

AIA Florida Creates a Vision Statement

Contributed by AIA Florida

October 2010

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SUMMARY

The AIA Florida Board and Executive Committee held a two-day strategic planning session to develop a five-year action plan for AIA Florida. The planning process kicked off with the creation of this vision statement: "AIA Florida is a united association of architects who lead the shaping of Florida's future."

With the vision statement in place, the strategic planning process began. To help facilitate the process, AIA Florida engaged Business Learning Institute (BLI). BLI helped structure the conversation to keep the planning process collaborative, positive, and moving forward at all times. As a result of the planning session, five action items, each with targeted goals and metrics, were developed.

These include:

- Connect and mobilize members
- Develop and engage leadership
- Collaborate with education
- Build the pipeline
- Communicate the AIA brand

TAKING THE TIME TO PLAN

To start off the planning session, the 22 attendees, including AIA Florida Executive Committee members past and present, staff, and regional leadership from AIA Puerto Rico and AIA Virgin Islands, reviewed the history of architecture as well as the Association. Attendees captured the past, starting with the architect as the master builder, through WWII and subsequent building boom, to Florida-specific impacts such as Disney World, Kennedy Space Center, and even the election of the first female AIA Florida president.

A *Context Map* was developed that included national impacts and kept "One AIA" in the forefront while identifying major trends and issues facing architects and the Association.

These were used to clarify the strengths, problems, opportunities and threats (SPOT analysis) for the association and profession. Seven strategic themes emerged: Collaboration, Growth, Advocacy, Knowledge, Strong Active Components, Leadership, and Community.

CONNECT AND MOBILIZE

A minimum number of standards were set for all 13 local components in Florida to act as a cohesive group. Some of these standards include: state-wide generally accepted component bylaws, the attendance at a Leadership Summit for all components, and the inclusion of component self-audits.

Since the strategic plan was put in place, AIA Florida membership has increased 2.7 percent overall, and three local components have market shares of approximately 70 percent, nearing the state goal of 75 percent by 2012.

DEVELOP AND ENGAGE LEADERSHIP

A leadership survey was distributed to members to determine a baseline of architects serving as appointed or elected officials in government positions. Specific targets are for an increase in members in government positions and on state commissions as well as members appointed to state commissions by 2012. Another goal includes the election of an architect to the Florida legislature by 2010 and to have at least six members running for elected office by 2012.

Recognizing the importance of AIA Florida member involvement in the community and providing service to non-profit organizations, members and staff have pledged over 5,000 hours to the 1% Program, with an organizational goal of 40,000 hours from the Florida/Caribbean Region.

COLLABORATE WITH EDUCATION

AIA Florida solicited articles for the *Florida/Caribbean Architect* magazine from architecture faculty at the local universities, thus helping faculty gain tenure or AIA Fellowship while bringing relevant articles to the membership. A task force was created to develop a state-wide Architecture competition scheduled to launch during the 2010 AIA Convention in Miami, Florida. This program, similar to the EuroPan Competition, engages architects, universities, students and municipalities in joint efforts.

BUILD THE PIPELINE

The Florida Foundation for Architecture (FFA) also plays an active role in the strategic plan through the support of design competitions for students, interns and emerging professionals. For example, the FFA sponsored the “Florida Cottage Design Competition.” This competition asked entrants to design affordable, sustainable and disaster resistant housing. In its first year, more than 89 associates, students and interns entered the competition. AIA Florida has created a section of the Web site to support emerging professionals and provide information about achieving licensure, resume posting and job locating, It also provides a place to post work for others to view.

COMMUNICATE THE AIA BRAND

AIA Florida increased the number of press releases sent out per month to five on average. Several editorials from members have appeared in local newspapers across the state. AIA Florida published a full profile in the June issue of *Southeast Construction* magazine in partnership with McGraw-Hill. In the 50th Anniversary edition of *Florida Trend* magazine, six members and/or firms were quoted or profiled due to the development of a relationship with the publication and efforts to educate the editorial staff about AIA issues. The AIA Florida Web site was completely redesigned. A new DVD, *Sustainable Design Matters*, is in development for distribution to municipalities and elected officials as a follow-up to the award-winning *Design Matters* DVD produced in 2006.

A STRATEGY FOR LASTING SUCCESS

The process provided AIA Florida leadership the opportunity to strategize and plan for the near term future of AIA Florida, while strengthening the connection with components, identifying and recruiting future leaders, and setting in motion proactive advocacy and government affairs agenda.

RESOURCES

More Best Practices

The following AIA Best Practices provide additional information related to this topic:

- 21.01.06 Communication is Open and Often for AIA Florida
- 21.03.19 Florida Architects Successfully Effect Legislation
- 21.04.03 AIA Florida Membership Program

Feedback

The AIA welcomes member feedback on Best Practice articles. To provide feedback on this article, please contact bestpractices@aia.org.

Key Terms

- Leadership
- Associations
- Design associations
- Architectural associations
- The American Institute of Architects
- AIA components