



June 26, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT
Mary Larkin, Communications Director
larkin@aia-mn.org

AIA Minnesota Announces Four 2015 Young Architect Award Recipients



(L to R) **Rebecca E. Celis, AIA**, (HGA Architects & Engineers); **Melissa Christenson Ekman, AIA**, (Miller Dunwiddie Architecture); **James Garrett, Jr., AIA**, (4RM+ULA); and **Amy Kalar, AIA**, (HGA Architects & Engineers)

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Minnesota is proud to announce the selection of four 2015 Young Architects Award recipients. These recipients will be recognized at the annual AIA Minnesota Awards Dinner on Friday, December 4, 2015, at the Minnesota History Center.

The AIA Minnesota Young Architect Award is given to architects who are AIA Minnesota members, have been licensed for less than 10 years, and have shown exceptional leadership in service to the profession, the community, design, planning, and education.

More information regarding the AIA Minnesota Young Architect Award Program may be found at <http://www.aia-mn.org/get-involved/aia-minnesota-awards/young-architect-award/>

2015 AIA Minnesota Young Architect Award Recipients:

Rebecca E. Celis, AIA, is an Associate Vice President at HGA Architects & Engineers (HGA). As a project manager in the Arts, Community, and Education Practice Group at HGA, Rebecca specializes in guiding and integrating the input of team members, consultants, contractors, and clients on complex Fine and Performing Arts projects. In addition, she serves as co-practice, group-leader of a 35-person studio and is responsible for organizing staff, balancing workload, and managing financial metrics. She has an undergraduate degree from Wellesley College and an M.Arch degree from University of Minnesota.

Melissa Christenson Ekman, AIA, is an architect with Miller Dunwiddie Architecture, joining the firm in 2005. Her focus is on historic preservation, educating clients, community, and professionals of the importance of preserving our historic structures. Her work ensures that the most appropriate treatments for restoration, preservation, and rehabilitation are performed. She attended the University of Minnesota and quickly discovered a passion for historic buildings. She then pursued a M. Arch degree with a Certificate in Preservation Studies from University of Wisconsin.



James Garrett, Jr., AIA, is a registered architect in Minnesota and New York and the founder of 4RM+ULA (*FORM + Urban Landscape Articulation*). Born on the Caribbean Island of St. Thomas, he spent his formative years in St. Paul. As a visual artist and published writer who is also a licensed architect, he expresses the urban condition through the lenses of art and design. He holds an A.B. Degree in Architecture from the College of Environmental Design at University of California (Berkeley) and an M.Arch degree from Parsons School of Design (New York City). He is president of the California Alumni Association-Minnesota Chapter and serves on the Metropolitan Council Livable Communities and Transit Oriented Development Advisory Committees.

Amy Kalar, AIA, is a Senior Associate and healthcare architect, as well as a leader in medical planning, at HGA Architects and Engineers (HGA). She serves as regional representative for the AIA Academy of Architecture for Health, chairs the LEED Education on the HGA Sustainability Council, is a founder/co-chair of the HGA Open Conversation Series, and co-chairs the AIA Minnesota Women in Architecture Committee. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Design and an M.Arch degree, both of which are from Montana State University.

In addition to the AIA Minnesota Young Architect Award, recipients of this award are encouraged to submit for the AIA National Young Architect Award. To date, eighteen AIA Minnesota architects have received an AIA National Young Architect Award, including: Vicki L. Hooper, AIA, and Joan M. Soranno, AIA, both 1993; William A. Blanski, AIA, 1995; Michael Fischer, AIA, and Robert Rothman, AIA, both 1996; Jeffry Kagermeier, AIA, 2001; Mohammed Lawal, AIA, 2002; Paul Neuhaus, AIA, 2003; Janis LaDouceur, AIA, 2004; James Dayton, AIA, 2005; Philip Koski, AIA, 2007; Michael Meehan, 2008; Matthew Kreilich, AIA, and Michael Schellin, AIA, both 2009; Steven Dwyer, AIA, 2011; Timothy Bicknell, AIA, 2012; and John Dwyer, AIA, and Alissa D. Luepke Pier, AIA, both 2013.

More information regarding the AIA Minnesota Young Architect Award Program may be found at <http://www.aia-mn.org/get-involved/aia-minnesota-awards/young-architect-award/>

*The American Institute of Architects Minnesota, founded in 1892, is dedicated to strengthening our communities, improving our built environment and providing exceptional design. For more information on the organization and Minnesota architectural firms, reference our web site at www.aia-mn.org and pick up a copy of *Architecture Minnesota*, the award-winning architectural magazine of the Midwest.*