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CHICOPEE CITY HALL  
CHICOPEE, MASSACHUSETTS  
DIETZ & COMPANY ARCHITECTS

SPRING  
2022

## AIA SMALL FIRM EXCHANGE (SFX)

### REBECCA S. RAHMLOW AIA, YOUR AIA SMALL FIRM EXCHANGE STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Each year the AIA Small Firm Exchange (SFX) selects small firm practitioners to advance the mutual interests of all small firms. As part of AIA's restructuring, representation on National boards and committees – including the Small Firm Exchange -- is now by state rather than region. We are pleased to introduce Massachusetts' newly appointed 2022 representative to the Small Firm Exchange, Rebecca S. Rahmlow AIA.

Rebecca is an architect and associate at Touloukian Touloukian Inc., a small architecture and urban design firm located in downtown Boston. With 15 years of experience, Rebecca has worked across many building typologies including academic, healthcare, civic, commercial, multi-family, and single family architecture for public and private Clients. She is passionate about sustainability, resiliency, and how the built environment can respond to climate change. She is an advocate for volunteer work and advancing architectural education.

The mission of the Small Firm Exchange (SFX) is to advance the mutual interests of architects practicing in small firms. SFX representatives are integral to AIA communications, connecting small firm leaders in their local and state components to the national organization. AIA members practicing in small firms are encouraged to reach out to Rebecca to discuss how the AIA could better support their practice. Find more information about the SFX at [aia.org/sfx](http://aia.org/sfx).

Rebecca's role is to hear any ideas, issues, and concerns you have that are relevant to small firms and bring these considerations to the national level. Rebecca will also provide updates throughout the year on topics discussed nationally which have so far included the AIA Trust, firm culture, succession planning, and more.

If you would like to get in touch with Rebecca, please reach out!

#### SFX State Representative

Rebecca S. Rahmlow, AIA

[rebeccar@ttarch.com](mailto:rebeccar@ttarch.com)



#### SFX: WHO WE ARE

The objectives of the AIA SFX are three-fold:

1. Advocate the value of small firms, the national SFX, and local SFX groups, both within the AIA and to the public.
2. Curate and disseminate the most pertinent resources and information, from the AIA & elsewhere, that benefit small firms.
3. Inform the AIA of current issues facing small firms and areas in which current resources/information are lacking.

**Approximately 75% of all firms within the AIA are small firms (10 employees or less), which equates to 14,288 small firms within the organization.**

~25% = sole practitioners = 4,750

~35% = 1-5 employees = 6,650

~15% = 5-10 employees = 2,850

**We need to find ways to leverage that size for collaboration and influence, just like the individual large firms do.**

#### VISIT [AIA.ORG/SFX](http://AIA.ORG/SFX) AND CLICK ON "JOIN OUR COMMUNITY" !

This will ensure that you're a part of our mailing list and receive our quarterly newsletter and important small firm information.

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### THE WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

THE WMAIA NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR. IT IS CIRCULATED TO ALL MEMBERS, ADVERTISERS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

PLEASE DIRECT ALL NEWSLETTER CORRESPONDENCE TO RACHAEL CHASE, AT [EDITOR@WMAIA.ORG](mailto:EDITOR@WMAIA.ORG).

ARTICLES, PHOTOS, NOTICES OF EVENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION ARE WELCOME.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE WMAIA.

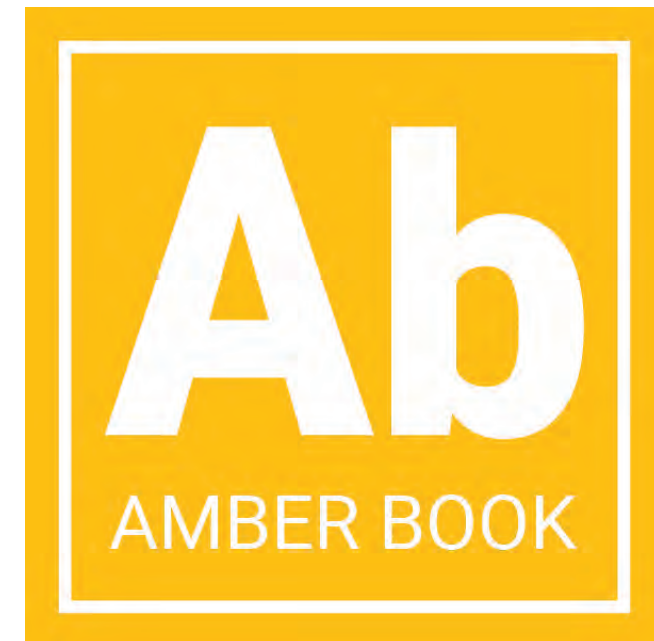
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**COVER PHOTO:** Chodos Inc. : For more photos, see article pages 5 + 6

## AMBER BOOKS DISCOUNT FOR EP'S

For EP's studying for the ARE – WMAIA will be offering a discount subscription to Amber Book WMAIA Chapter License:

For 48 hours May 2-3, 2022 you have access to the WMAIA's Future Architects and Associate Members Amber Book Chapter License. On the website ([www.amber-book.com](http://www.amber-book.com)) click the "enroll now" button, sign up with the discount code AIAWMA and receive \$170 off the \$390/month tuition. The discount is good for each month you subscribe (not just the first one) and you can stop whenever you like (you don't have to stop at the same time as the others in the chapter). Everyone gets the full course, including the textbook, videos, online flash cards, and practice exams. If you're not thrilled with the course, they'll give you your money back—no questions asked. The discount code will be honored: May 2-3, 2022.



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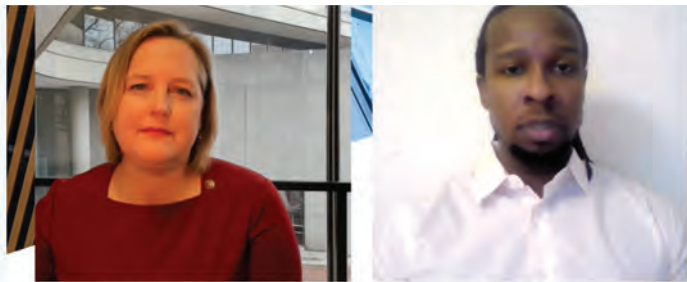
## GRASSROOTS 2022: AN AIA LEADERSHIP EVENT

This year's Grassroots Conference – AIA's premier leadership event for chapter leaders – took place online from February 22-24, 2022. With National's support we were able to "send" our executive director Lorin Starr as well as President-Elect Kerry Bartini AIA and Treasurer Garrison Piers-Gamble Associate AIA. The three days of leadership training addressed critical issues facing the profession with truly inspirational speakers, including an introduction to Lakisha Woods CAE, AIA's new EVP/CEO. The conference was led by Massachusetts' own Emily Grandstaff-Rice FAIA, AIA's 2022 First Vice President/2023 President. Her thoughtful conversations with the keynote speakers were enlightening. We are highlighting a few of the talks here.

### Grassroots 2022 began with a powerful keynote conversation between AIA Vice President and Grassroots Chair Emily Grandstaff-Rice and Dr. Ibram X. Kendi.

Dr. Kendi is an anti-racist activist, historian, and professor at Boston University and the author of two New York Times bestsellers "How to be an Antiracist," and "Stamped from the Beginning" which was also the recipient of the National Book Award. Kendi was recently awarded the MacArthur Fellowship "Genius Grant." During their discussion, Kendi raised thought-provoking ideas about people's preconceptions and definitions of the words "racist" and "anti-racist." He also spoke about the critical role architects have in shaping and empowering the communities where they practice and how architecture as a discipline is uniquely equipped to facilitate equity and justice.

A major takeaway from this conversation was Kendi's explanation of the definition of the word "antiracist." He explained that an "antiracist" is "One who is expressing the idea that racial groups are equals and none needs developing, and is supporting policy that reduces racial inequity." He expressed that "racist" isn't a descriptive term, rather it is a pejorative term that changes from moment to moment. He stated that people are complex and so is the use and understanding of the words "racist" and "anti-racist." Rather than defining people as "racist" or "anti-racist" it is instead of people's minute-to-minute thoughts, decisions, and actions that must be evaluated as being "racist" or "anti-racist." This process places significant emphasis on actively critiquing ourselves as well as the cultural and social constructs which shape our thoughts and actions.



EMILY A. GRANDSTAFF-RICE, FAIA

IBRAM X. KENDI, Ph.D.



Kendi conveyed that it is our personal responsibility to be conscious of the systemic inequalities that exist both historically and today and to understand how they have shaped and continue to shape us and our community environment.

Kendi challenged the hundreds of architects listening in on the virtual call "to think very deeply about whether they're creating equitable and just places, space, and environments. Architects and designers are really some of the people that are at the heart of those conversations, such as: What type of nation, what type of world, what type of future do we want to build?" Kendi expressed how communities need to have the opportunity to have their own vision of their community recognized, and brought to fruition, not just the ideas and vision developed by the architect. Members of the community need to be active participants in community growth in order for the work to be culturally sensitive and sustainable stating you can't blame someone who doesn't have a seat at the table.

Representation was a constant theme throughout the conversation. Kendi commented on how he is often asked how communities may address inequalities with specific regard to representation. He said he continually hears "we can't find them" when referring to people searching for representatives of minority groups. In response, Kendi gave a blunt and honest example of how this is not a problem in American athletics, specifically related to high school football and the exorbitant resources that are spent searching for the next great talent. If diversity and equity are the goals, then means and methods for achieving this already exist.

**A community that is represented is one that is empowered. If people have an active role in crafting the vision of their community those individuals will likely gain a positive conception of ownership, stimulating personal connections and love for that place. Love of place is something people will fight to preserve. People already have a strong vision of their community and what it needs, they may already have positive conceptions and love for their community and know best what is lovable about it "Front porches, stoops." We all need to listen. Each person, each community knows their truth.**

## GRASSROOTS 2022: AN AIA LEADERSHIP EVENT

### The keynote address at the end of day two of the 2022 Grassroots Conference was given by Walter Hood.

Walter Hood is a Landscape Architect and professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and principal of Hood Design Studio in Oakland, California. Professor Hood was recently awarded the MacArthur Fellowship "Genius Grant," and is the author of the book "Black Landscapes Matter."

In his keynote address entitled "Preserving History and Building Community," Hood presented several of his projects, focusing particular attention on his visioning process and design narratives that grapple with the "memory of place." Hood's work aspires to expose the layers and differences in memory that make up a place. This was clearly seen in his work on a project in Charleston South Carolina.

Hood's introduction to the Charleston project was with an existing photograph of a neatly kept grass lawn located along the Charleston waterfront which he described as being a place that most people don't acknowledge and simply pass by. After extensive historical research and archaeological exploration, it was determined that this site was once known as Gadsden's Wharf. A place where 40 percent or approximately 100,000 enslaved Africans had landed during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Over the years, the memory of the place has been completely wiped clean.

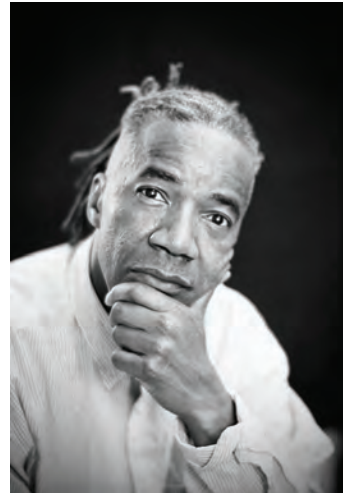
Hood, in partnership with Architect Harry Cobb, was commissioned to design the International African American Museum here to celebrate the memory of those who passed through this place. Hood's work brings awareness back to this landscape. He calls attention to the fact that this was a place where Africans were stored, sold, and died by the thousands. To achieve this, Hood spoke about how he uses empathy as a tool for design to develop multi-dimensional elements that foster active interpretation and stimulate conversation.

He provides examples of this through his use of tabby shale, physical memories collected from the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean used as an expressive building material that pays homage to the awful crossing experienced by so many and those lost on the voyage. Hood's design also celebrates the beautiful things that Africans brought with them to America including their spiritual relationships with the earth, water, and nature which he conveys through the use of Native African plant species, stone, and sand dunes that transform the landscape and make deep connections to the impact Africans have had in physically shaping America.

The new landscape gives people space to congregate and discuss, here he draws inspiration from the "hush harbors," places where enslaved Africans would gather and share stories and traditions away from their owners.

Hood's landscape forces visitors to grapple with the atrocity of this place. This is fully embodied in the design of the "Tide Tribute" a shallow tidal reflecting pool. The base of the pool is embossed with a human-scale abstraction of the Brookes Map. The Brookes Map was a diagram of African men, women, and children stored on the ships used in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. As the water fills the pool the figures temporarily disappear from view, out of focus and forgotten again until the water recedes and the figures re-appear with captured water reflecting the life of those visitors passing by.

**In his address, Walter Hood conveyed that what he wants is for all stories to be told and he expressed to the Grassroots attendees to be ok with the fact that as designers we may not get it all right at first but starting the conversation is what is right, now. He ended his presentation with an uplifting sentiment saying "Great things happen when we exist in each other's worlds."**

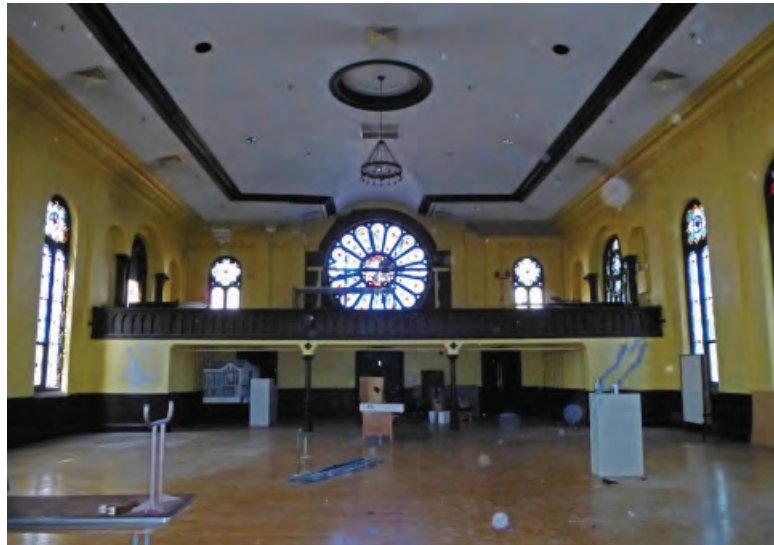


LAKISHA WOODS, CAE  
AIA EVP/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER





WAY BEFORE



BEFORE



AFTER

Dietz & Company Architects was engaged as the architect for the rehabilitation of the historic Chicopee City Hall in Chicopee, Massachusetts. On the National and State Registers of Historic Places, and one of the most historically significant buildings in Western Massachusetts, Chicopee City Hall was built in 1871 in the “Romanesque Revival” style and has been a major landmark in the City since its inception.

The Main Building, including the 147-foot campanile with a gold eagle perched atop its spire, is said to have drawn design inspiration from the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, Italy. Building materials were locally sourced including the metal railings, fittings and eagle weathervane atop the tower all cast at the Ames Manufacturing Company, across from City Hall. The walnut and butternut woodwork was crafted by Lafayette Temple cabinet makers of Chicopee. In 1929 the building was expanded by a connecting bridge to a new four-story City Hall Annex.

This project addressed overall building preservation, structural, accessibility, and maintenance issues, including the comprehensive rehabilitation of the historic exterior envelope and Auditorium, which was closed for many years due to deterioration and collapse of plaster from the walls and ceiling. The vision was to bring the Auditorium back to life while restoring the structural stability of the building. Part of the rehabilitation was the repair of the stained-glass windows, including the iconic rose window which had experienced failure of a stone tracery spoke that crashed to the building’s exterior entry stairs below. The design team was challenged to address numerous technical challenges by using creative solutions to transform the Auditorium into a flexible and accessible multipurpose space with new state of the art technology and lighting for meetings, presentations, and civic events.

The exterior rehabilitation sought to retain the historic architectural significance of the building and included repairs to the campanile with clock and eagle weathervane, stained-glass windows, slate roofing, masonry, and to stylistic features such as corbelling, carved stone tracery, and arches that all contribute to the building’s character. Stabilization and structural reinforcement using port anchors and low-pressure grouting was provided at the masonry wall surrounding the rose window. Traditional lime mortar was specified to match the original and stone was sourced to match the existing red sandstone originally from the now defunct East Longmeadow quarries.

One of the goals of the Auditorium rehabilitation was restoring and retaining the building’s original features, including the stained-glass windows. The windows fall into two basic types: painted, and unpainted. The painted windows date to the original construction. They were heavily restored in the past and are painted in an ornamental design applied by stencil. All of these windows were carefully removed and brought to Guarducci Stained Glass Studio where they were carefully restored.

Through much research, the great hall was transformed into a modern space with a nod to its past. The new chandeliers are an example of how this inspired material selections. An 1871 article about the building spoke of “two patent reflecting



sun and ventilators... profusely lighting the hall, at the same time afford efficient ventilation.” Research uncovered that this referred to gas ventilating lamps and “sunburners” connected to the chimneys to provide light and ventilation. While no photos of the original sunburners exist, images of similar fixtures provided inspiration for the new chandeliers.

The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of this treasured landmark will preserve the building into the future and serve the community of Chicopee for generations to come.

Owner: City of Chicopee

OPM: NV5

PROJECT TEAM:

Architect: Dietz & Company Architects, Inc.

General Contractor: D.A. Sullivan & Sons

Mechanical/Electrical Engineer: RDK Engineers

Structural/Envelope: Gale Associates, Inc.

Stained Glass Consultant: Julie L. Sloan, LLC

Structural: GNCB Consulting Engineers, P.C.

Plaster Conservation: John Canning & Co.

Code Consultant: R.W. Sullivan Engineering

Elevator Consultant: Syska Hennessy Group, LLC

Civil Engineer: R. Levesque Associates, Inc.

Acoustical Consultant: Cavanaugh Tocci Associates

Historical Consultant: Greg Farmer

*“The city of Chicopee’s Auditorium...has been restored to remember our past, and now we can look forward to the present and future of this multi-purpose space.”*  
Chicopee Mayor John Vieau



# STRUCTURAL ROUND TIMBER

GREG CABRAL, ORIGINAL MASS TIMBER MAINE

On February 24, 2022, Greg Cabral of Original Mass Timber Maine presented a program entitled **Why Trees Are Stronger Than Wood** as part of WMAIA's COTE Committee program series. He discussed Structural Round Timber (SRT), which requires no adhesives, minimal processing, and can be fabricated using existing local timber supplies, making it an accessible and early-impact solution for mass timber markets and sustainable forest economies. SRT can compete in both strength and cost with steel and engineered wood products, with the added benefits of shorter supply chains, lower embodied energy, and higher carbon sequestration. Original Mass Timber Maine, a grant-funded initiative administered by the Town of Ashland, ME, has joined forces with influential leaders in the A/E/C community to develop markets for Structural Round Timber (SRT) from regional forest owners to provide cost effective solutions that sequester more carbon, and require less processing than competitive products, while providing jobs for local forest economies. We asked Greg to recap some of that presentation for those of you who were unable to attend.

In September 2020, the Town of Ashland secured \$600,000 in grants for an initiative to position the community as an east coast production hub for structural round timber (SRT). Structural Round Timber (SRT) is a mass timber building product requiring no adhesives and minimal processing, and one that can be fabricated using existing facility infrastructure and local timber supplies. SRT uses the inherent structural attributes of unmilled trees in commercial construction for applications such as columns, beams, and trusses. SRT is well-positioned to benefit from the growing awareness of mass timber products sweeping through the U.S. today. The earliest adopters have been innovative owners and architects who are nature-oriented, driven by sustainability or biophilia, and seeking to both subtly and overtly give nature a greater role in the built environment.

With markets for mass timber construction growing, the project seeks to position Ashland and the Maine Woods to take advantage of an estimated \$130 million market for structural round timber products in the north and mid-Atlantic east coast of the United States.

The opportunity arrived at the right time, as Ashland was actively looking at multiple market opportunities to restore more wood products manufacturing to their local business mix. Ashland is strategically located at the gateway to the Northern Maine forest resource and has proximity and transportation access to significant markets. The Town has a 100-acre industrial park and numerous un- or under-utilized manufacturing sites that could support such businesses.

What was missing was market demand to justify business investment in those sites, and this project intends to grow one of those markets. Local land managers like Seven Islands Land Company are supporters and partners in the project. Given mill closures and the recent explosion at the pulp mill in Jay, Maine landowners have lost markets for millions of tons of pulp wood over the past several years. Structural round timber offers a new and higher-margin market opportunity for that material.

National SRT firm, WholeTrees Structures, has partnered with

the initiative to oversee the market development campaign as well as preparation for Maine-based production in the Ashland-area.

To launch the program, Ashland and its partners secured a \$450,000 from the Northern Forest Future Forest Economy Initiative, coordinated by the Northern Forest Center, and \$150,000 from FOR|Maine (Forest Opportunity Roadmap) coalition and the Maine Development Foundation. These resources were used to hire a staff member focused specifically on growing structural round timber markets, engage a SRT market development firm, and take on other activities with a goal of growing a \$1-2 million sales funnel for SRT from the Ashland area in the next three years.

In January 2021, Original Mass Timber Maine was born. By proving the strength of burgeoning and significant markets for SRT throughout the Northeast, Original Mass Timber Maine expects to entice Northern Maine's forest products companies to fabricate the product in both retrooled and new industrial facilities.

The key to SRT market development is two-fold: to educate and inspire. This initiative will raise awareness among architects and others who drive decision making in the construction market that SRT products are viable, cost effective, and a regionally sourced alternative to conventional commercial construction.

In 2021 Original Mass Timber Maine embarked on creating an industry-first Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) for Maine-sourced SRT with OneClick LCA. The 3rd-party-verified EPD will transparently communicate the environmental performance of SRT, making it possible to compare it to different materials and products to assist with selecting the most sustainable option. The Original Mass Timber Maine Structural Round Timber EPD is expected to be published and publicly available in April 2022.

Original Mass Timber Maine is currently working with the University of Maine to include Maine-sourced SRT in a research project designed to understand and compare the costs, capabilities, and carbon impacts of structural materials. This study will compare the costs and environmental benefits of replacing steel and Glulam with SRT in a hypothetical 80,000 square foot, 3-story research facility. The anticipated completion date is May 2022.

## FACTS ABOUT STRUCTURAL ROUND TIMBER (SRT)

SRT is 50% stronger than sawn heavy timber of the same diameter

**SRT is defined as Heavy Timber in the IBC.**

Round timbers fall under building code Types II through V as complete structural systems. They can also be in Type II roofing systems above 20'.

**Depending on the diameter, round timber can have a 1-5 hour fire rating.**

SRT has structural applications as trusses, columns, and beams

**SRT complements other mass timber products and competes favorably on both cost, lead-time, and sustainability with the products it might replace.**

SRT can be sourced and fabricated regionally.

**SRT retains the natural form of whole trees, enhancing its contribution to biophilic aspects of the built environment.**

SRT is a renewable resource derived from sustainably managed forests.

**SRT requires minimal processing compared to other structural products, resulting in lower embodied energy.**

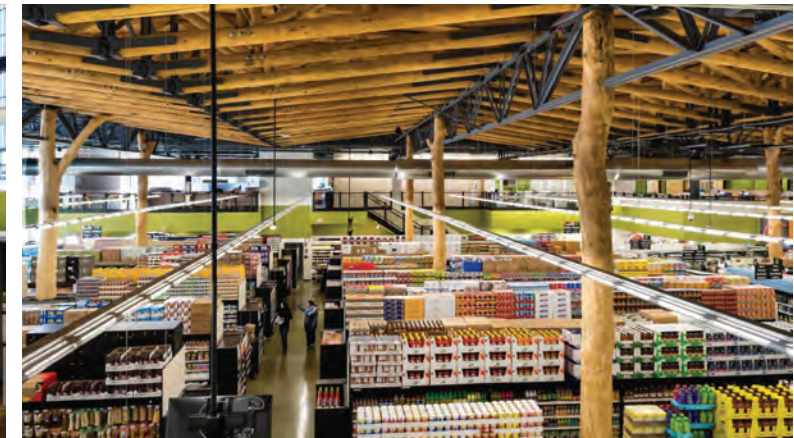
50% of the dry weight of wood is carbon sequestered from the atmosphere by trees as they grow. That carbon remains in the wood products used in construction, making SRT a preferred carbon solution.

# STRUCTURAL ROUND TIMBER

GREG CABRAL, ORIGINAL MASS TIMBER MAINE



Grand Rounds Office | Lewiston, ME | Platz Associates



Festival Foods Grocery Store | Madison, WI | Bark Design Architects



Captain Johnston Blakely Elementary School | Bainbridge Island, WA | Mithun



Mountainside Residence | Warren, VT | Maclay Architects

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UMaine Hypothetical Research Facility | Orono, ME | Simons Architects



Children's Museum of Eau Claire | Eau Claire, WI | Steinberg Hart



## For more information contact:

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[gregcabral@originalmasstimber.com](mailto:gregcabral@originalmasstimber.com)

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## THINGS TO DO + SEE IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

**SCMA** SMITH COLLEGE  
MUSEUM OF ART

### MAYA LIN : MAPPINGS

January 28–August 7, 2022

**Each of my works originates from a simple desire to make people aware of their surroundings, not just the physical world but also the psychological world we live in. — Maya Lin**

This exhibition showcases art by Maya Lin (American, born 1959). The exhibition brings attention to environmental issues like climate change, species extinction and the relationship between humans and the world we inhabit.

Using a variety of materials, including steel pins, marble, and bound atlases, Lin distills complicated scientific and quantitative information into resonant objects. These artworks open a dialogue between the artist and the viewer.

A key component of the exhibition is what Lin has called her “last memorial,” What Is Missing?. This interactive, multi-site artwork bears witness to the cumulative and ongoing devastation of species loss caused by human action. The work reminds us of our collective responsibility to protect the earth.

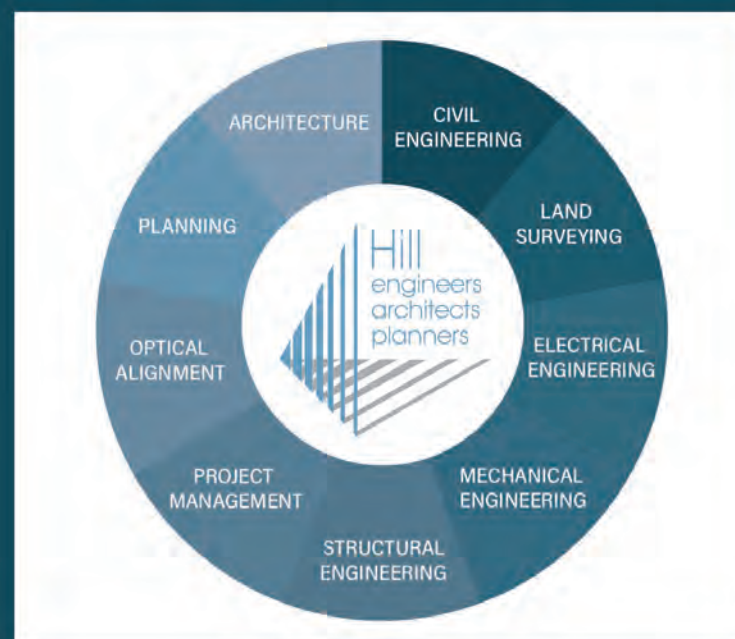


RED SEA (Bodies of water series)



FROM RHODE ISLAND TO SOUTH CAROLINA  
(Rand-McNally The Great Geographical Atlas)

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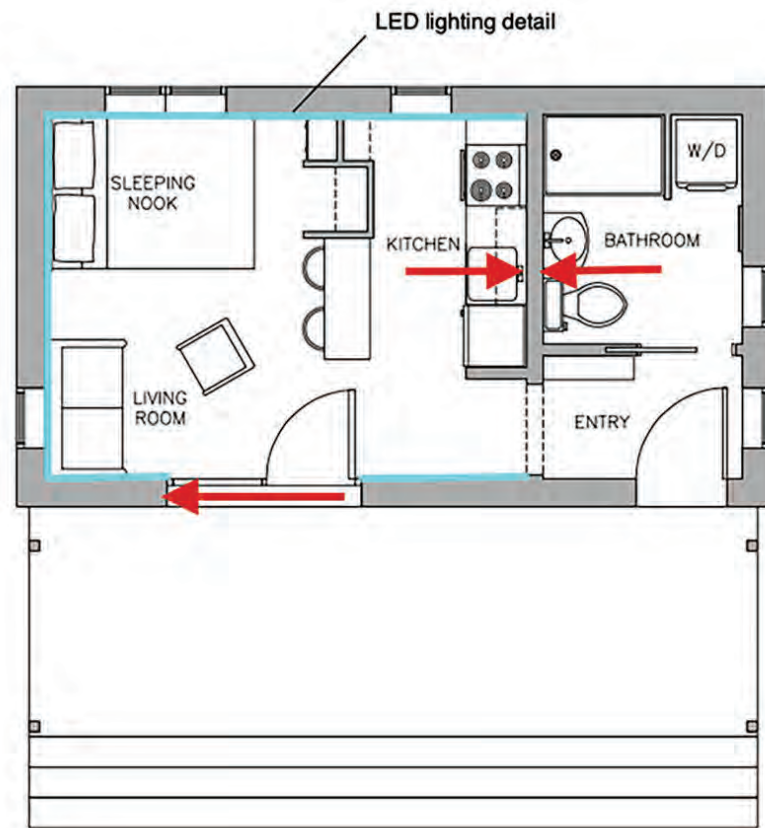
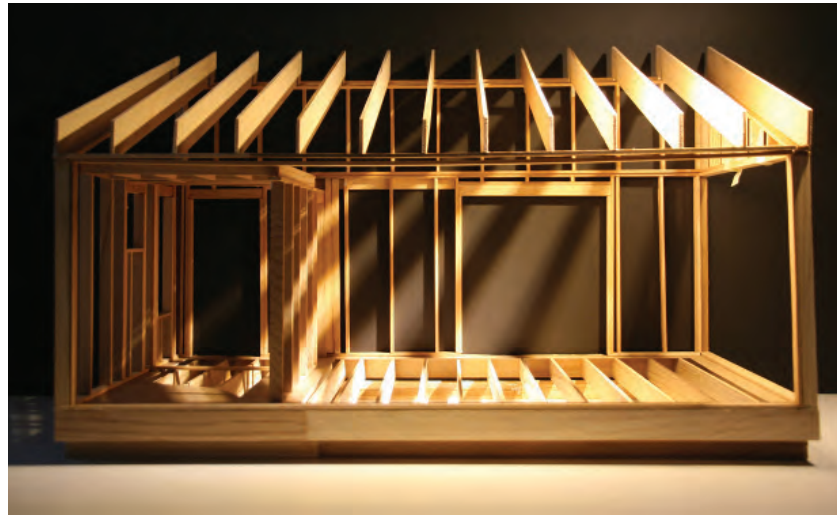
# THE Hygge Haus

A COLLABORATIVE DESIGN / BUILD PROJECT

The Hygge House - The word Hygge is of Danish and Norwegian origins and means “a quality of coziness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being” - is a portable, 350SF, Net Zero, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) designed and built by students in a collaborative effort between UMass Building & Construction Technology, UMass Architecture, Five College Architectural Studies, & East Branch Studio. The semester-long design-build course that encapsulates this project is led by L. Carl Fiocchi (BCT), Robert Williams AIA (Architecture), Naomi Darling AIA (Five Colleges) and Kent Hicks (East Branch Studio). It offers learning opportunities in high performance construction, construction practices, low load mechanical systems selection and installation, performance verification, and carbon accounting. The project as well as the course helps students understand the climate impacts of carbon in the built environment and explores ways to design and build better structures, as the inefficiency of buildings is responsible for approximately forty percent of global carbon emissions.

After the build is completed, students will have the opportunity for teaching about the building when the Hygge House is used as an auxiliary stage at the Green River Music Festival (June 24-26, 2022). After the festival the building will be moved to a permanent home in Holyoke, MA where it will fulfill its principal role as an ADU to a new single family residence addressing affordable housing for underserved communities.

You can follow this project throughout the spring semester and beyond on its blog: <https://blogs.umass.edu/umassdesbuild/>. The WMAIA Newsletter will feature an update when the project is complete!



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## WMAIA COMMUNITY SPRING 2022

### WMAIA PROGRAMS

We are looking forward to two – in person! – tours this spring...so save the dates...more information will be available soon.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2022

TOUR: BERKSHIRE INNOVATION CENTER, PITTSFIELD MA

DESIGNED BY STEFFIAN BRADLEY;

EDM (CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION)

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022

WMAIA WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE PRESENTS

TOUR: STCC STUDENT LEARNING COMMONS, SPRINGFIELD MA

DESIGNED BY ANN BEHA ARCHITECTS

SPONSORED BY MARVIN

