



## For Immediate Release

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## The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Announces the 2023 Women in Architecture and Emerging Professionals Awardees

(New Haven, CT; June 14, 2023) The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Connecticut) recently announced the recipients of two prestigious awards.

### Women in Architecture Award

The AIA Connecticut Women in Architecture Award celebrates female architects in Connecticut who demonstrate design excellence, advocate for equitable and sustainable practices, and create a positive impact in the architecture profession and industry. The 2023 recipients are Amanda Martocchio, AIA, Founder and Principal of Amanda Martocchio Architecture and Ming Thompson, AIA, IIDA, NOMA, Founder and Principal of Atelier Cho Thompson.

"Catalysts for positive change, both Amanda and Ming embody the spirit of design excellence and social impact," said Gina Calabro, AIA Connecticut Executive Director and CEO. "Their unwavering dedication to creating inclusive spaces, mentoring aspiring professionals, and advancing the field of architecture inspires us all and we look forward to celebrating their accomplishments at our awards gala in December."

Amanda Martocchio leads a thriving Connecticut practice whose work reflects clarity of intention, rigorous detailing, and a focus on sustainable materials and building practices. She has played a crucial role within her community, spearheading the design and approval of the new, world-class Library in New Canaan. Working closely with the building design team, she ensured that the design adhered to principles of fairness and accessibility for everyone. Additionally, Amanda assumed a pivotal position in overseeing the multi-phase expansion of St. Luke's School in New Canaan, advocating for architectural spaces that fostered collaborative learning and community involvement.

Beyond her immediate community, Amanda led the design and construction of a prototype health clinic in a remote village in Nicaragua. This endeavor took into account the input of local residents, considering their practices, building materials, and methods. Amanda is dedicated to making a positive impact in her field, as she actively mentors students and provides support to junior architects. In her studio, she fosters an environment that values flexibility, diversity, and a healthy work-life balance.

Ming Thompson is deeply committed to enhancing the human experience through design. She firmly believes that good design should permeate all aspects, from buildings to furniture to logos and everything in between. Recognized for her exceptional work, Ming was honored with the 2020 AIA Young Architect Award and is a co-founder of Atelier Cho Thompson.

In the early stages of her career, Ming gained valuable experience by working in both large and small architectural firms across the world. Her professional journey included stints at Zephyr Architects in Beijing and Bohlin Cywinski Jackson in San Francisco. Furthermore, she actively pursued opportunities to contribute to non-profit organizations, leveraging her expertise to foster community engagement through design. Ming's passion for making art accessible to the public led her to collaborate with renowned museums and galleries such as the Peggy Guggenheim Collection and the National Gallery of Art. As an independent curator, she successfully curated and managed exhibitions.

Beyond her architectural pursuits, Ming is involved in various educational and leadership roles. She serves as a Critic for the Yale Building Project and provides guidance as a First-Year Advisor at Yale University. Additionally, she holds positions on the Board of Trustees of the Yale-China Association, the Board of Directors of the New Haven Preservation Trust, and the Alumni Council of the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Ming's dedication to



championing women in architecture is evident through her former co-chairmanship of the Women in Architecture Committee of AIA Connecticut. She frequently speaks and writes on the subject of equity in architecture, sharing her insights and advocating for a more inclusive profession.

## Emerging Professionals Award

The AIA Connecticut Emerging Professionals Award recognizes and supports recently licensed or graduate architects who have made outstanding, innovative contributions to the discipline and/or architecture profession and have rendered exemplary service in the public realm. The 2023 Excellence recipient is Cassandra Archer, AIA, NOMA, Centerbrook Architects and Planners. The 2023 Merit Award recipient is Laura Bedus, AIA, WELL AP, NOMA, JCJ Architecture.

"Both Cassie and Laura exemplify dedication and passion in their respective roles within the architectural community," said Executive Director and CEO Gina Calabro. "Cassie's commitment to mentoring and bridging the gap between professionals and students is truly inspiring. Her involvement in NOMA CT and various DEI initiatives showcases her unwavering support for inclusivity in architecture. Likewise, Laura's active participation in NOMA CT, her role as Co-Chair for the AIA CT Emerging Professionals Community, and her commitment to meaningful growth and development within her firm demonstrate her relentless drive to create networking and mentoring opportunities for emerging professionals. Both women are shining examples of the positive impact individuals can have in their field and in fostering an inclusive and supportive environment."

Excellence recipient Cassie Archer's dedication to guiding the next generation of architects is evident through her active participation in the Connecticut Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA CT). As the Sponsorship Committee Chair and K-12 Outreach Co-Chair, she collaborates with the architectural community to establish internships, scholarships, and hands-on learning opportunities for students. Furthermore, she initiated the "I AM" Lecture Series to bridge the gap between professionals and students in the field.

Apart from her involvement in NOMA CT, Cassie actively engages in various diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives aimed at promoting accessibility in the field of architecture. She serves as a board member of the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts and has previously held the position of Board Director for the Connecticut Architecture Foundation. Additionally, during the pandemic, Cassie generously contributed her expertise by designing an open-air meeting pavilion for schools and community use in Chester.

Laura Bedus serves as a NOMA CT board member and sits on their communications committee as editor of their quarterly newsletter. She is also co-chair of AIA Connecticut's Emerging Professionals Community, where she plays a crucial role in fostering growth opportunities related to networking, mentoring, and ARE/AXP (Architectural Registration Examination/Architectural Experience Program). She has organized events that facilitate connections between emerging professionals and the broader AEC (Architecture, Engineering, and Construction) community. Moreover, Laura collaborates with the AIA CT Allied Advisory Committee and the Women in Architecture 4x10 Mentoring Group to provide emerging professionals with valuable developmental and networking prospects.

Furthermore, Laura's commitment to promoting substantial growth and development in her profession extends to her employment. She is an active member of JCJ Architecture's JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Committee and contributes as a member of the firm's REVIT working group.

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### *About AIA Connecticut:*

AIA Connecticut, a statewide chapter of the American Institute of Architects, serves the architectural profession, encourages design excellence, and works to improve society through a concern for the quality of the built and natural environments. Members commit themselves to the highest standards of practice and code of ethics that addresses responsibilities to the public, clients, the building industry, and the art and science of architecture.



AIA Connecticut serves as a resource to architects and the public. Its membership of over 1,500 is comprised of architects, associates working towards licensure, students, and professionals in affiliated fields.

For more information, visit AIA Connecticut's website at [www.aiact.org](http://www.aiact.org)