Ian Merker, AIA

Candidate for Young Architects Forum (YAF) Director, North

Biography

I became obsessed with drawing cities and urban elements from a young age, getting in trouble for doodling and daydreaming about future metropolises. I worked through college at Cal Poly Pomona, and spent my savings traveling on a budget. A year of study in the UK secured my interest in preservation and a fascination for modern design. By learning Regenerative Studies, an integrated systems approach to design is intrinsic.

I live and work in my hometown. My prized projects are a neighborhood catalyst transit oriented development, a terminus light rail station, and high performance prototype homes in the desert.

Mission Statement

As an Associate Director, my goal was to keep future architects excited about the profession. My first action was to put a Young Architect on the board to encourage new ideas at the table. Emerging professionals are either looking for work or spending very little time designing. Community involvement and encouraging good design is the only way to preserve the future of architects.

As the AIA Central Valley Film Curator, I share the beauty of design with the public. Films on architecture are a popular medium for encouraging interest in what we do and give a forum for discourse. It also helps me keep my finger on the pulse of Emerging Professionals, a group that attends film events over other AIA activities. Our outreach can also work as member retention.

In metro areas without university-level architecture programs, we would have a brain drain if not for cultural investment and mentoring by locals. Through high school level mentoring, we plant a seed with future architects, but we must maintain a connection through college to get them to return. We need to maintain synergy between academia and multiple job markets to keep in tune with the expanding role of the profession.