

AIA Atlanta netWorking Women

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SUMMARY

netWorking Women is a group of working women in the world of architecture and the allied fields. Their mission is to promote relationships and teamwork between architects and designers and their partners in allied professions: engineers, interior designers, contractors, material suppliers, marketers, accountants, educators, etc.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

netWorking Women is dedicated to advancing and supporting the position of women by developing informative programs and providing mutual support. The committee has organized speaker events, panel discussions, a wine-tasting event and a charity drive with Atlanta's Dress for Success, an organization whose mission netWorking Women supports.

Their most successful events have been a holiday wine-tasting; a "Successful Women in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering" panel discussion; a "How to Network" seminar; and a spa event.

The group collects business cards from all of their event attendees, which helps them to gather more information about them.

netWorking Women operates through the support of sponsorship from local firms including women-owned organizations. Previous sponsors include Interface Corporation, Haworth, Turner Construction, Design within Reach, Juneau Construction, Southface, The Mason Murer Gallery and The Atlanta Community Food Bank.

IMPACT

The unique aspect of Atlanta's netWorking Women program is the inclusion of women from the allied fields, as noted in their mission statement.

netWorking women gives women in the allied professions the opportunity to gather regularly to network and solidify professional relationships in the design community while strengthening themselves individually. It also allows women in the industry to shine and share their successes with one another, offering opportunities for mentoring without being a structured mentoring program. The aim of netWorking Women is not to separate women within the profession, but to recognize that they offer valuable and unique contributions to the field.

The mailing list includes approximately 275 local female AIA members and approximately 300 non-AIA members from the allied fields. Events are regularly attended by members and non-members alike; and typically more non-members attend. It is this continued outreach beyond their membership that has led to netWorking Women's success.

LESSONS LEARNED

netWorking Women's number one rule is that there are no rules. This has given the group much more freedom to explore topics, garner sponsorships, and accept members.

The group also has a steering committee large enough for work to be evenly distributed so that one or two people do not become overwhelmed planning events.

To help increase the turnout at their events, netWorking Women picks event venues that are easily accessible by public transportation; provides maps, directions, and links to the event venue; and actively tries not to schedule events close in date to other AIA functions so that attendees are not forced to choose between multiple AIA events. They also invite students to attend free of charge.

RESOURCES

More Best Practices

The following AIA Best Practice provides additional information related to this topic:

[BSA Women in Design Network](#)

For More Information on This Topic

<http://www.aiaatlanta.org/members/index.cfm?menuval=members&Fuseaction=networkingwome>

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
- Diversity
- Women in design

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