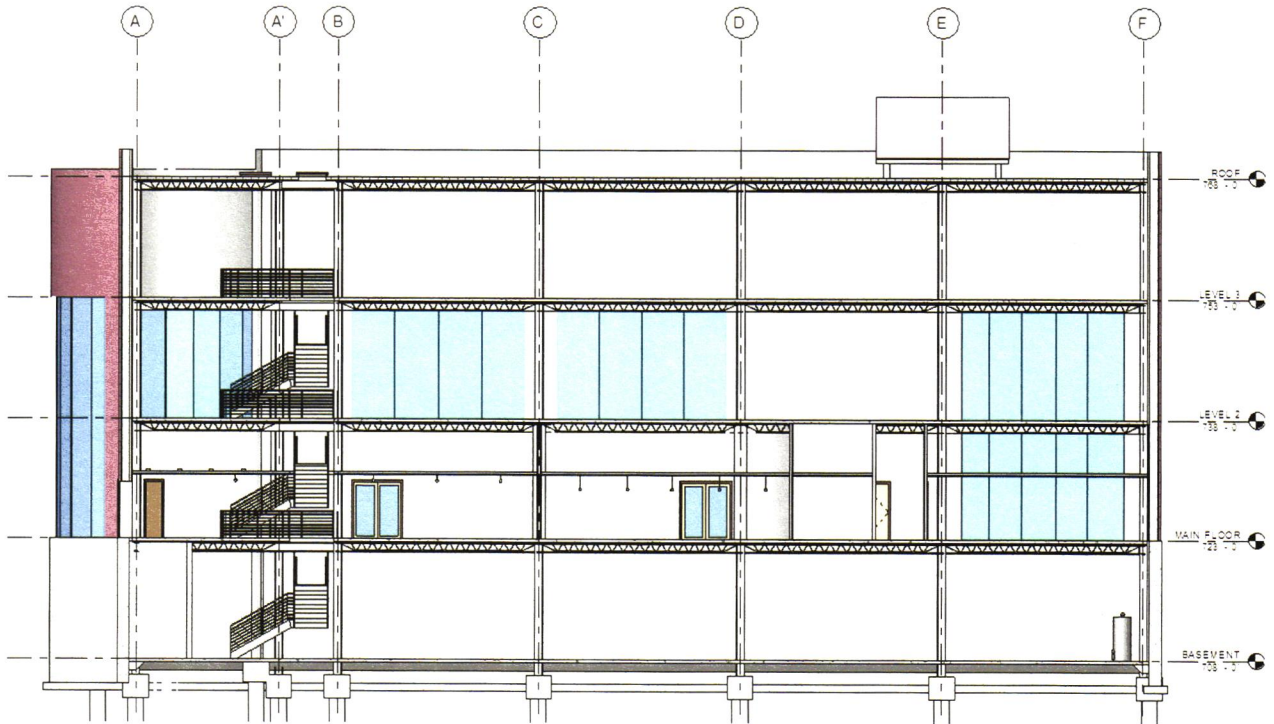
The Center for Excellence in Design is an idea that has been slowly building among AIA Pittsburgh and like-minded organizations. Functioning not only as our office space, it would be

a one-stop design center for Pittsburgh, focusing on quality details and the effect each new element would have on the fabric of the city. This public space would serve as a resource to help escalate the value of design and to further the goal of creating livable communities within our region. It would provide a common meeting space for all issues pertaining to design. Our wish list addressed not only our needs, but also the needs of a building that would house such a variety of organizations and tenants.


On the day of the workshop, the classroom was full of design professionals, groups of three







to five architects around a table covered with bum wad and a laptop. Witnessing this gathering of minds, eager to learn and think collaboratively, made the session feel like a success, even before the first idea was down on paper. Among the glow of the projector and group laptops, the teams were given some fundamental information that would be built upon throughout. The basic footprint of a proposed building – created by Warren for this particular exercise – was introduced, to help ensure that all of the groups worked within a set framework. They were also introduced to the AIA Pittsburgh wish list. As the brainstorming began, the room filled with a gurgling of ideas. The energy level remained high as the lessons progressed. Warren, Dietrich, and a smattering of architects who were on hand to answer questions and assist with any problems circled around the tables.

At the end of the day many were tired, but the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Looking at the layout, and taking a walk-through in my mind, I can only wait with bated breathe for our new AIA office. A girl can dream, can't she! 

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- Good daylight
- Natural ventilation
- Use of recycled materials
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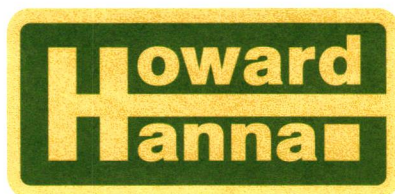
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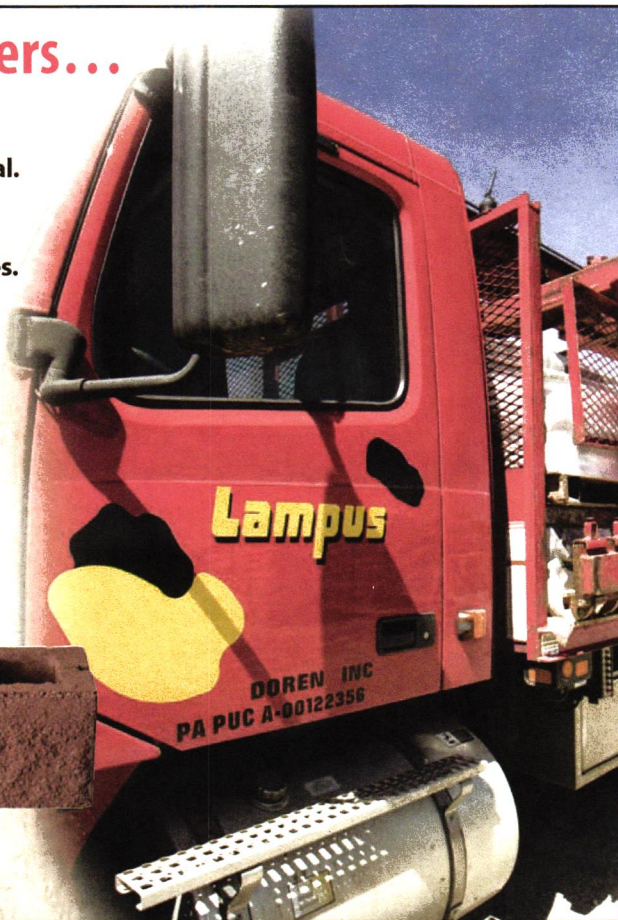
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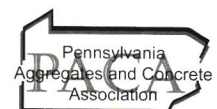
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