

# THANK YOU AIAspire 2019 ATTENDEES

**Aaron Foster**

Judson University

**Shawn Bandel**

Judson University

**Anna Wightman**

Judson University

**Afnan Omar Alamoudi**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Ashley Boduch**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Derrick McCormick**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Anthony Piazza**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Enru Zhou**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

**Nese Gulay Altintas**

Illinois Institute of Technology

**Erin Conti**

Illinois Institute of Technology

**Muntaha Imteyaz**

Illinois Institute of Technology

**Rachel Wiesbrock**

Illinois Institute of Technology

**Fernando Lopez**

University of Illinois at Chicago

**Michael Manalansan**

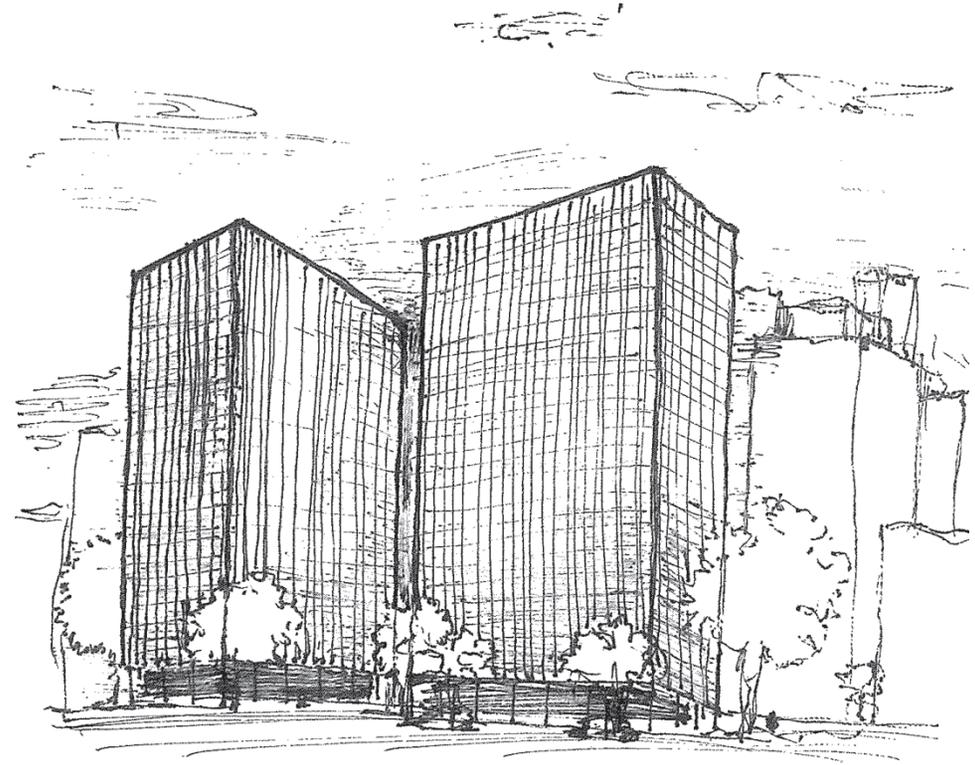
University of Illinois at Chicago

**Miguel Sevilla**

University of Illinois at Chicago



**AIA**  
Illinois



# AIAspire

**AIA Illinois Student Leadership Conference**

**September 6-7, 2019**

**THANK YOU**



**SMITHGROUP**

# WELCOME YOUNG LEADERS



## From AIA Illinois' President

Continuing the AIA Illinois tradition of outreach and leadership development, **AIAspire** was created exclusively for AIAS members who aspire to become future leaders of the profession. This event was designed to provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth to the next generation of architects, and you have been selected from applicants from architectural programs throughout Illinois to participate in the third year of this event.

The goal of the program is to enhance your understanding of the profession (including both traditional and non-traditional career paths) through presentations, small group and one-on-one interaction with industry leading professionals and peers and offer opportunities to expand your personal network of contacts. Our hope is to groom future leaders in the field of architecture and the AIA.

We appreciate the contributions of the organizing committee, moderators, presenters and sponsors without whom this event would not be possible.

Thank you for joining us and we trust that you will find **AIAspire** a valuable step in your journey to a rewarding career in architecture.

**Terence A. Moeller, AIA**  
2019 President, AIA Illinois

# THE AGENDA

## MEETING LOCATIONS

**Friday:** Offices of SmithGroup - 35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 900, Chicago, IL  
**Saturday: (morning)** Hyatt Hospitality Room - 150 North Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL

## Friday, September 6

### Noon – 1:30 p.m. **Opening Luncheon** and OPENING SPEAKER

**Theme:** Welcome (Terry Moeller, AIA IL President)  
Introductions (Leanne Meyer-Smith, AIA IL Director)  
**Presenters:** Opening Speaker (Fred Brandstrader) - Ciere Boatwright, Vice-President, Real Estate & Inclusion - Center for Neighborhood Initiatives, Inc.

### 1:30 – 1:45 p.m. **Break**

### 1:45 – 2:45 p.m. **Session 1 / Career Paths and Planning Yours**

**Theme:** Traditional and non-traditional career possibilities  
**Moderator:** Fred Brandstrader, AIA IL Director  
**Outline:** Overview of panelists' career paths followed by panelist & student discussion

### 2:45 – 3:30 p.m. **Break and Hotel Check In**

### 3:30 – 3:45 p.m. **Activity / SmithGroup Tour and Virtual Reality Demo**

**Presenters:** Charlotte Carlton, Raquel Guzman Geara, Holly Harris, Arash Irani, Molly Rademacher  
**Outline:** Tour SmithGroup's agile work environment and see how they utilize virtual reality to elevate projects.

### 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. **Session 2 / Portfolio Review and Interview Tips**

**Presenters:** Panel of Design Professionals  
**Moderator:** Molly Rademacher for the Portfolio Review  
**Outline:** Speed dating portfolio review and interview / cover letter/ resume tips.

### 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. **Activity / Networking Workshop**

**Presenter:** Rana Lee  
**Outline:** Learn how to confidently navigate networking situations.

### 5:45 – 6:45 p.m. **AIA Chicago Office for a meet and greet with AIA Illinois and AIA Chicago Leadership**

### 7:00 p.m. **Walk to DINNER at Broken English, 75 East Lake Street**

# THE AGENDA

**Saturday, September 7**

## **8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Breakfast Session / Hyatt Hospitality Room**

**Theme:** Why Architecture is Fun

**Keynote:** Peter Exley FAIA Founder, Architecture Is Fun, Inc. Adjunct Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, National AIA President-elect

**Outline:** For twenty-five years, clients and communities have come to Architecture Is Fun for collaboration, creativity, participation and passion. They are an incubator for architects, educators, artists, and designers and reach out to neighborhoods and organizations who value engaging, playful and meaningful experiences in public space. They like good ideas and having fun. *Breaks as needed during sessions (not scheduled)*

## **9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Session 3 / Stand Up + Stand Out!**

**Presenters:** Jeremy Gentile + Omar Garcia

**Outline:** In this two part session, students will gain knowledge in leveraging their networks and showcasing their unique generational skills in order to allow themselves to stand out from the crowd and step up to the challenges that lay ahead in leadership roles. Knitting personal promotion, leadership development, and event planning together, this session will leave students with a toolkit for success in both their chapters and careers. After an introductory lecture, students will work in groups to begin applying new skills in networking, marketing, and planning in a workshop allowing them to brainstorm new events and their potential implementation in the year ahead.

## **10:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Activity / Power Construction Site Tour (take the CTA to-from)**

Tour is at Fulton Ogden Office Building, 1375 W. Fulton Market. The project is a 14 story, 380,000SF office building with first floor lobby and retail space, 2 floors parking and 11 floors of office space. By Sept., project will be topped out with approx. 25% of the curtain-wall installed. The developer has requested that those touring sign a waiver of liability.

## **12:15 – 1:00 p.m. Activity / Riverwalk Tour**

**Tour Guide:** Jeremy Gentile

**Outline:** Attendees will head down to the south bank of the Chicago River and explore the pedestrian-friendly Chicago Riverwalk, which stretches from Lake Shore Drive to Lake Street, and examine the notable architecture along the way.

## **1:00 – 2 p.m. Closing Lunch Followed by Chicago Architecture Center Tour**

**Theme:** Feedback Process

**Outline:** Recognitions, closing thoughts, take-aways

*2019 AIA Illinois Student Emerging Professional Summit September 7-8, 2019*

## **3:30 p.m. Move into the EP Summit (optional)**

# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## **Session 1 / Career Paths**

Moderator – Fred Brandstrader

Panelists: Victor Garcia, Linda Kozloski, Gracia Maria Shiffrin, Jonathan Fine

The practice of architecture is much more than “making blueprints” and the profession is engaged in activities beyond building design. Many professionals use critical thinking/problem-solving and awareness of built environment components to pursue a variety of careers. In prepping for this panel, a past panelist couldn’t have better described the essence of what this discussion is all about...“Not everyone who gets a degree in architecture obtains a license, and not everyone who has a degree in architecture and becomes licensed works steadily in the profession for all or most of their career.”

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Explore career options for someone with an architecture degree and discuss when is the ‘right’ time to switch out of a traditional architecture career path;
- Determine what skills and tools developed from architecture curricula can translate to non- traditional architecture careers;
- Discuss how professional organizations; like AIA, ULI, USGBC, etc. help expand career development;
- Understand the importance of mentoring, volunteering and being a Citizen Architect in your community.

## **Session 2 / Portfolio Review and Interview Tips**

Moderator – Molly Rademacher

Panel Participants: Portfolio Review Participants:

- Jeremy Gentile, Assoc. AIA – Partners by Design
- Molly Rademacher, Assoc. AIA – SmithGroup, Architect I
- Shawn Waddell – SmithGroup, Structural Engineer I
- Valerie Nawojski, AIA, RID, NCIDQ – SmithGroup, Architect, Interior Designer
- Travis Frangie – SmithGroup, Marketing
- Matt Dumich, FAIA – SmithGroup, Principal, Workplace Studio Leader
- Deborah Nemeth, IIDA, RID, LEED AP BD+C – SmithGroup, Associate, Interior Design
- Raquel Guzman Geara, RA, LEED GA- SmithGroup, Architect
- Oswaldo ‘Oz’ Ortega, AIA LEED AP – Gensler, Project Architect
- Alan Barker, AIA, LEED AP – Lamar Johnson Collaborative, Associate Principal

# SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

## *Session 2 - Continued*

Architectural graduates and young architects have to present themselves and their work in the best way possible to land that first internship or full time job. What do firms look for in my portfolio? How can I improve my presentation? This session will examine these questions and more. The panelists will offer their perspective on these topics and engage attendees in small group breakouts that will allow a direct question and answer session. Sample comments from student portfolio reviews will be presented for discussion.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Understand the purpose of the portfolio
- Be able to improve upon or develop a professional and impressive portfolio
- Understand how to use your portfolio to explain your strengths
- Describe pertinent information to include in my portfolio

## **Session 3 / Stand Up + Stand Out!**

Moderators: Jeremy Gentile and Omar Garcia

In this two part session, students will gain knowledge in leveraging their networks and showcasing their unique generational skills in order to allow themselves to stand out from the crowd and step up to the challenges that lay ahead in leadership roles.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Attendees will be able to knit personal promotion, leadership development, and event planning together.
- Attendees will be able to utilize a toolkit for success in both their chapters and careers.
- Attendees will be able to apply new skills in a networking, marketing, and planning in a workshop allowing them to brainstorm new events.
- Attendees will be able to implement these new skills in the year ahead.

# KEYNOTE PRESENTER



**Peter Exley, 2020 First Vice President/2021 President-elect of the AIA**  
*Co-Founder, Architecture Is Fun*

**P**eter Exley has established an internationally recognized practice of architecture for children, families, and communities, elevating the standards of design for learning and play environments. He is the co-founder of Architecture Is Fun, a Chicago-based architecture, design, and consulting firm, recipient of the 2017 AIA Chicago Firm of the Year. Dedicated to helping the next generation of architects, Peter has also been an adjunct professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) for more than 25 years. Peter has served the AIA in several roles, including president of AIA Chicago, Illinois regional representative to the Strategic Council, chair of the Public Outreach Committee, and as a liaison to the Young Architects Forum. He was recently elected as the 2020 First Vice President/2021 President-elect of the AIA.

# KEYNOTE PRESENTER

## Ciere Boatright

*Vice President, Real Estate and Inclusion for Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives, Inc.*

Since joining Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI) in 2013, Ciere has managed the planning and development of new projects, including Pullman Park, the 180-acre mixed use site at 111th Street and I-94, where CNI has coordinated over \$350 million of new investment and created nearly 1,500 new jobs. In addition to planning and development, Ciere has been instrumental in leading CNI's community engagement process. By forging positive relationships with community groups, community members, she fostered widespread support for: Artspace, an innovative new work/live space now under construction; the new Whole Foods Distribution Center in Pullman; a new Mariano's in Bronzeville; and a new community center in Pullman, the largest year-round, indoor athletic complex of its kind in the region. Ciere spearheads CNI's efforts for diversity and inclusion: Through her management and project oversight, CNI has achieved between 30 to 50 percent minority business enterprise contractor participation in its projects. Active in the civic space, Ciere serves as a Commissioner for the Roseland Medical District and a Commissioner for SSA 71. Ciere proudly serves on the executive board of ULI's Women's Leadership Initiative and serves as a Link Unlimited volunteer and Sponsor. Ciere is a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow and was recognized as one of Crain's 2019 Notable Women in Commercial Real Estate. She's recently selected as one of Chicago Scholars' 2019 35 under 35 impactful leaders in Chicago, received Link Unlimited's Richard T. Smith Alumni Award & UIC CUPPA's Jim Marek Alumni Appreciation Award. Ciere received a Bachelor's degree from Hamilton College and a Master's in Urban Planning at University of Illinois Chicago in 2016.



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**Fred Brandstrader, AIA**, *Vice President - Construction & Capital Expenditures at Hyatt Hotels Corporation*

Experienced Registered Architect with senior level experience representing Owner's in the areas of Program-Project Management. With 25+years of experience in both the hospitality and commercial sectors, my strength as a team leader and facilitator has achieved award winning success in various complex construction projects. Based in Chicago and

having worked in various markets across the US and Canada. At Hyatt, he is currently responsible for overseeing the planning, design and construction for capital projects related to the approx. 30 corporately owned hotel assets across the country.



**Charlotte Carlton**, *SmithGroup, Civil Division*

As a civil designer, Charlotte Carlton has a strong foundation in site and infrastructure design, providing essential technical support on a variety of projects. She is experienced in utility design, grading, and permitting with an emphasis on stormwater management. Her capabilities include studies and calculations for stormwater and utility design with the use of technical software as well as interdisciplinary coordination for an optimal design through all phases

of documentation. Her responsibilities include conceptual planning and design development to permitting and construction administration for a range of project types including college campuses, community parks, and corporate sites.



**Jonathan Fine**

Jonathan Fine is a licensed architect, community advocate and historic preservation enthusiast, having founded Preservation Chicago, the city's leading grass-roots historic preservation organization, in 2001. His career path has been non-linear, but each career endeavor has been informed and enhanced by his architectural education. He received his architecture degree from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1987 and has been a licensed architect since 1996. Jonathan began his career as the owner of a small architecture

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firm, doing mostly residential architecture. Currently, Jonathan serves as the Architectural Project Manager for Marvin Windows and covers the greater Chicagoland region. In 2001, he co-founded Preservation Chicago and served as its first board president and first executive director. Mr. Fine is an active member of the American Institute of Architects, The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Edgar Miller Legacy.



## **Omar Garcia**

Omar Garcia is always creating. Whether experimenting with architecture and design, exploring the built world on his podcast Student Architect, or simply taking a bike ride down the mountains, Omar is always looking for an opportunity to create an impact and help improve the built environment. A love of activity and design permeates every project and often leads to innovative concepts. Omar sees architecture and design as vehicles for the betterment of life and

strives to find new solutions to any situation.



## **Victor Garcia, Assoc. AIA, NCARB, LEED GA**

Victor Garcia is Manager of Design & Planning for Americas Design Services where he manages design projects for Hyatt's full services brands. Before joining Hyatt, Victor worked in Dallas, TX as an Architectural Designer for CallisonRTKL on various commercial, residential mixed-use, hospitality, and luxury retail projects. Some projects include Hudson's Bay in The Netherlands, Doota Mall in Seoul, Crockett Food Hall in Fort Worth, and 5Bao & 7Bao Master

Plans in Hangzhou for Overseas Chinese Town Holdings Limited. Prior to CallisonRTKL, Victor worked at Cinemark USA as a Project Designer for over thirty domestic and international projects in the United States and Latin America where he designed movie theaters, restaurants, lounges, and bars. Outside of architecture and design, he also has experience in Real Estate Property Management with Lincoln Property Company, UDR, and ZRS Management. Victor holds a B.S. in Architecture and a Business Minor from The University of Texas at Arlington. He is completing his Masters of Architecture in the Fall of 2019 at Southern Illinois University and plans to begin taking his ARE exams in 2020 to get Registered as an Architect.



## **Jeremy Gentile, Associate AIA, Project Designer at Partners by Design**

A graduate of the Bachelor of Architecture program at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Jeremy currently works as a Project Designer at Partners by Design in Chicago, Illinois. His practice experience spans from ground up public sector to high-end residential, hospitality, commercial interiors, large scale master planning and facility improvement projects. An advocate for Emerging Professionals and the future

of the architectural profession, Jeremy serves as a Regional Director on the AIA National Associates Committee and previously served on the AIAS National Board of Directors. He has also spoken on topics of leadership at various conferences.



## **Raquel Guzman Gears, RA, LEED GA, SmithGroup, Architect**

Raquel Guzman Gears is a creative designer with a strong background in planning, architectural and design strategies. She has experience ranging from large scale design and planning and higher education strategic planning to small-scale graphic communication. A strong conceptual and analytical thinker, she evaluates projects from through design thinking, creating solutions that empathize with the

users' needs and project site. She uses design iteration and problem solving to assess functional and experiential qualities in order to create solutions that rethink traditional methods. Raquel's sharp attention to detail and exceptional graphic design capabilities effectively convey the team's vision for each project while fostering client and team collaboration, both visually and verbally.



## **Holly Harris, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP BD+C, SmithGroup, Architectural Designer**

Holly Harris describes her design process as "analytically creative" and has experience ranging from large scale, data-driven health system strategic planning and facility master planning to small-scale graphic representation and communication. As a strong conceptual and operational thinker, Holly collectively evaluates functional, operational, and

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experiential factors when exploring design iterations and solutions, and she is fascinated with projects that tell a story from conception to completion. Her passion for healthcare design blossomed through her encounters with patients and caregivers, from which she has learned to design with empathy and humility.



**Arash Irani, Associate | Architect**

As a 3D designer, planner and digital artist with an architecture background, Arash Irani's primary role is to assist both the design team and the client to better understand the project during every stage of the design process. Using the latest technology in design and planning tools, Arash has shown the importance of 3D as more than just an end product but a design instrument. With more than 20 years of industry experience in 3D visualization and design,

Arash has worked on architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, transportation, and planning projects of every size and scale both nationally and internationally. Arash is currently spearheading the push to implement Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality technologies both in the firm and for the clients they serve.



**Linda Kozloski, AIA, LEED AP**

Linda joined Lendlease in 2015 as the Senior Design Manager for the Urban Regeneration Business in the Americas region. In her role, she is responsible for managing the design process for development projects in the Chicago market and supporting Lendlease's development efforts nationally. She brings nearly 25 years of architectural design and project management experience in the development business including design and project manager roles

for Related Midwest. Her architectural design experience includes an Associate Principal role at GREC Architects and Senior Associate and Director of Interiors at DeStefano + Partners. Most recently, as a Senior Project Manager with CBRE, she held the role of Subject Matter Expert for Hospitality Project Management projects in Chicago and across Canada. She received Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Architecture degrees from Pennsylvania State University. Her professional affiliations include the American Institute of Architects and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). Originally from Pennsylvania, she moved to Chicago 25 years ago.



**Rana Lee, CCIM, EDAC, LEED AP BC+C,  
SmithGroup, Principal | Director of Business  
Development**

An immersive and curious spirit is the secret behind Rana's success as director of business development. When designing a client experience, she's dedicated and passionate about understanding everything about their business – from their point of view. A natural connector, Rana quickly coalesces divergent ideas and gets to the heart of the matter. She sees possibilities

and doesn't hesitate to explore ideas – and sometimes with untraditional partners. When Rana wanted a better understanding of hospital campuses, she teamed with Mr. Potato Head to map the patient journey from parking lot to waiting room. Those unique insights led to a series of conversations with hospital leaders about patient-centered care. When it comes to exploring possibilities, Rana loves to start with "Why?" She's a true advocate for clients and colleagues, empowering them to imagine bigger futures and greater outcomes. Rana's committed to creating inclusive communities and mentoring the next generation of women. When she's not thinking about clients, you'll find her on the golf course imagining the perfect shot...while at the same time, mentoring a young female caddy.



**James A. Maciejewski, AIA, Principal Architect of  
JMA Architects**

Jim Maciejewski received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Architectural Studies from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. He received his Masters of Science Degree in Architectural Studies, with emphasis on structural engineering, from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. Starting as an intern, and progressing to ownership, Jim has spent the last 24 years at JMA focusing

on public architecture, including educational, municipal, and healthcare projects. With a commitment to the communities served and a focus on enduring architecture, JMA has evolved under Jim's leadership to offer architectural and construction management services to a variety of clients. Jim is a past President of the Eastern Illinois Chapter of AIA. As a citizen architect, Jim has served as president of the local Board of Zoning Appeals for 14 years.

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**Leanne Meyer-Smith, AIA, LEED AP BD+ C, VP of Architecture, Wight & Company**

Ms. Meyer-Smith has nearly 30 years of extensive experience that ranges from building design, facility analysis, and master planning to construction administration and project management applying her unique skills to both new construction and renovation work for a variety of educational, municipal, religious, and commercial clients. She can recall the day in

grammar school while most of her classmates were writing book reports, she was actually building “The House of Seven Gables.” After completing this project, she announced to her parents that she was going to become an architect one day. In her volunteer activities, she has traveled to Haiti several times to review the construction of a Catholic church and a health care facility that she designed for the sister parish of her church. Ms. Meyer-Smith extends this type of personal commitment in projects closer to home as well. At Wight & Company she is responsible for leading teams in making a client’s vision become a successful reality. She is committed to providing leadership in a participatory process dedicated to bringing quality, long-lasting, and sustainable solutions to each client’s building needs. As a Director on State of Illinois Board of the American Institute of Architects, Leanne is committed to collaborating with other architects in service, advocacy and public awareness relative to the profession of architecture. In her hometown of Naperville, she enjoys sharing her architecture expertise on the Naperville Review Board and she is proud of her Naperville Park District Seager Park Building design.



**Molly Rademacher, Assoc. AIA, SmithGroup, Architectural Designer**

A creative architectural designer with a strong background in interior design. She has experience ranging from higher education renovations and office building design, to workplace strategy and building repositioning. A creative thinker and highly driven, Molly designs holistic solutions that empathize with the users’ needs and reflect the client’s brand. Molly’s sharp attention to detail and exceptional graphic

design capabilities effectively convey the team’s vision for each project while fostering client and team collaboration, both visually and verbally.



**Gracia Maria Shiffrin, FAIA**

Shiffrin’s body of work over the past three decades combines real estate development with a social mission. Her commitment to high-quality buildings and strong neighborhoods has resulted in the creation and preservation of thousands of affordable housing units, the development of recreational facilities and cultural centers, and it has steered the preservation of Chicago’s resources. Her strong belief in the power of architecture to provide hope and inspiration

has guided her work in the creation of buildings and spaces that lift the social, spiritual, economic, and health conditions of those she serves. AIA recognized her work by elevating her to the College of Fellows in 2015. As an architect and attorney, Gracia has blazed a unique professional path in the public and nonprofit sectors.