

**LONG RANGE PLAN
FOR
THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY
OF
THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS**
August 30, 2010

Mission and Vision Statement:

Mission: The Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects is the voice of the architecture profession in the Commonwealth, dedicated to serving its members, advancing their value, and improving the quality of the built environment.

Vision: Through a culture of innovation, the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects empowers its members and inspires the creation of a better built environment.

Underlying Principles:

The Society will SERVE members of the AIA in Virginia by

- Acting as the VOICE of the profession in the Commonwealth
- Advancing the VALUE of architects in society
- Inspiring the creation of a QUALITY built environment
- Empowering CONNECTIONS and COLLABORATIONS with members, components, students, allied professionals and other organizations

Strategies:

I. Professional Excellence

Advance quality in the built environment by equipping members to be leaders in the profession, the industry, and their communities.

Summary of Major Programs and Activities:

Emerging Professionals:

Emerging Leaders in Architecture: An Honors Academy of the Virginia Society AIA
Intern Development Program
Young Architects' Forum (YAF)

Continuing Education:

Design Forum
Architecture Exchange East (ArchEx)
Code Seminars
Business Practice Seminars

Knowledge Communities:

Virginia Women in Design
Virginia Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art and Architecture
Historic Resources Committee
Design Committee

Awards:

Virginia Society AIA Prize
Awards for Excellence in Architecture
Prize for Design Research and Scholarship

SERVE:

Professional Excellence programs serve the membership by providing opportunities for mentorship, professional development, and networking. The programs will be of the highest quality and reflect the needs, aspirations, and values of the profession.

VOICE:

Excellence requires hearing the voice of the entire spectrum in the profession of architecture including practicing architects, emerging professionals, students, professors and allied professionals.

- Endeavor to expand Board representation to schools of architecture by providing concurrent terms on the Board for each of the three schools of architecture in the Commonwealth
- Maintain a standing invitation for the regional director of the YAF to attend the VSAIA Board meetings.

VALUE:

The Society seeks to help raise the value of architects in society.

- Seek opportunities to enhance the value of architects in society by engaging associates, interns, emerging professionals, women and other underrepresented groups
 - Seek opportunities to engage current members in new areas (i.e., re-entry into the workplace, balancing work-life, etc...)
 - Consider development of a formalized mentor program
 - Continue collaboration with VCA for educational programming
 - Highlight the value of camaraderie / networking
 - Recruit new members
- Consider development and implementation of a comprehensive Virginia training needs assessment
 - Approach National AIA, USGBC and other sources to see what information may have been gathered previously
 - Consult with National AIA and local components to identify information-gathering needs
 - Consider consulting with an evaluation expert to create a survey instrument and analyze results

QUALITY:

Professional Excellence programs enhance the quality of the built environment by providing architects with exceptional learning opportunities.

- Raise the quality of architectural design in the Commonwealth
 - Encourage retention of the best and brightest students in the state by supporting quality programs
 - Support creation of programs that feature the best and brightest practitioners
 - Encourage sponsorship programs and other means of enhancing competition opportunities and raising monetary awards commensurate with their goals
- Hold all VSAIA Professional Excellence programs to the highest standard of quality
- Celebrate and encourage design, research and contributions to knowledge

CONNECTIONS & COLLABORATIONS:

- Take advantage of opportunities to strengthen relationships with allied professions
 - Consider potential for collaboration in both existing and proposed events with landscape architects, interior designers, industrial designers, engineers and graphic designers
 - Where possible, look for ways to bring the construction industry and architects together
- Enhance partnerships with the universities, specifically the architecture, art, landscape architecture and interior design programs in the Commonwealth

- Look for opportunities to build partnerships with and provide programming for underrepresented groups
- Look for ways to develop stronger relationships between the VSAIA and the component chapters
 - Consider collaborative programs between the VSAIA and chapters
 - Highlight collaborative efforts in web and print media

II. Government Advocacy

Advance public policies about design and practice through political outreach, education, and engagement that are responsive to the needs of the profession and the public.

Summary of Major Programs and Activities:

Virginia Legislation
 Public Contracts for Professional Services
 Building Standards/Codes/Regulation Review Advocacy
 Sustainability Efforts
 Citizen Architect Tracking
 State Elected Officials Communications
 Political Action Committee
 Professional Regulation Positions
 Government Board Appointment Review

SERVE:

Government Advocacy programs serve the members by creating the means to address their concerns through legislation, regulation, or other public programs, primarily at the statewide level in Virginia.

VOICE:

The VSAIA is the voice of the profession in the Commonwealth and will support its components on advocacy issues as needed.

- Help connect the profession to political leaders at all levels
- Conduct vigorous annual VSAIAPAC campaigns
- Help identify and enlist citizen architects in championing issues on their community boards or commissions
- Encourage members to seek appointment to state boards

VALUE:

The Society will raise the appreciation of the profession's value.

- Seek to expand and preserve the role of architects
- Identify legislative and regulatory opportunities that would improve the built environment and the practice of architecture
- Seek enforcement of the law relating to unlicensed individuals

QUALITY:

The VSAIA shall identify programs that would serve as models for encouraging members and non-members alike to improve the quality of life within their communities.

- The VSAIA promotes exemplary building performance, as well as exemplary design quality
 - The AIA supports whole-project performance criteria over rating systems
 - The AIA supports the International Green Construction Code as a model for all communities to use for sustainable construction

CONNECTIONS & COLLABORATIONS:

The VSAIA shall identify additional avenues for collaboration among professions, trades, business organizations and government entities to enhance the expectation of success in legislation, regulation and the public's appreciation of the profession's activities.

III. Communications & Outreach

Elevate the voice of architects to promote the value of design and to enhance the public's understanding of the importance of architecture.

Summary of Major Programs and Activities

Programs:

Virginia Center for Architecture
Honors Awards

Publications:

Inform magazine
readinform.com
VSAIA News
VSAIA Website

ArchEx Website

Public Relations:

Direct Mail
Media Relations
Social Media
Advertising
Promotions
Partnerships

SERVE:

Communications and Outreach programs serve the membership by working to help citizens of the Commonwealth understand the value of architecture and the architect's role in the community. It accomplishes this through programming, publications and public relations.

VOICE:

In order to meet the ambitious strategic goals of the organization, all members of the Society staff, both paid and volunteer, must be committed to effective and consistent communication of our messages.

- Develop a Public voice for VSAIA
 - Language about design should be understandable to a public audience
- Develop a Professional voice for VSAIA
 - Communication should be timely, informative and relevant to design, practice and technical execution of architecture
 - Have the face of the VSAIA more closely represent its membership

VALUE:

Public programs will underscore the value of architecture and architects through these key messages:

- Celebrate our excellence – get the word out about the value and quality of the VSAIA – let our voices be heard!
- With their role in the design and planning process, architects must have tremendous influence in the communities where we live, work and play
- Good design must enrich our communities and make a difference in each of our lives
- Architects are to lead the green revolution

Professional communications will reinforce the value of membership with these key messages:

- The Society is committed to providing member value and superior service
- The Society is committed to providing quality professional development programs which are critical to remaining competitive in the marketplace
- The Society is committed to protecting business interests through legislative advocacy
- The Society is committed to connecting colleagues who share common challenges and interests and providing venues to share knowledge and form the relationships which enrich careers
- The Society is committed to communicating the value of your work and the role architects play in the community
- The Society is committed to make service with the VSAIA easy to understand and inviting.

QUALITY:

The Society's Communications and Outreach programs will maintain the highest professional standards in each medium.

- Deliver high graphic value in all communications
- Continuously develop and adjust complementary versions of each form of communication to include print, email, internet, and social media
- Adjust the message in each form of media for the audience most likely to be receiving information in that manner
- Collaborate directly with VCA to promote lectures, workshops and other direct communications

CONNECTIONS & COLLABORATIONS:

The Society will continue to evaluate strategic partnerships while seeking new opportunities for collaboration.

- Establish a permanent VCA liaison to the Society's Communications and Outreach programs to reinforce the special relationship between VCA and VSAIA
- Develop linkages with allied professions and educational institutions to expand ways our message can be received
- Establish relationships for proactive communication with accredited Virginia schools of architecture (Virginia Tech, UVA, Hampton University) and other design professions