



## For Immediate Release

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### **The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Announces the 2025 Alice Washburn, Women in Architecture, & Emerging Professional Awards**

(New Haven, CT, July 23, 2025) The Connecticut Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Connecticut) recently announced the recipients of four prestigious awards.

#### ***Alice Washburn Awards***

The Alice Washburn Awards are named for the distinguished Connecticut designer and builder of the 1920's, largely self-taught, whose work is known for her thoughtful stylistic and programmatic invention.

Focusing on style, the program acknowledges excellence in traditional house design through the thoughtful adaptation of tradition to address 21st-century needs. Works are located in Connecticut and designed in a style broadly considered as "traditional".

Visit the [Alice Washburn Awards Page](#) for images and descriptions

#### **Accessory Buildings**

*Excellence*

**Pond Chalet**

Rolfs Elert Office

#### **Additions/Renovations**

*Excellence*

**Four Winds**

Rolfs Elert Office

*Merit*

**French Provincial**

Saniee Architects LLC

#### **New Construction**

*Merit*

**General's Residence**

Duo Dickinson Architect

*Commendation*

**Island Cottage**

Vicente-Burin Architects

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#### ***Women in Architecture Awards***

This award program honors practicing female architects in Connecticut who demonstrate

design excellence, promote equitable & sustainable practice, and are affecting change in the profession. [Women in Architecture Awards Page](#)

**Elizabeth DiSalvo, AIA, Trillium Architects Co-operative, Inc.**

Elizabeth DiSalvo is the founder and CEO of Trillium Architects Cooperative, Inc., a 12-person employee-owned firm focused on designing highly sustainable, energy-efficient buildings. For over 20 years, she has led the firm as a recognized leader in the Northeast's green building movement, with work concentrated in Fairfield and Westchester Counties. Trillium specializes in Net Zero homes, LEED-certified residences, Passive House design, and other sustainable solutions, earning multiple awards for both design and environmental performance.

Beyond Trillium, Elizabeth founded SEED Homes, which offers Net Zero modular homes at lower costs, and NetZ GenZ Homes, which provides affordable, energy-efficient mini apartment solutions. Raised in the building design industry, she began working in the field at age 14 and holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a Master's in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbia University. Her diverse experience spans Los Angeles, New York, off-grid projects in Colorado, and work with Centerbrook Architects in Connecticut.

Elizabeth is also a dedicated community activist, serving on local planning, housing, and energy committees, and co-chairing the AIA CT Small Firms Exchange. Her collaborative approach to architecture emphasizes full team participation, believing inclusive input leads to the best outcomes. A strong advocate for equity in the profession, she structured Trillium as a cooperative to share ownership and opportunity among its employees.

**Julia McFadden, AIA, Principal, QA+M Architecture**

Julia McFadden is a Principal with QA+M Architecture, co-leading the firm's education studio. For the past 17 years Julia has led dozens of public and private education projects from early childhood schools to higher education. Through the transformative experience of designing the rebuild of the Sandy Hook School, Julia has become an advocate for the innovative ways school design can promote academic achievement, socio-emotional well-being, and a safe environment through biophilic design and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. She has written and spoken both nationally and internationally on these topics, most recently for EdCrunch in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Throughout her career, Julia has promoted equitable practices and encouraged participatory collaboration with her team, consultants, and especially the client and users. In graduate school, long before the current JEDI focus of the profession, Julia organized a national symposium to address gender and diversity challenges in architectural education.

As a project leader and principal, Julia's unique ability to facilitate dialogue and creative engagement with large and diverse client groups fosters enthusiasm and cooperation while building consensus around strong visionary goals. She inspires clients with her

passionate articulation of their project's potential and how the design will elevate their organization's goals.

Through her speaking engagements and writing, Julia has become a sought-after expert and advocate for: sensitive, holistic, and sustainable K12 school design; design engagement for traumatized communities; and the integration and intersection of Feng Shui, wellness, biophilic design, and sustainability.

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### ***Emerging Professionals Awards***

This awards program recognizes and supports emerging, graduate architects who have made outstanding, innovative contributions to the discipline and/or profession and have rendered exemplary service in the public realm. [Emerging Professional Awards Page](#)

#### **Joy Ortiz-Colón, AIA, NOMA, LEED Green Associate, Amenta Emma Architects**

As a Project Architect at Amenta Emma, Joy Ortiz-Colón brings a thoughtful and impactful approach to her work, demonstrating a strong commitment to design excellence and community-centered practice. Her leadership in advancing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion is equally noteworthy—having co-founded a JEDI committee at her previous firm and currently serving as chair of Amenta Emma's JEDI+B Committee, Joy has led numerous outreach initiatives that connect students to the field of architecture and promote a more inclusive profession.

Joy's dedication to mentorship and service is evident through her involvement with the ACE Mentorship Program, participation as a guest critic at several academic institutions, and active engagement with AIA Connecticut's EDI Knowledge Community, NOMA CT's K-12 Outreach Committee, and the Washington Street Planning Committee. Her continued service to her community further reflects a deep-rooted commitment to making a positive impact.

Through her design talent, leadership, and passion for advocacy, Joy is helping shape a more equitable future for the architecture profession.

#### **Aurora Perreault, Assoc. AIA, NOMA, Patriquin Architects**

Since joining Patriquin Architects, Aurora Perreault has made meaningful contributions across all phases of design and construction for the firm's educational and commercial projects. As co-chair of the firm's Sustainability Committee, she has led research initiatives focused on carbon-positive design, building performance enhancement, and the selection of socially responsible materials—advancing the goals of climate-conscious architecture.

Aurora is being honored with this prestigious award not only for her strong commitment to sustainable design but also for her mentorship and leadership in advancing the profession. As an active member of AIA Connecticut's EDI and Emerging Professionals Committees, and as a Board Member and Programs Chair for NOMAct, she continues to elevate and



connect the architecture community through impactful educational and social programming.

Her mentoring roles—as a frequent juror at the University of Hartford and a mentor for the ACE Program in New Haven since 2023—further exemplify her dedication to supporting emerging talent and fostering the next generation of architects.

**Grace Rykard, AIA, Pickard Chilton**

Grace Rykard's path to this honor reflects a deep and consistent dedication to mentorship, design excellence, and community engagement. From her time at Oklahoma State University, she has demonstrated a thoughtful ethos of supporting others and building community. Since joining Pickard Chilton in 2022, Grace has continued this momentum, contributing meaningfully to major design projects and playing an active role in recruitment efforts that help strengthen the future of the profession.

Her impact extends well beyond the studio. As a co-leader of New Haven's ACE Chapter, she mentors 20–30 high school students annually, with her teams achieving strong placements in national design competitions. She has represented the profession at multiple high school career days and has led Junior Achievement's Career Walk for the past three years—connecting countless students with pathways into architecture.

Through her thoughtful mentorship, design contributions, and commitment to outreach, Grace is helping shape a more inclusive, engaged, and forward-looking profession.

**Images are available at the links above or at <https://aiact.org/awards/>**

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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)