AIACC Firm Mentorship Award

Darden Architects, Inc.

• Providing consistent support and mentorship opportunities for emerging professionals.
• Actively supporting Interns in the pursuit and IDP, ARE, and licensure.
• Promoting a professional environment of mutual respect and continuous opportunities for interns to progress professionally.
AIACC Firm Mentorship Award

We would like to nominate the following AIA member firm for the AIACC Firm Mentorship Award, for their extraordinary effort to mentor Emerging Professionals.

Name of Chapter

AIA San Joaquin

Nominee Information

Name of Nominee

Darden Architects, Inc.

Address of Nominee

6790 N. West Ave

Address

Fresno CA 93711

City (State) (Zip)

Nominator Information

Name of Nominator

Paul Halajian AIA LEED AP

Nominator Address

1099 E. Champlain Dr. Ste A-172

Address

Fresno California 93720-5033

City (State) (Zip)

Telephone

559.304.7533 paul.halajianaia@gmail.com

E-mail Address

The information provided on this and the accompanying materials is a true and accurate representation of the merits and accomplishments of the nominee.

Signature, Nominator

6/17/2011

Signature, Chapter President

6/17/2011
Dear AIA California Council Academy for Emerging Professionals,

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Darden Architects, Inc. of Fresno, California for the 2011 AIA California Council Academy for Emerging Professionals Awards Firm Mentorship category. As the current President of AIA San Joaquin, I have been fortunate to observe not only their commitment to mentorship, but the actual results of a rigorous mentorship program instituted by this award winning Firm. I can personally attest to the strength of the Darden Architects mentorship program based on my first hand experience working with Firm leaders and Emerging Professionals at the local AIA Chapter level.

The architectural profession benefits as a whole when our Emerging Professionals are given the chance to learn from the generations of architects before them. Mentorship allows Emerging Professionals to develop their own skills, discover talents and gain new experiences under the direction of those with many more years of knowledge. As vast and broad as our profession can be at times, many Emerging Professionals look for guidance to help navigate the ever changing world of architecture and requirements to become an architect. Darden Architects, Inc. believes mentorship passes on the professionalism, integrity and quality of the practice from one generation to the next.

In a time when many practices are being challenged by the economy, Darden Architects has continued to stand by their commitment to foster young talent, support licensure, and teach their interns about the profession and practice of architecture. In 2009, they received the 2009-2012 IDP Firm, nationally recognizing their support of IDP and licensure.

Darden Architects, Inc. has set a standard of mentorship and support for Emerging Professionals that stands out locally, statewide and even nationally. The firm leaders are actively involved in local community and professional related organizations, illustrating the importance of the architect's role in shaping community and society as a whole. Additionally, many of the Emerging Professionals at Darden Architects, Inc. serve as leaders and volunteers in their community and their profession, further continuing the cycle of stewardship.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Paul Halajian
AIA
President
American Institute of Architects California Council
Academy for Emerging Professionals
Firm Mentorship Award Letter of Support

1303 J Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, California 95814-2935
Telephone 916/448-9082
Facsimile 916/442-5346
http://www.aiacc.org

Dear Academy for Emerging Professionals,

Darden Architects, Inc. illustrates the value and importance of Firm Mentorship. The American Institute of Architects nationally acknowledges the significance of mentoring in the AIA Code of Ethics stating all “members should recognize and fulfill their obligation to nurture fellow professionals as they progress through all stages of their career, beginning with professional education in the academy, progressing through internship, and continuing throughout their career.” Mentorship is not only an Ethical Standard of the American Institute of Architects, it is a core value of Darden Architects and the foundation of our practice.

Since 1959, Darden Architects has created Central California architecture through design solutions that impact the community and create quality and enduring architecture. We are an innovative, passionate and professional firm that emphasizes teamwork, commitment and individual growth. Projects completed by this office have received local, state and national recognition. With that being said, the Principals of Darden Architects bring a wealth of experience to the firm and it’s Emerging Professionals. They recognize it is their role to support the profession and good-works in their community, and to also respect the dignity and recognize the merit of each employee. Our firm prides itself as being a “Teaching Firm” that especially supports entry level professionals with their career goals. These tenets are evident by Darden Architects being awarded the 2009-2012 National IDP Firm award for our outstanding intern program.

Our firm believes in providing real-world project settings, with hands-on experience in order to foster motivated and talented individuals wishing to develop their abilities. We encourage our Emerging Professionals through in-house seminars, IDP and ARE support, job-site tours, and industry organization involvement. We support the natural aspirations of our Emerging Professionals who share a passion for the profession, a commitment to their career and a desire to give back to their community.

Darden Architects, Inc. has always been dedicated to the continual growth and development of our employees. Our Firm leaders believe in quality, efficiency, sustainability, innovation, dedication, and professionalism, and strive to pass these traits on to our Emerging Professionals.

Sincerely,

Edwin S. Darden Jr., Architect, AIA
edd@dardenarchitects.com
6790 N. West Ave. | Fresno, CA 93711 | 559.448.8051 | Fax: 559.446.1765
www.dardenarchitects.com
Mentoring

Darden Architects’ leadership is committed to mentoring and developing Emerging Professionals.

Darden Architects has made a commitment to the development of its employees and to integrate mentoring into the firm’s culture. Each of the firm’s licensed Principals and Associates act as a mentor to the firm’s interns and employees in the firm with less experience. Additionally, each acts as a supervisor to a different intern. It is the responsibility of firm mentors to provide the interns with guidance and encouragement, be supportive of their goals, and provide insight into the profession of architecture. Mentors at Darden Architects help their interns develop strategies for training progress and set milestones to achieve their professional goals.

Mentors and Emerging Professionals are paired by the firm’s Intern Development Program (IDP) Director, a Principal of the firm, keeping in mind interests, education, experience and career goals. There is a “no questions asked” policy if an intern or mentor wants to make a change. The firm’s IDP Director acts as the sounding board for both mentors and interns, making sure relationships develop and expectations are being met.

In addition to the IDP mentor and intern relationship, the firm has a history of taking special interest in the development of young architects. New members of the firm are paired informally with someone with more experience ensuring that they receive the proper training and explanation of firm standards. This ensures that no new employee gets overwhelmed, and that they receive positive reinforcement for growth.

Mentors meet with their interns regularly, but formally at each quarterly group meeting to check their progress in IDP and to provide support in the intern’s quest for licensure. Additionally, a lunch is hosted by the firm several times a year. This gives supervisors, mentors and interns an opportunity to share experiences and helpful hints as a group, thus creating a support network for those involved.

The firm also encourages interns to find a mentor outside of the firm and will assist the intern in finding a good match if they need assistance. Many members of the firm provide the leadership of industry organizations such as AIA, CSI, and USGBC and are familiar with other professionals in the community. This makes assisting interns in finding mentors that are a good match outside of the firm easy to do.
AIACC Firm Mentorship Award
Supportive Exhibits

Mentors: Firm Leadership

Edwin S. Darden, Jr. AIA
Principal
41 Years Experience with the Firm
43 Years Experience in the Profession

Martin E. Dietz AIA CCS LEED® AP
Principal
32 Years Experience with the Firm
32 Years Experience in the Profession

Edwin C. Goodwin AIA
Principal
26 Years Experience with the Firm
34 Years Experience in the Profession

Grant E. Dodson AIA
Principal
26 Years Experience with the Firm
27 Years Experience in the Profession

Robert L. Petithomme AIA LEED AP
Principal
14 Years Experience with the Firm
29 Years Experience in the Profession

DeDe Darnell ASID IIDA LEED® AP
Principal
17 Years Experience with the Firm
27 Years Experience in the Profession

Michael K. Fennacy AIA
Principal
17 Years Experience with the Firm
24 Years Experience in the Profession

Antonio J. Avila AIA LEED® AP
Principal
16 Years Experience with the Firm
18 Years Experience in the Profession
Supervising

Darden Architects’ Principals and Associates have found it advantageous to be supervisors to the firm’s Emerging Professionals.

Darden Architects’ approach to the supervisor and intern relationship works in tandem with one of the firm’s core values of emphasizing the team in the firm’s structure and layout. The open office layout, with firm Principals, Associates, experienced architects, young architects and interns interspersed, is intentionally done to specifically enhance the intern’s access to needed assistance. This gives interns the opportunity to observe the daily practice of architecture at all levels and provides the opportunity for timely supervising/mentoring for day-to-day feedback.

Each of the firm’s Principals and Associates are involved as supervisors to interns in the NCARB Intern Development Program (IDP). Each supervisor directly oversees the work of an intern on a daily basis and regularly assesses the quality of their work. Because feedback is provided daily, a positive work environment has been created. Supervisors certify documentation quarterly.

Because all firm Principals and Associates are involved in supervising the interns, the progress of each can be closely monitored. Areas where training is lacking are identified, and in some cases anticipated. Needed opportunities are recognized immediately and arrangements can be made to provide them without delay. Regular discussions occur regarding intern requirements when project teams are being assembled or reassigned. All Supervisors are knowledgeable about the progress and general capabilities of each intern.

Each of the firm’s Principals and Associates are regularly provided with information so they are knowledgeable about the most current IDP and ARE requirements. Information is provided in the form of e-mail updates, presentations by interns, and information placed on the Emerging Professionals site on the firm’s internal network intranet site (refer to pg. 11-12) For the supervisor’s convenience, the intranet also provides links to relevant Websites, resources and references.

“Darden Architects’ involvement in the community, support of the profession and breadth of experience made the Firm my top choice.”

– Haley Gipe
Learning Opportunities

Darden Architects, Inc.’s commitment to excellence is apparent in the way that training and the sharing of knowledge is second nature to everyone, regardless of years in the practice or position in the firm. The firm recognizes that the people are the most valuable asset of an architectural firm and spends a considerable amount of time and resources on educational opportunities. These opportunities include:

**MENTOR LUNCHES**
Principals, Associates and firm “experts” present topics relevant to the practice of architecture and lead interactive discussions in the firm’s training room during the lunch hour.

**PROJECT SPECIFIC LUNCH & LEARNS**
Project specific presentations are given by project teams, highlighting unique aspects of the projects and lessons learned.

**IDP PROGRAM**
The firm has developed a comprehensive IDP program that facilitates opportunities for interns to fulfill IDP requirements and insures they are gaining exposure to situations that allow them to gain a wider knowledge base.

**ARE STUDY MATERIALS**
The firm provides a full range of study materials for the ARE and maintains a study area for those studying for exams of all types. *(refer to pg 7)*

**LEED/CCS/INTERIORS STUDY**
The firm provides study materials, one-on-one instruction, mock exams and arranges study groups preparing for exams.
CONSTRUCTION & PROJECT TOURS
Project tours are used to illustrate field related issues and examples of unique features of projects.

LIBRARY
A resource library of technical product data, current national, state and local building codes, samples of building materials and finishes is maintained.

VENDOR/PRODUCT LUNCHES
Lunch and Learns providing technical and product information are conducted by product reps or vendors and are attended by architects and designers of all levels. So far in 2011 we have completed 44 Lunch and Learns, with many more scheduled.

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
The firm encourages participation in professional organizations and provides reimbursement of dues and meeting fees for those that are active.

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING SESSIONS
Technology Training sessions are provided to all employees when new technology is implemented. The firm's intranet is also a resource for employees to refer to for technology information and “how-to's.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
AIA articles, trade magazines, white papers and AIA professional practice publications available to all.

Darden Architects understands that the foundation of the practice of architecture has it’s roots in education and mentoring, and has developed a varied and inclusive education program that supports the professional development of it’s employees.
Mentor Lunch - Example Announcement

MENTOR LUNCH

Topic: Agreement for Architectural Services
Presented by: Ed Darden, Jr., AIA
When: 12:15 - 1:00 p.m., Aug. 20th, 22nd, 27th, and 29th
Where: Training Room

Description:
This presentation will cover one of our most recent RFP’s. Included in this presentation will be the Agreement for Architectural Services that was subsequently offered by the District when we were selected, and the ensuing negotiations which ultimately led to mutually agreed upon terms.

Through your participation, you should:
• Become more familiar with a function of the business normally handled by the principals.
• Become more informed on issues of liability, responsibility, risk and profitability of Architectural practice.
• Gain insight into why successful contract negotiations are the foundation of a successful practice, and why you may lack the courage to be successful at it.
• Gain a better understanding of the inter-relationship between the decisions we make about our own practice when we enter into an agreement for services, and the profession of Architecture now and into the future.
• Become charged and motivated to accept responsibility for whatever role you are called upon to play in the unfolding story of our profession and be willing to “Pay it Forward” for your own good and for those that will follow.
• Understand why the AIA is critical to our wellbeing.

This information will be presented in a series of four sessions. Attendees should try to attend all four sessions to get the most out of this presentation. Please contact Rebecca if you would like to attend.

The sessions begin at 12:15 p.m. and end at 1:00 p.m. Please eat your lunch between 12:00 p.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Those wishing a box lunch can pre-order for $5. Please contact Kristi.
Architect Registration Examination Support

Darden Architects is committed to assisting emerging professionals on their path to licensure.

Darden Architects has demonstrated a commitment in assisting emerging professionals on their path to licensure by providing a study area and a full range of study materials devoted to preparing for the Architect Registration Examination (ARE). Because of the high cost of study and preparatory materials, the firm has dedicated financial resources to equip this extensive library. The library includes reference books, the complete edition of Kaplan ARE Learning Systems for all divisions of the ARE, NCARB study guides and mock exams, and NCARB in-house software installed at three workstation. Study materials in the ARE library are available to all interns and can be “checked out” to be used outside of the study area.

Experienced architects in the firm guide interns through the ARE process and one-on-one instruction is provided to anyone that feels they need additional help in preparing for their exams. Because the Principals and Associates of the firm are directly involved with interns as mentors and supervisors, they can recognize when extra help may be needed and know who would be best to provide the help.

Darden Architects compensates interns for 100% of the cost of all ARE divisions once they have successfully passed all sections, and provides paid time off to take the ARE. A celebration of the achievement of licensure occurs when an intern passes all ARE divisions.
Commitment to the NCARB Intern Development Program

Darden Architects actively embraces the Intern Development Program by making licensure and education and professional development integral parts of the firm’s core value.

Darden Architects has a long history of building a culture of learning and mentoring. We feel it is to our advantage an our professional responsibility to train interns. The underlying goal is to help interns complete the NCARB Intern Development Program (IDP) and pass the ARE. What we’ve found is that at the same time, the firm benefits because intern education and training provide a solid foundation for the firm’s practice. It has an additional benefit of helping to attract some of the brightest and most talented young people to our firm.

Darden Architects received the prestigious Intern Development program “IDP Firm 2009-2012” Presented by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Darden Architects is one of only 22 firms nationally and 1 of 2 in California that are recognized as an IDP Firm.

To show the firm’s commitment to IDP, its IDP Director is a Principal of the firm. The IDP Director is an advisor to the interns, manages the calendar, sets up presentations and is responsible for making sure that all interns are being given the training opportunities they need. The firm's IDP Director makes sure that interns are gaining exposure to situations or supplementary education that allows them to gain a wider knowledge base of the profession as a whole. We understand that each intern advances through IDP at a different pace and with a different level of understanding. Darden Architects feels it is our responsibility to insure that each intern is provided with opportunities, resources and unwavering support as they make their way through IDP.

All interns at the firm are assisted with obtaining their NCARB Record as soon as they are eligible. The firm pays 100% of the costs associated with the NCARB Records Application fee and any IDP Maintenance fees throughout the completion of the ARE.

Darden Architects has made the “Emerging Professionals Companion (EPC),” “The Architects Handbook of Professional Practice” and “The Construction Specifications Institute Project Resource Manual- CSI Manual of Practice” available to all interns. Presentations and discussions are developed to work in conjunction with the EPC.

The firm maintains a video library of presentations and IDP discussions that can be checked out and viewed by anyone that missed a presentation or just wants to view it again. The firm also provides relevant webinars as an additional educational opportunity for interns, supervisors and mentors.

Interns are encouraged to mentor each other as a peer group. The firm’s IDP Director provides insight as needed but generally just facilitates the needs of the group. We feel that interns can learn from and help each other, building camaraderie and a sense of team along the way. Interns frequently meet to discuss presentations and exercises, as well as have discussions to make sure everyone is understanding the process and are getting their questions answered.

Our firm has shown support of IDP by having two of its interns become IDP Auxiliary Coordinators. The firm supports the two interns in the efforts this position requires. They have made presentations to the firm’s leadership, other interns, other firms, and to local schools and colleges.
Darden Architects

Darden Architects has an internal network called the intranet with resources and information for all employees. There is also a dedicated section for Emerging Professionals. The Intranet is meant to be a resource to interns, supervisors, mentors and all Emerging Professionals in the firm seeking references and wanting to learn more about certain subject matter. There are Revit Resources, Project Management links and resources, Specifications support, and an entire section dedication to licensure information in the Emerging Professionals section. The Emerging Professionals section of the Darden Architects Intranet aims to assist all interns making their way through the IDP and ARE process. It contains information on the California Architects Board, CIDP/IDP Programs, ARE, California Supplemental Examination, NCARB Rules of Conduct, and information for Supervisors and Mentors. Links to the “Emerging Professionals Companion,” “National Young Architects Forum” and “AIA/IDP Best Practices” are included. Exercises developed from presentations and recommended exercises from the “Emerging Professionals Companion” are also posted for intern's easy reference.

Darden Architects Intranet - Resources
Professional development and learning is the cornerstone of Darden Architects. Several of Darden Architects’ core values support a learning environment. They include promoting the professional development of employees, supporting the profession and good works in our community, emphasizing the team in our office structure rather than the individual, and recognizing and respecting individuals’ merits and dignity.

Darden Architects has established a Professional Workshop program to contribute to the profession of architecture through experience sharing with students. Each presenter has their own distinct qualified area of expertise, and, through the dissemination of their experiences, students preparing to enter the working world will gain better insight as to how the conceptual methods taught in school will apply to their professional careers. The workshops include:

- Partner’s Forum
  (Partners of the firm answer questions developed by IDP members)
- Programming New Schools
- School Planning and Design
- Construction Documents
- Specification Writing
- Information Management
- Substitution Procedures
- Construction Administration
- Project Delivery Methods
- Project Budgeting
- The Profession of Interior Design
- Owner/Architect Agreement and Professional Practice
- Business Management: Tracking Billings
- The Perfect Statement of Qualifications
- LEED AP Exam
- Graphic Design in an Architecture Office
- Building Information Modeling

Darden Architects has a scholarship program available to students from the San Joaquin Valley of Central California. The firm wants to help local students interested in the profession and hopes to encourage them to come back to the Valley upon graduation. We have found that students are very interested in what firms are doing for interns in the way of the NCARB IDP. We have found our firm’s robust IDP Group to be a major selling point to students when we are recruiting.

The firm encourages professional development on all levels and is generous in sponsoring employee training internally, locally, and nationally. Members of the firm are involved with the local AIA Board, USGBC committees, and CSI Product Shows, to name a few. The firm supports its employees in their efforts to be involved by reimbursing them for costs associated with dues and meeting fees.

Firms can support professionalism of the highest level in the practice of architecture by starting at the student level and continuing their support through a variety of methods for interns, young architects, and experienced architects.
Dear Academy For Emerging Professionals Awards Panel,

As an Emerging Professional currently pursuing my architectural license, I’ve come to realize that mentorship is not only paramount to my success as an architect but it plays a monumental role in shaping my career as a professional the person I am to become. After six years at California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo I obtained my Bachelors in Architecture, a professional accredited degree, along with three Minors in Environmental Design, Art and Design, and Sustainable Environments. Needless to say, like many Emerging Professionals, I enjoyed my scholastic term and have a passion for learning about the architectural profession and all things built environment.

Upon graduation, Darden Architects was the next goal I set on my path to architectural licensure. Their involvement in the community, support of the profession and breadth of experience made the Firm my top choice three years ago when I was job searching. Since being offered an intern-architect position at Darden Architects, I have continuously been given opportunities to learn and exposure to real-world projects. Moreover, my dedication to the profession through my increased involvement with the AIA has not only been fully supported but also encouraged.

As the current IDP State Coordinator for AIA California Council, when I speak to interns or students and give them examples from my own experience as an intern at Darden Architects I’m constantly surprised to hear that other firms are not as encouraging as my own. I am fortunate to work for Firm leaders who believe in me, and take time to bestow their wisdom and knowledge upon me. In my brief 3 years at Darden Architects my fervor for the profession and drive to become a Registered Architect here in California has only grown largely due to the mentorship of Firm Leaders that believe in fostering the next generation of architects.

Cordially,

Haley Gipe
ASSOC. IDP LEED AP | AIACC IDP State Coordinator
haleyg@dardenarchitects.com
6790 N. West Ave. | Fresno, CA 93711 | 559.448.8051 | Fax: 559.446.1765
www.dardenarchitects.com
June 17, 2011

AIA California Council
Re: AIA CC Firm Mentorship Award

Dear AIA CC Awards Committee,

Let me tell you a story about how Darden Architects has made an extraordinary effort to mentor me on my late-to-architecture path in life.

I did not go to Cal Poly SLO. I did not go to Berkeley. I don’t even have a degree in Architecture. Certainly, I thought, there is no road to licensure with that type of background. People with degrees in English and Interior Design are past the point in their lives that architecture is a viable option, so I thought. I imagined the only way to become an architect was to get straight A’s in high school and go to an exclusive university.

I learned in life later, after a dispassionate year teaching, that life really was about finding something I absolutely loved to do, and working as hard at it as I could. So I went back to a local state college and pursued a degree in Interior Design. I was thrilled when I discovered specifications as an intern at Darden Architects – English and design combined! I thought written architecture was certainly the closest I could come to any kind of architecture, so I was joyfully pursuing excellence in that skill set. But I knew that true excellence in specifications comes from the licensed Architect. It was like sitting on the moon with a telescope pointed at Earth. It felt close, but just not the same planet.

Thanks to Darden Architects, I discovered California has another path to licensure. Darden Architects has an IDP group that they allow anyone in the office to be a part of. The IDP group sets the agenda for what they want and need to learn—based on the training areas set up by NCARB’s IDP. Thanks to the IDP group, we have an extensive education and mentorship system. Most importantly, the AIACC IDP state coordinator gave me the most valuable piece of information: The path of licensure in California can start entirely with experience! This is an opportunity of a lifetime. I really had no idea it was possible!

Due to Darden Architect’s support of the IDP program and the true intent of Intern Development, they have transferred me from specifications into actual design training. They are teaching me Revit (I am the first of the generation that will rarely use Auto-CAD) and the many other necessary skills. I am impressed with the sacrifice Darden Architects made to move me from my production work in specifications, and place me as a fledgling designer under Bob Petithomme, a firm Partner, as I learn the practice of architecture.

In this tough economy, I understand the importance of the bottom line to have all hands on deck making projects happen. I am proud and honored that Darden Architects is embracing the significant sacrifice to invest in me on my road of licensure.

Darden has taught me there is a road for me to Architecture. Darden is teaching me every day how to get there. All I have to do is hang on to our IDP group, and they will take me through it.

I think that is extraordinary. And I feel that my life has been made extraordinary because of Darden Architect’s commitment to their Emerging Professionals.

Thank you.

Kjirsten L. Harpain, CSI, CCS, LEED AP BD+C, NCIDQ® Certificate No. 026181

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARCHITECTURE</th>
<th>PLANNING</th>
<th>INTERIORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edwin S. Darden FAIA</td>
<td>Edwin S. Darden Jr. AIA</td>
<td>Martin E. Dietz AIA CCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeDe Darnell ASID</td>
<td>Robert L. Petithomme AIA</td>
<td>Sean A. Mendoza AIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin C. Goodwin AIA</td>
<td>Grant E. Dodson AIA</td>
<td>Michael K. Fennacy AIA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>