



Dear Honor Awards Jury

AIA OHIO HONOR
AWARDS JURY

—
AIA OHIO
400 W. WILSON BRIDGE
ROAD; SUITE 120
WORTHINGTON, OH
43085

—
06.06.21

—
RE: CHRISTOPHER
MEYERS, AIA OHIO
MENTOR AWARD
NOMINATION

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to nominate Christopher Meyers, AIA for the AIA Ohio 2021 Mentor Award. Chris and I first met when he was an emerging professional at my firm, WSA. Even then, Chris took an active role in modeling professional behavior, working with new employees and summer interns, and developing standards to ease the transition from the academy to the professional realm. With my encouragement, Chris started his own practice, primarily to explore practice unencumbered by precedent, and with a more direct and intimate relationship to emerging professionals.

As a firm leader, Chris harnesses mentorship to accelerate career growth among employees and works to craft specific development pathways for each associate. He is patient, measured, and encouraging and helps emerging professionals find and exploit their own personal gift. The firm has also become known for a culture of giving where associates are encouraged to support their peers, creating a virtuous circle of mentorship.

Chris is a mentor to Knowlton School of Architecture students, consistently volunteering to present best practices and inspire through engaging stories and real-life examples. He and his firm have sponsored nearly twenty graduate students through scholarship offerings and one-on-one engagement, and he connects students to opportunities for early applied learning. His work on the Columbus State Community College advisory board has served to strengthen alternative pathways to architectural careers for a diverse student population.

Throughout Greater Columbus, Chris is a tireless advocate for social support systems and uses his network to connect Meyers + Associates employees to volunteer opportunities. Here, Chris sparks a routine of giving among mentees who leverage experiences to expand their influence in the community. He shapes connected, engaged advocates one associate at a time.

It's not often that firm leaders prioritize mentorship. Most focus on design, profitability, and continuity. Chris, however, sees mentorship as a foundation for success, and his priorities greatly expand his architectural impact. For these reasons, I believe that Chris is an ideal model mentor, and I strongly encourage you to recognize Christopher Meyers, AIA with the AIA Ohio Mentor Award.

Yours very truly,

TIMOTHY C. HAWK, FAIA; PRESIDENT
AT-LARGE DIRECTOR, AIA NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

—
WSA; 982 S FRONT STREET; COLUMBUS, OH 43206



AIA Ohio
Attn: AIA Ohio Awards Committee
400 W. Wilson Bridge Rd., Ste 120
Worthington, OH 43085

June 10, 2021

Dear Awards Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I offer the below letter of support to Chris Meyers, AIA, for the AIA Ohio Mentor Award. Chris is passionate about mentoring aspiring architects toward successful and fulfilling careers, while also encouraging them to make a difference in their communities. As a firm owner, Chris understands the importance of a student's transition to practice and the necessity of licensure. As such, Chris primarily focuses his time and energy on staff who are not yet registered architects, creating mentoring programs and being a mentor himself.

Chris understands how connecting mentorship and volunteerism contributes to the leadership development of emerging professionals. Within his practice, Chris created a leadership academy to mentor staff professionally. The program includes one-on-one weekly mentoring sessions, group mentoring, and reverse mentoring between younger and older staff members. Unique to the program is its "citizen architect" component that focuses on volunteerism. Firm members are offered time in service for up to 120 hours annually to give back to their community and to serve others. Over twenty years of practice, 90 staff members have engaged with over 50 charitable organizations.

Beyond his firm, Chris championed the Office Associateship program at the Knowlton School of Architecture at The Ohio State University. The program supports an endowment to sponsor graduate students while also fostering collaboration and mentorship between the sponsoring firm and graduate student. As an advisory board member, Chris leads the engagement of over 75 firms who collectively provide over \$350,000 annually in financial support to graduate level students.

Chris is extremely interested in promoting architectural registration. Serving his second term as a Member of the State Board of Architects of Ohio, Chris promotes the development of emerging professionals seeking registration. Chris has pushed for refinements and efficiencies in the registration process through the AXP mentorship programs. As an AXP Mentor advisor to over 60 individuals, 97% have become licensed architects. In addition, he works with the five schools of architecture within Ohio, mentoring hundreds of students on the benefits of registration. During his term on the state board there has been a 24 percent increase in AXP applicants. Because of Chris' success, he was sought out by NCARB to lead their Futures Collaboration, a program that explores challenges and opportunities in the profession.

Chris Meyers, AIA is truly worthy of the AIA Ohio Mentor Award. His contributions to mentorship in the profession will have a lasting impact for generations.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Daskalov", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aleksandr S. Daskalov, AIA
2021 AIA Columbus President



Through his established and innovative mentorship practices, Christopher Meyers, AIA has guided aspiring architects to successful careers through interactive experience sharing. His committed efforts and influence at local, regional and national levels has had a profound and positive impact on mentorship within the profession.

Background

At early stages in his career, Christopher Meyers, AIA was guided and influenced by some of Ohio's most prominent architects. His own training was rooted in experiential methods of building skills and knowledge through practice. Recognizing the evolution of his own successes, Meyers has sought to help cultivate the careers of aspiring professionals through his interactive engagement and guidance.

Meyers built upon his own training methods and sought to establish new ones in his own practice. In his twentieth year as the founding owner and principal of Meyers + Associates, a thirty person design studio based in Columbus, Ohio, Meyers leads a practice with a focus on three primary mentorship objectives;

**Development of community focused architects.
Enhancing academic to professional transitions.
Promoting the pursuit of architectural registration.**

Mentorship is the fundamental basis of practice for Meyers. With recent recognition by Architect Magazine as a Top 50 firm nationally, with particular mention of the mentorship focused efforts in the practice, Meyers has implemented interactive techniques to develop the next generation of architect leaders.

As a graduate of The Knowlton School of Architecture at The Ohio State University with Bachelors and Master degrees, having taught within the program and now serving on their advisory board, Meyers is deeply committed to enhancing the academic experience for students, not only at his own alma mater but at universities throughout the state. Through his promotion of various programs enhancing the transitional experience of students to practice and speaking to students on the benefits of architectural registration, Meyers has established a strong link between professional practice and academic experiences through his engaged mentorship of students.

Initially appointed by Governor Kasich and then re appointed by Governor DeWine, Meyers is serving in his second term as a Member of The State Board of Architects of Ohio with a primary objective of promoting the development of emerging professionals seeking registration. As a State Board Member and past president, He leads developed programs within NCARB at a National level, these initiatives have been adopted by numerous other states for their proven success in developing mentorship based approaches to advance the profession.

Mentorship through innovative practice

Within his civic focused practice, Meyers implemented an in house advanced leadership academy to mentor staff in their professional development and personal community service pursuits.

Meyers engages with each staff member weekly in small group mentoring sessions. These sessions focus on all aspects of registration, career development and community service. This approach of focused mentorship strengthens the profession, builds leaders, and has instilled the importance of an architects role to positively impact the lives of others.

In practice, Meyers has also promoted the concept of reverse mentorship with younger professionals sharing their skills, talents, experiences, and techniques that they have with older professionals to further foster a mutual collaborative dialogue.

Mentoring Citizen Architects

Early in his practice, Meyers was troubled with the lack of engaged activism and support of community focused efforts by design professionals in his community, Meyers sought to change the diminished spirit of volunteerism while also further engaging with his Mentees in a more profound way.

Meyers took on the opportunity to create an initiative to guide others to discover the benefits of giving back through volunteerism and to instill upon young professionals in architecture the significance of their role in shaping the community. As a model for Mentor guided volunteerism, Meyers has promoted service to others through charitable participation and community outreach impacting thousands in the community.

Meyers led his Mentees and others to develop their own passion to serve others. Over 20 years of practice, 90 of his staff have participated in outside service organizations. Firm members are offered time in service for up to 120 hours annually as a benefit, this program encourages staff members to find their passion in serving others and enlist co workers, friends and family to participate and experience the benefits of their volunteer efforts. Staff members have engaged with over 50 charitable organizations and civic focused efforts.

Meyers Mentor guided volunteerism program has exposed the young professionals he mentors to the opportunities they have to impact their world through service and volunteerism with their skills they have in architecture.

Mentorship Adapted

Meyers has recognized that the traditional model of Mentor-Mentee interaction has changed and evolved throughout his career. The traditional model with face to face dialogue that has been the foundation of most of our development as professionals has been pressured to adapt.

Given the impact of the global pandemic and also with the advent of so many useful advanced technologies, our communication methods are no longer bound to mentorship in a conventional manner also offering a broader reach.

Driven by early dialogue with his younger staff and other Mentees at the onset of the 2020 COVID pandemic, Meyers quickly realized that with separation, the strength of his connections to his Mentees was at risk.

He grew concerned with their overall professional development and their outlook on their chosen profession. During the pandemic, with remote work, isolation and global uncertainty many emerging professionals were a bit lost. Mentoring towards situational awareness, confidence and finding stability was the root of his approach towards mentoring during the pandemic.

By utilizing multiple means of interactive technologies, Meyers was able to maintain if not flourish his connection to those he is engaging with through Mentorship.

Joining with AIA Columbus and their ARCHways emerging professionals mentorship program, Meyers participated on multiple panel discussions and interactive sessions with young professionals in the community, sharing experience and a confident tone to reassure others in seeing the potential positive outcomes of the difficult situation.

Recognizing that communication was still the critical means of Mentoring, Meyers engaged with his Mentees and a larger network of aspiring architects to offer a series of video presentations covering topics such as communication techniques, preparation methods for registration exams, job site observation standards, volunteerism in practice and many other topics of interest. Each one leading to robust conversation and a stronger mentoring experience.

This shift in methodology found great success and has become a critical approach for Meyers to reach a broader audience of those yearning for professional guidance and opportunities to develop in their career.



Mentoring through COVID

When faced with the challenge of how the COVID pandemic impacted interpersonal communication and traditional mentorship, Meyers pivoted to develop a series of video presentations to send to mentees as a means to maintain interactive dialogue.

Mentoring a students transition to practice

Beyond his own firm, Meyers established a connection between practicing architects interested in mentoring architectural students. He championed the Office Associateship and Mentorship programs at The Knowlton School of Architecture at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

The program supports an endowment to sponsor graduate level students. The students engage with the firms that offer extended mentorship and networking opportunities to these emerging professionals. As a founding firm in the Office Associateship program, Meyers promoted the benefits with other firm owners in Columbus and beyond growing the program by engaging with participating firms. This program has fostered strong mentorship-based connections to students and professionals and has since been established at multiple other academic institutions as a means to promote alumni and firm mentorship and engagement with graduate level emerging professionals.

On behalf of the program and as an Advisory Board Member, Meyers leads the engagement of over 75 firms for the Office Associateship and Mentorship programs who collectively provide over \$350,000 annually in financial support of graduate level students.

Mentoring to professional registration

Through his active engagement with mentoring emerging professionals Meyers advances the profession through communication, education, and interaction. He has established initiatives to increase the number of licensure applicants through a renewed effort focused on student engagement. In his leadership roles within The Ohio Architects Board and NCARB, Meyers has championed refinements and efficiencies in the registration process through the AXP mentorship programs that have directly elevated architectural registration success rates.

Meyers has been sought out by NCARB to guide their Futures Collaborative for his leadership in creative mentorship programs with a focus on promoting licensure. The Futures Collaborative, was established in 2017 by NCARB to explore challenges and opportunities facing the profession, the collaborative is composed of leading architects, experts in emerging techniques, and architectural licensing board members. His mentorship model of practice and his promotion of professional advancement in Ohio for The State Board have garnered the attention at a national level. His successful methods are being implemented within numerous other State Architectural Registration Boards. For the Ohio Board, Meyers has led communication with the five schools of architecture in Ohio mentoring hundreds of architectural students on the benefits of registration, impacting the quantity of AXP applicants in the state with a 24% increase within his terms.

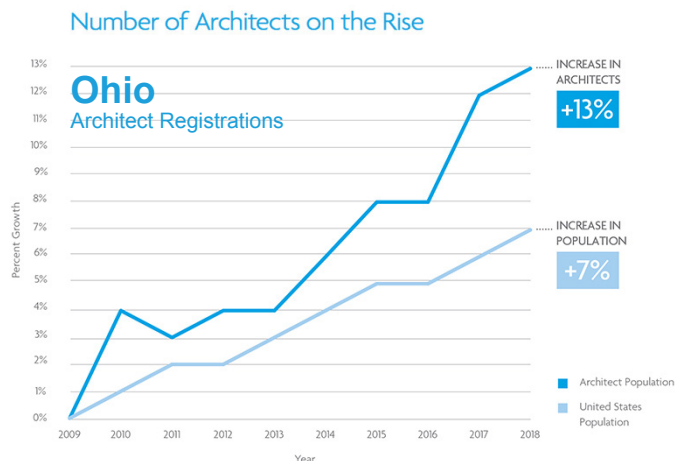


Knowlton School of Architecture Mentor networking event

'The work of The Ohio Architects Board serves as a model for others. Chris, your ability to drive policy change and significantly elevate the success rates of young architects passing the ARE has simply been fantastic.'

Michael J. Armstrong

CEO of The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)

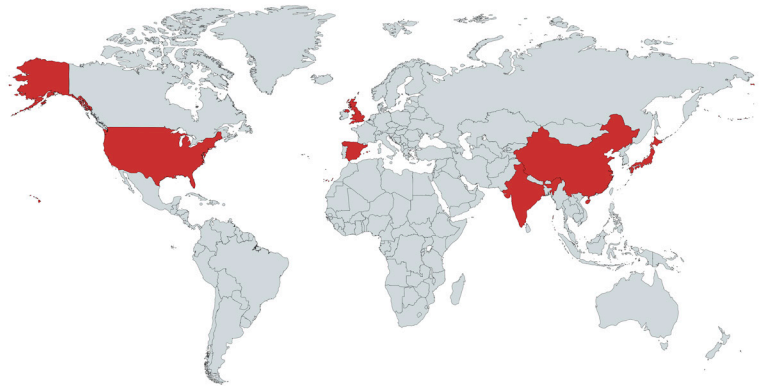


Data provided by NCARB By The Numbers

Through his leadership roles Meyers strives to help cultivate the next generation of architects not only seeking professional practice but also leading organizations. He has been an AXP Mentor advisor to over 60 individuals with a 97% success rate of gaining architectural registration. Mentees within his firm and outside of his practice have gone on to new opportunities in firms around the world, many in leadership roles using the same mentorship training techniques.

"The ongoing mentorship that I have been so fortunate to receive from you has helped give me such clarity on my path forward. Understanding not only my path to licensure but also a method of practice that guided a strategy to develop my own firm. Now, after a few years in I want to express my enormous gratitude for helping me shape my own company modeled around your mentorship based model of practice."

Former Meyers + Associates Architectural Associate



The following is a partial list of architectural mentees. Those denoted in bold represent individuals that have gone on to positions as firm owners, principals and design directors.

Kerianne Ours
Hristina Panovska, AIA
Brian Peterson, AIA
Amanda Pidgeon, AIA
Alexandria Sandhu, AIA
Jay Schwartz, AIA
Michael Schwartz, Assoc. AIA
Melissa Shanks, AIA
Charity Sims, Assoc. AIA
Rachael Smale, AIA
Darren Spensiero, AIA
Jeff Squire, AIA
Michael Testrake, Assoc. AIA

Christopher Meyers, AIA has based his career and practice around the vast beneficial aspects of mentorship and the cultivation of emerging professionals. Through innovative methods in his own practice he has shaped and impacted the professional development of many accomplished young architects and design professionals. His broad reach to the academic environment and promotion of mentorship based programs have created a stronger link for students to engage with seasoned professionals and their firms. In his leadership positions with The Ohio Board of Architects, NCARB and its Futures Collaborative Committee, Meyers is taking his successful techniques and efforts to promote mentorship in practice to a national level.

RENARD, LLC

June 9, 2021

RE: AIA Ohio Mentor Award

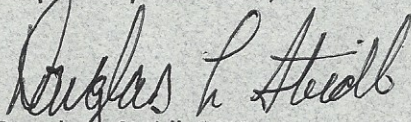
This letter is an endorsement to the nomination of Christopher Meyers, AIA for the AIA Ohio Mentorship Award based upon several significant aspects of his mentoring that distinguish him from other candidates:

- His mentorship is disciplined and generated in reaction to the happenstance methods by which he encountered mentorship on his way to becoming a registered architect. Steps in the process designed by Chris are communicated through documented steps, organized materials and directed conversations.
- His mentorship is creative. Combinations of events, discussions and even videos coordinated and produced by Mr. Meyers serve to present the issues facing architects that are pertinent to their registration exams and knowledge accumulation. During Covid-19 video clips to generate discussion through electronic means were produced and starred in by Chris.
- His mentorship seeks to discover the passion of the mentee. A passionate vision provides direction for the emerging professional. Chris's passion for creating better communities is demonstrative of this goal. Mentees see a living example of how passion can excite desire, ignite action, give purpose to one's work, and lead to a better world.
- His mentorship is diverse and expansive. Architects benefitting from Chris's mentorship are working across the United States and around the world, literally. The mentees have been from numerous nations, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, and belief perspectives. Especially notable is the number of women he has assisted.
- His mentorship doesn't stop with the AXP, but through registration, and even when the individual becomes a design director or principle in a firm.

Christopher Meyers, AIA, as a member of the Ohio Architects Registration Board for seven years, has consistently voiced his strong support for mentorship programs, advocating for emerging professionals and working to facilitate the registration process, while seeking to assure that the health, safety and welfare of the public are maintained. I would emphasize the word "welfare" which epitomizes Chris's philosophy of design for and service to community. Through his service to NCARB, he has worked diligently to share his mentorship methodologies on a national scale.

Mr. Meyers truly lives mentorship. Please give serious consideration to awarding the AIA Ohio Mentorship Award to Christopher Meyers, AIA. He is certainly deserving.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas L. Steidl, FAIA

2005 President, The American Institute of Architects

2009 President, The National Architectural Accreditation Board

Dean Emeritus, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Kent State University

June 11, 2021

Dear AIA Ohio Board of Directors,

It is with much enthusiasm that I write in support of Christopher Meyers, AIA, for the 2021 AIA Ohio Mentor Award. I have had the pleasure of having Chris as a mentor for the last five years that I have worked at Meyers + Associates. As principal of the firm, Chris leads with compassion, respect, and a great deal of enthusiasm.

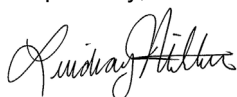
Despite the demand on his time that comes with running a firm with dozens of active projects, I have never experienced an instance where Chris was too busy to take a question from me. His open-door policy has provided myself and my colleagues with the confidence to speak up knowing that no question will be viewed as insignificant. This stems from Chris' own admission that his job is to cultivate young architects. He continually demonstrates this by choosing to sit down and talk through designs as opposed to leaving a set of red line markups on someone's desk for them to pick up. He understands that having a conversation about design is much more beneficial for the education of his employees.

In addition to being generous with his time, Chris' style of teaching is rooted in patience and respect. His years of experience as both an architect and a business leader have given him a wealth of knowledge that exceeds many of his staff, but he makes it a point to not single-handedly lead discussions within the office. All team members are treated as equals and given opportunities to voice their opinions. By allowing his staff to be active participants in the design process, we are able to develop our own critical thinking with the added benefit of gaining confidence through experience.

Chris' involvement in the profession extends beyond the office as well. He currently serves on the Ohio Board of Architects and as Board Chairman of the NCARB Futures Collaborative committee. It is not unusual for Chris to walk out of these meetings eager to share how the profession is developing to better shape the role of architects in the community.

The most important quality that makes him an ideal candidate for this award though is his excitement in the success of those around him. Upon seeing the results of my final licensing exam, Chris proceeded to shout his congratulations from the other end of the office and then spent the entire walk to my desk exclaiming what an accomplishment it was. As a newly licensed architect, he encouraged me to submit for the 2020 Say It Loud Ohio exhibit and to get involved with the local AIA chapter, where I am now co-chair of the AIA Columbus Committee on Design. Chris is a champion of others and it is exactly this type of leader who deserves to be recognized with the 2021 Mentor Award.

Respectfully,



Lindsay Mitchell, AIA



June 11, 2021

Re: Christopher Meyers

Dear AIA Ohio Board of Directors,

It is a great privilege to be given the opportunity to write in recommendation of Chris Meyers for this honor and to affirm his commitment to shaping the careers of young professionals. I owe much of where I am today to Chris' dedication to my personal and professional development.

My relationship with Chris and his firm began when I was selected for a summer internship position before my final year of graduate school. From the outset, Chris made it clear that the internship was structured for my own benefit, development, and education over any advantage it may have provided to the firm's productivity. Through frequent touch-base discussions and a full range of varied experiences relating to the profession and workplace, Chris ensured those three short months provided a true glimpse into the myriad aspects of our profession.

The following year, I was excited to accept a full-time position with Chris' firm. I soon realized that he runs his firm in the same manner I had experienced as an intern. Chris takes great pride in developing well-rounded architects and designers, mentoring and guiding the younger staff to grow into roles of responsibility. While the work itself is important, Chris makes it clear that the professional development and personal well-being of the members of the Meyers + Associates family come before all else. Semiannual reviews with each employee begin with questions about families and extracurriculars and end with the setting of specific goals for personal and professional development.

Over my time with Chris, I grew from a young recent graduate to managing my own projects within a few short years. I cannot envision that having been possible without Chris' dedication to my growth as an architect as well as his unique ability to bestow responsibility while providing guidance. His constant mentorship and support at every turn gave me the confidence to step into new roles and take on greater responsibility as an architect and project manager.

For my colleagues and me, Chris has created an environment that actively encourages professional development by supporting exams and credentialing, active participation in professional organizations and committees, and intentional outreach in the community. My yearly participation in The Ohio State University's Knowlton School of Architecture Mentor Program feels to me like a small but obligatory gesture towards paying forward the privilege and good fortune of having Chris Meyers mentor my early years in the profession as well as my continued development as a well-rounded architect.

Meyers + Associates Architecture is built upon the strong foundation of Chris' dedication to mentorship and investing in the development of his team. It is my honor to strongly recommend Chris Meyers for this award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Peterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Peterson, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C



9 June 2021

Honor Awards Committee
AIA Ohio
400 W. Wilson Bridge Rd., Ste 120
Worthington, OH 43085

Nomination of Christopher Meyers AIA for the AIA Ohio Mentor Award

Dear Committee Members:

I am extremely pleased to support the nomination of Christopher Meyers AIA, for the AIA Ohio Mentor Award. I have known Chris for over 30 years, and I have seen him develop from a talented student to an award winning and engaged practitioner. Chris believes strongly that architects have a responsibility to serve their communities, both professional and civic. And, he has acted on and spread this idea far and wide. He has four main areas of mentoring: Office, The Knowlton School, Profession and Community.

In the office, Chris has done an amazing job of mentoring his staff. Most importantly, he gives his staff the opportunity to develop their skills by including them in the major decisions on projects. Second, he encourages them to become mentors themselves by providing 120 service hours as a paid company benefit for time that they spend serving non-profit organizations. This effort has been extremely important because it has helped to represent the profession in the community. Third, Chris encourages his staff to keep learning by offering the Meyers + Associates Employee Travel Program. Although with the pandemic, the program was on hiatus this past year, but over the years it has been important not just for those who have travelled but also for the rest of the office as the recipients report on their adventures to the whole office.

At the Knowlton School, there is no area in which he has not been involved, from serving on juries to being a member of the Campaign Committee, from leading the KSA Office Associateship Program to encouraging related disciplines to support the school, from doing mock interviews and portfolio reviews to hiring our latest graduates. It seems that Chris always has time for the students.

In the profession, Chris has had an impact with his leadership in NCARB and his presidency of the Ohio Architects Board. Yet again he serves in these positions so that he can help the next generation of architects. Among other accomplishments, he was instrumental in encouraging the discussion about time to licensure, where the length of time has contributed to the lack of diversity in the profession. Through all of this he has given tirelessly of his time, knowledge and financial support. Under his leadership, the pass rate for Ohio licensure has increased by 17% in a single year.

In the community, there are his countless pro-bono efforts for the Catholic Church, The Women's Care Center and Creative Living. Again, not only has he served the particular constituents; he has created a model for his mentees, other individuals and organizations to develop their own commitment to volunteerism.

Clearly, Christopher Meyers AIA is the go-to-person for mentorship. Through his good efforts, he has had an enormous impact on both the profession and the community. It is for these reasons that I am pleased to support the nomination of him for the 2021 AIA Ohio Mentor Award.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Livesey FAIA
Professor and Director Emeritus