

AIA Wisconsin Architects in Schools

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SUMMARY

The AIA Wisconsin “Architects in Schools” program was created to encourage greater awareness, understanding, and appreciation of architecture and the built environment.

The program helps teachers make connections with architects in their communities who can assist them in developing lesson plans and learning activities that will introduce their students to important ideas and concepts through architecture. Members of AIA Wisconsin offer it as a community service.

THE PROGRAM

“Architects in Schools” provides a number of educational resources for use by member architects and teachers.

For high school students, AIA Wisconsin members make themselves available for “Career Days” and other programs. AIA Wisconsin provides handout materials for students who may be interested in becoming architects. For example, *Careers in Architecture* highlights career options and outlines education, experience, and examination requirements. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation on “A Student’s Pathway to Architecture” reviews the steps involved in becoming an architect.

HOW IT WORKS

AIA Wisconsin’s “Architects in Schools” is loosely structured. There are no registration forms that teachers or architects need to fill out. All information is made available on the web page.

The “Architects in Schools” web page lists a number of resources broken down by grade: grades K-2; grades 3-5; grades 6-8; and grades 9-12. The website also offers examples in which architecture can be effectively included in school curricula for History, Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, Math, and Visual Arts.

For elementary and middle school students, a 20-minute video, *How Buildings Speak*, produced by AIA Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Architects Foundation, illustrates how architecture affects people every day. Featuring many Wisconsin buildings, it introduces students to the basic elements of Architecture: form, scale, color, texture and materials. Additional resources such as Legos and a loaning library are available to teachers and architects going into the classroom.

Another matrix is available that details additional activities and talking points and is divided into four sections: preschool-2nd grade; grades 3-6; middle school; high school; and college-adult. Career day tips, suggested group sizes, and suggested durations for each type of activity are offered.

RESULTS

These readily available resources make it easier for local educators to find activities related to architecture that can be incorporated into school curricula. The system also provides architect members with a source of information when going into a classroom.

AIA Wisconsin also works with Junior Achievement Worldwide, an international program whose mission

is to “inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.” AIA Wisconsin works with the local offices to match interested architects with the program. These architects are then invited into the classroom to speak about communities and how they function around the built environment.

RESOURCES

More Best Practices

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

[AIA Cincinnati Architecture By Children](#)

[Architectural Awareness Program for Junior High Students](#)

[Architecture: It's Elementary! A K – 5 Curriculum](#)

[Kids in Architecture: A Grade 5 Curriculum](#)

For More Information on This Topic

<http://www.aiaw.org/about/comm/ais.shtml>

<http://www.aiaw.org/about/comm/documents/AIS-DA2.xls>

<http://www.ja.org/default.asp>

Feedback

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

Keywords

- AIA Components
- Associations
- K-12 Education
- Scholarships

This Best Practice was developed in concert with the AIA's Diversity initiative. Any questions or comments about the content herein can be sent to diversity@aia.org.