

EPC

Emerging Professional's Companion

A Resource for Architectural Education and Experience

Workshop Proceedings
AIA National Convention

Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino
Las Vegas
May 21, 2005

Introduction

The session provided a snapshot of today's environment for emerging professionals gaining experience in U.S. architecture firms; an introduction to the Web site for the Emerging Professional's Companion (EPC), a new tool firms can use to develop in-house continuing education programs; and an opportunity to explore applications of the material within firms.

The Intern Development Program (IDP) is now mandatory in 50 of the 55 jurisdictions. Many firm owners and architects who serve as IDP supervisors did not experience a formal internship program such as the IDP. Therefore, the EPC is designed to provide a reliable framework in which an emerging professional can gain knowledge by working with a seasoned practitioner. This work is not only valuable to an intern seeking IDP credit, but is valuable to an architect who may receive continuing education credit for this mentoring activity.

The end result is a fundamental shift in the way architects and their firms approach learning activities in their office. Using the content of the EPC as a platform, firms can develop formal and informal ways to share knowledge. These proceedings document the work done by the workshop participants and can be shared by others as applications for the EPC.

Facilitators

The workshop was led by Suzanna Wight, AIA, and Jean Valence, FSMPS.

The session began with an introduction to the EPC and a walk-through of the Web site by Suzanna. Suzanna is the Emerging Professionals director at the AIA national component in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, she oversees all program and leadership development activities related to emerging professionals, associate members, and newly licensed architect members of the AIA. More specifically, Suzanna serves as the staff liaison to the National Associates Committee (NAC), Young Architects Forum (YAF) Advisory Committee, YAF regional liaisons, and local YAF chapters. She also coordinates the AIA's involvement with the IDP and internship generally through staff support to the IDP Coordinating Committee, 2005 Internship Conference, and the *Emerging Professionals Companion*. A member of the AIA since 1999, Suzanna served on the NAC in 2001 as chair and regional associate director for the Mid-Atlantic Region, followed by a one-year term as the associate director on the AIA Board of Directors.

Before joining the AIA staff, Suzanna worked for three years as a job captain in Gensler's Washington, D.C., office. Suzanna earned her Bachelor of Architecture with a minor in architectural history from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Penn., in 1999, and became a registered architect in the District of Columbia in 2003.

Jean defined three significant learning levels: mentoring, coaching, and training. Jean is a principal and vice president of Symmes Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA) Inc., a firm of 160 architects, engineers, interior designers, and planners in Cambridge, Mass. As SMMA's director of strategic development, Jean is responsible for marketing, staff professional development, and advancement of the firm's strategic plan. Active in professional initiatives locally and nationally, she is an overseer of the Boston Architectural Center, having completed terms as a director and vice chair of the board. For the AIA, Jean regularly serves as a juror for its Continuing Education System Awards of Excellence. She is a founder and faculty member of the AIA/CES Firm Leadership Summit and has served on the AIA/NCARB advisory committee for the Emerging Professionals Companion, the recently launched online resource for architecture students, graduates, and interns.

Jean is author of *The Architect's Essentials of Professional Development* and "Balancing Operations and Marketing" in the *SMPS Marketing Handbook*. A fellow of the Society for

Marketing Professional Services, Jean is also a recipient of the society's highest honor, the Marketing Achievement Award.

Participants

Group 1

Tiffany Beffel
Gary Dodson, AIA
Dave Griffiths
Doug Hurley, AIA

Group 2

Carlos E. Cala, AIA
Chad Cole
John Martin, AIA
Bob Chernack, AIA

Group 3

Summer Gorder, Assoc. AIA
Jeremy Burge, Assoc. AIA
Ryan Clarke, Assoc. AIA

Group 4

Aron Thompson, Assoc. AIA
Karl Schindwolf, AIA
Natividad Soto, AIA
Joe Venturoni, AIA

Group 5

Krista Becker, AIA
Bonnie Blake-Drucker, AIA
Steve Fridsma, AIA
Tina Bauer, AIA
German Aparichio

Mentoring

Philip Stahl, AIA
Stahl Architects
Fargo, ND

Philip Stahl is a passionate sole proprietor in a small town. His firm, Stahl Architects, received the 2005 IDP Outstanding Firm Award. Phil received his undergraduate degree in 1994 from North Dakota State University, Fargo. He worked for two firms during his internship and initial licensure.

Phil began practicing as a virtual office, a consultant for other architects in a time crunch while balancing the lake home market in the Minnesota lakes region. As the practice grew, it split between the residential and commercial markets. His heart's desire is to work on architecture with spirit and encourage a strong social bond between local architects. His firm received its first AIA design award last year.

Phil mentors between 1 to 3 young architects, 5 to 10 interns, and 3 to 5 students a year through interaction with the local university, young architects forum and the local and state AIA components. He has served as adjunct instructor at North Dakota State University's architecture/landscape architecture department and on various university critiques, guest lectures, and design juries.

Phil has served numerous years as the local AIA president; he cofounded the local Young Architects Forum and has served on various state AIA positions. He is vice president of his neighborhood association and chair of his church's leadership board.

He and his wife Melanie have two girls, ages one and two, whom he protects time for faithfully.

As a young, small firm Stahl Architects has some of the greatest opportunities for training because the intern to architect ratio is 1:1 or greater. Interns rub shoulders with the architects all day. Also since the firm is small, an intern is part of the entire design and construction process. Given the layout of the studio, interns hear all of the phone conversations with clients, engineers, and contractors. The interns accompany the architects when meeting with those same groups of people.

Stahl Architects will assign most of the design work to the interns under the architects' tutelage. The assignments provide personal ownership, experience, and maximum motivation for the interns. Meetings with clients, contract negotiations, billing methods, debt collection, design, construction documents, code search, project estimating, bidding/negotiation, construction administration and management, project closeout, and general business knowledge are all items for hands-on experience. There is little the intern does not do, see, or know of in the firm. They are even included in the firm's decision-making; they get to see consequences of decisions made that affect the firm's well-being.

Stahl Architects hires individuals who want their own firms in the future. This hiring practice raises the bar in the interns' motivation and ambition to learn and reminds Stahl to train them in all aspects of architecture practice, from A to Z.

Phil Stahl meets with an IDP mentee regularly or when IDP paperwork needs to be submitted. Although he lets the interns decide how often they would like to meet, Phil tries to stay in contact with them either through local Young Architect Forum events, telephone, or e-mail.

When discussing IDP paperwork, they determine what is to be submitted and discuss what learning areas were covered and any concerns the intern might have. Phil asks if they are getting adequate hours in their particular firm to ensure a timely and productive internship.

For his own employees, Phil knows on a daily basis what area each intern is working on. Interns use the IDP learning unit worksheet to keep track of their learning units. This then can be evaluated for what particular areas need to be focused on for future projects.

Stahl Architects is also proactive in maintaining continuing education, even with the interns who don't yet need the credits. Interns and architects attend product seminars, shows, and AIA functions together.

Working Session #1

Participants were asked to consider the following questions:

1. What are the strengths of this exercise as a mentoring activity?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with design team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn and continue to learn
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps to frame the approach of what is needed in terms of knowledge about the building construction process and relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication flow
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group of interns can work together and save their work for future use • Creates structure within the firm 	

2. How would you use this activity while working with an intern?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction/observation between contractor-team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By communicating
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes dialogue between mentor and mentee and gives credit to mentee for dialogue they would need to have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility
Group 5	
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3. How can IDP supervisors and mentors support the *EPC*?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reality checks! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage learning—the profession and professional conduct
Group 3	Group 4
--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement with intern
Group 5	
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4. How might the firm support interns' use of the *EPC*?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncover errors/omissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal knowledge and personal growth • Increased interest • Enthusiasm
Group 3	Group 4
--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an assignment with the <i>EPC</i> for interns/mentors
Group 5	
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5. List benefits for the intern and benefits for the firm.

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to observe paper/document flow • Observing project types that occur with different opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better work
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity • Variety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of staff to answer intern questions • Learn process • Builds firm culture and leadership • Firm gets an experienced worker
Group 5	
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Coaching

John Caldwell, AIA
Caldwell Architects
Los Angeles

A finalist in the Medium Firm Category of the 2005 IDP Outstanding Firm Award, John Caldwell leads a group of interns each day on their path to licensure. John received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from California State Polytechnic University in San Luis Obispo in 1969. His intern experience included work at Hugh Gibbs & Don Gibbs, FAIA, Architects in Long Beach, Black O'Dowd Architects in Palos Verdes, and John Lautner, FAIA, Architect in Hollywood.

John became a licensed architect in California in 1972 and started his own firm in 1977, now named Caldwell Architects. His educational clients include the University of California, Los Angeles; University of Southern California; California State University System; and numerous community colleges and unified school districts. His institutional clients include the U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Navy, and various counties, cities, and ports.

John's work has been recognized with more than 30 local, regional, and national awards, including the 2000 AIA Business Week/Architectural Record Award for the Port of Long Beach Pier A Container Terminal.

An active member in the professional community, John has served as president of the AIA Long Beach/South Bay and currently serves as vice president on the executive committee of the Friends of the Schindler House in West Hollywood.

His firm's Intern Development Program was recognized by the AIA with a 1998 IDP Outstanding Firm Honorable Mention in the small firm category.

Caldwell Architects has a ratio of licensed architects to interns which ranges from 1:1 to 1:1.5. The firm also has several educational clients who provide a wide range projects, including many small jobs. The small projects serve as coaching opportunities. Each of these projects has a licensed architect overseeing the project and an intern doing the work.

The intern is involved in every step of the process with the architect, including meeting with the client, doing the field investigation, designing the project, preparing the contract documents, meeting with the building department, making plan check corrections, assisting in the bidding process and construction administration, reviewing submittals, and preparing change orders. All this work is done under the direct supervision of the architect.

This process increases the firm's expense because two people attend meetings and site visits instead of one. In the end, however, the experience gained by the interns increases their efficiency to the point where the benefits outweigh the additional cost. The interns have real input in the architecture process from start to finish and the firm makes money on small projects.

Caldwell Architects also includes interns in its marketing program by having the interns attend presubmittal conferences, prepare submittal packages (under John's supervision) and even attend interviews. Their input on submittal packages plus their computer skills keeps the firm's marketing material fresh and exciting. Many of the interviews are with educational clients who appreciate the learning atmosphere in the office and have their own students as part of the interview committee.

Interns are also involved in the firm's management. There are 10 committees in the office, each headed by a licensed architect. Interns are assigned to any of seven of those committees: Personnel Management, Facility Management, Resource Management (standards), Sustainable Design (founded by the interns), Marketing Management, Information Management, and Computer Management. The committees give the interns first hand practical experience in running an office.

With its Intern Development Program, Caldwell Architects attracts high-quality graduates, has a well-trained and efficient staff, and has a good intern retention record.

Working Session #2

Participants were asked to consider the following questions:

1. How would you develop a formal coaching engagement for one or several ARE candidates?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify different types of RFIs Classify RFIs in categories/types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the coach understand the objective and process of guiding the intern to learn and understand
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalize the IDP development in areas that need growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish steps to coach by outline
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick a product on a project 	

2. How would you prepare the coach for taking on this role?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand internal process and clients limitations 	
Group 3	Group 4
--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a project
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use past projects to review order of magnitude Look at RFI logs; paths criticals 	

3. How would you measure success?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the ability of the intern to apply this knowledge to future projects
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much responsibility the intern assumes on their own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz of project steps process
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign an administrator to document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> receives and logs reviews and assigns responsibility 	

- Will help intern discern frivolous RFIs

4. What objections might project leaders have to implementing such a coaching activity on their project and how would you deal with it?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding liabilities associated with RFIs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cost ○ impact on construction ○ time management • Benefit of firm - encourage to take on ownership • Delegation from PM/PA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial burden • Time consumption
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs more money • Takes more time • Have a holistic, integrated approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time (take away from billable hours) • Discovering errors • Corrective action with intern
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review RFI log and list questions to discuss with supervisor/mentor 	

Training

Murphy Antoine, AIA, AICP
Theresa Coolihan, CNU, LEED AP
Torti Gallas and Partners
Silver Spring, MD

A finalist in the Large Firm Category of the 2005 IDP Outstanding Firm Award, Torti Gallas and Partners was represented by Murphy Antoine and Theresa Coolihan.

Murphy holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and Masters degrees in Planning and Architecture from the University of Virginia. Murphy joined Torti Gallas in 1997 as a senior planner and currently serves as director of the firm's Neighborhood Revitalization Studio. During his 16-year career, Murphy has been involved in numerous urban planning and neighborhood revitalization projects throughout the United States. His proven design skills have been integral in the development of several neighborhood revitalization strategies for public housing authorities. Murphy received his license to practice architecture in Virginia in 2001 and has been a certified planner since 1999.

Theresa received her Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Notre Dame in 2000. She is a project architect in the firm's Neighborhood Revitalization Studio. Since joining the firm in 2000 she has been involved in several neighborhood revitalization projects around the country, as well as planning projects in and around the Washington Metropolitan area. Theresa is a LEED accredited professional.

At Torti Gallas and Partners interns are an integral part of the process, the project, and the firm. Torti Gallas addresses the need for its interns' professional development through its supplementary education program. Presentations and discussions on technical issues, practice management, and design philosophy are held in house on a weekly, biweekly, and monthly basis. Interns are encouraged to not only attend, but also help organize these events. Interns can also pursue educational opportunities at outside locations with the help of all available firm resources. In all, more than 4,500 hours were dedicated to training last year.

Training settings at Torti Gallas include firm-wide informal discussions, classroom settings, one-on-one in-office training, field observation, self-directed study, and studio level mentoring.

Many of the courses at Torti Gallas are designed and instructed by Torti Gallas staff. Technical training includes construction document technician (CDT) training and graphics training in marketing software, as interns often aid in competition submissions and publications. Additionally, the firm offers training in project tracking software for those interns that are managing their own projects and periodic updates in computer drafting. A comprehensive series for those seeking LEED accreditation is instructed by interns; its success has been measured in the accreditation of 11 principals.

Management training at Torti Gallas is offered through the Project Management Training course, which is both self-directed and classroom based. Office management opportunities are found through involvement in firm-wide committees, such as public relations and marketing, design, automation and CADD, sustainability, and participation in firm-wide strategic planning.

Design-based discussions in semimonthly design discourses and project design reviews bring interns and firm leaders together to debate design decisions and discuss the current events in the fields of architecture and urban design.

In addition to training opportunities, the intern group meets monthly to discuss how else the firm can contribute to intern development and vice versa. IDP tracking systems and ARE support groups were developed directly through the intern group.

The comprehensive approach to intern training and professional development at Torti Gallas and Partners allows interns a variety of experiences that contribute to the growth of the individual and the strength of the firm as a whole. The firm's investment in support of its interns empowers the interns to take on leadership roles throughout the firm and in the community.

Working Session #3

Participants were asked to consider the following questions:

Envision a way that within your firm, or by teaming with another firm, you could design training programs using *EPC* content as a basis:

1. Who would teach it?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential Leaders- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Code compliance coordinator ○ City/state representative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior code reviewer in firm • ADA seminar attendee • Outside consultant
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A licensed architect • Use case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional with training (ADA) • By application
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern researches and presents topics to the firm • Associates and principals • Different based on firm size 	

2. How would you evaluate the success of the workshop?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question-and-answer session • Sample scenario evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth permitting process next time • Less reliance on reference material • Quicker project delivery • Integration into concept
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have attendees evaluate a scenario that does not meet ADA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside source review • Review existing project
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerpoint as resource tool • Question-and-answer guide developed • Track utilization web-based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tech tips • Own portfolio samples 	

3. What would the instructors get out of this program?

Group 1	Group 2
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied viewpoints on interpretation of the code • Go-to person or “ADA expert” • Locate/evaluate deficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ mentoring ○ ownership or task/information • Time saver • Social responsibility
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review better productivity on future projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More feedback from interns
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speaking skills • Explore new interests • Opportunity to present 	

4. How can you make it fun and engaging?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scavenger hunt for good/bad examples of ADA compliance/violations • Learn from handicap individuals on positive implementation/design techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time in wheelchair blindfolded • Design charrette—whole and components • Sounding board
Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game show • ADA trivia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide hands-on handicap equipment training
Group 5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower them to share their knowledge • Role play it 	

Conclusion

The EPC can be used in a variety of ways to support the intern in the learning process. The results of this workshop provide real examples of how small, medium, and large firms are successfully integrating mentoring, coaching, and training activities for interns into the core functions of their practice. Added to this, the participant work is a testament to the versatility of the EPC exercises in shaping and planning a learning environment for interns. Whether used in a one-on-one session or in a large group seminar setting, the content of the EPC is a useful platform for architects who wish to provide professional development for their staff.

To get started with the *Emerging Professional's Companion*, visit www.EPCCompanion.org.