



AIA West Jersey

A Section of
The American Institute of Architects
New Jersey Chapter and Region

A Message From Our President.....

2011 AIA WJ Executive Committee

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Dear Fellow AIA West Jersey Members:

It is an honor to serve as your President of the American Institute of Architects, West Jersey Chapter, for 2011.

For those of you that attended the Inaugural Gala on Saturday night, I hope that you had as much fun as I did. We had approximately 70 guests attending this year's event, and it was a very entertaining and enjoyable evening. For those members that were unable to attend, I want to formally thank you for the opportunity to serve you and this Chapter.

One of my goals for the upcoming year is to help increase public awareness. The public needs to be educated as to what we do, how we do it, why we do it, and how society benefits from what we do. In this day and age, there are still so many people that just don't understand what we as architects do.

I want to make a concerted effort to raise public awareness and promote our industry within the Tri-County area. This includes press releases; advertising; social media; and integration of our newly revamped website. We need to credit the accomplishments of our peers and make the public aware of them. Whether it's a ground breaking ceremony, ribbon cutting ceremony, community service event or an Inaugural banquet, we need to get the word out.

Our organization continues to provide a wide variety of services and benefits to our members...through continuing education seminars and accreditation; advocacy; mentorship; and other avenues, our Chapter is the voice of the architectural profession for West Jersey.

The future of AIA West Jersey and the architectural profession within our community relies upon you. We are 175 members strong, committed to the highest standards of the design and construction industry. Through these difficult economic times, however, we must remain committed, determined and most important, unified in order to persevere. The reality is unlike many other professions, the government, insurance companies and other outside forces can not tell us how to structure our business organizations, acquire work, or even the fees we can charge for our services. That is a huge advantage that we have. Sure, we have building codes to follow, and clients that we need to satisfy, but there is nothing standing in our way from experiencing the American dream.

Most important, the future of our industry lies with our young and emerging professionals, and we must make every effort to support their needs. Our Chapter is doing so by the recent establishment of our Young Associates Group which, in less than one year, boasts over 35 members. We have established study groups,



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mentoring opportunities, and seminars to assist our youngest colleague's transition into the profession which will help ensure the vitality of our Chapter.

On a similar note, our efforts include working towards the establishment of the first school of architecture in southern NJ at Rowan University. As of today, such a program is under development and Rowan is actively seeking the necessary accreditation and state approvals. The existence of such a program will give our members a pool of fresh talent to draw from, and will be a resource for all of us in our continuing education.

We have some terrific programs planned for the coming year. Stay tuned for future emails and newsletters for more information. In addition, stay tuned to our new website at www.aiawestjersey.org.

I want to thank William J. Fearon, AIA for the unbelievable job he did as President for AIA WJ 2010, and I look forward to his continued involvement with the Chapter. I also want to welcome Jason Lutz, Assoc. AIA to the Executive Board and I wish him much success.

If anyone wishes to discuss any matters with me, please feel free to contact me at (856) 874-1770 or email me at wcohen@cohendesignbuild.com.

Very truly yours,

William J. Cohen, AIA

President, AIA West Jersey