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WINTER
2023



MAIER CAMERLENGHI ADDITION
AMHERST MASSACHUSETTS
NAOMI DARLING ARCHITECTURE

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WMAIA ANNUAL MEETING 2022
UMASS AMHERST OLVER DESIGN BUILDING



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- THIRTEEN + FOURTEEN IN MEMORIAM: LAURA FITCH AIA
- FIFTEEN WMAIA PROGRAMS

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.

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

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

COVER PHOTO: SEAN KERNAN

COVER STORY: SEE HONOR AWARDS PAGE FOUR

WMAIA COMMUNITY

As we welcome 2023, our community is mourning the sudden passing of Laura Fitch AIA. Laura was a long-time very involved member of WMAIA, most recently as a co-chair of the COTE committee. Laura will be greatly missed. At Laura's memorial service her friends and family all spoke of her persistent involvement in, and support of the communities around her. I would urge us all to embrace that intention and continue to participate in our communities, offering what we can as both architects, and humans.

Looking back on 2022, WMAIA continued our pandemic journey with both virtual and in-person tours and events. Attendance at these events didn't favor one format over the other, so we'll continue to support both formats moving forward. We have some great events planned for 2023, so stay tuned and read your WMAIA enews!

We finished the year with our Annual Meeting which was a great success: a fantastic setting at the Olver Design Building, impressive awards projects, and of course great company. As noted by the thoughtful jury member and awards presenter Edward Becker, there is something special about our region and the projects that we produce. Our chapter hosts an impressive amount of talent and thoughtful design that we can all be proud of.

I hope to see you all at a 2023 WMAIA program or event and look forward to seeing more of what makes our region outstanding.

Garth Schwellenbach AIA

WMAIA President

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I Award winners (clockwise from top left): Thomas Douglas Architects, Naomi Darling Architecture Shepley Bulfinch Architects, C & H Architects, Thomas Douglas Architects, Truth Box Architects, Jones Whitsett Architects Photos by WMAIA Community

DO YOU HAVE A COVER STORY?
EMAIL EDITOR@WMAIA.ORG

WMAIA ANNUAL MEETING 2022

In our first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019, WMAIA celebrated the season and design in Western Massachusetts with a lively gathering at the Olver Design Building at UMass on December 14, 2022. With almost 100 people present, the evening included the presentation of an HON WMAIA Award to Sen. Jo Comerford, a keynote by 2023 AIA President Emily Grandstaff-Rice FAIA, presentation of our student scholarships, and our 2022 Design Awards. Here's a recap of the evening's highlights:

HONORARY WMAIA

Every two years (even years), WMAIA bestows Honorary Membership upon a person or persons outside the profession of architecture. State Senator Jo Comerford was the recipient of the Honorary WMAIA membership at this year's annual meeting. She accepted the honor in person at the UMass Design building and spoke about her gratitude for the collaboration the chapter has offered to her on critical bills related to infrastructure, environment, climate, capital funding of school projects, and building codes

Joanne Comerford became our senator after winning a remarkable write-in campaign in the Fall of 2018. By her own admission, architecture was not her strong suit. Never one to be deterred, she listened, engaged and championed on behalf of WMAIA to the benefit of western Massachusetts. She fought for the expansion of solar net-metering, filed the originating legislation for the municipal Net Zero opt-in code, and successfully won passage of legislation requiring an accounting of the indoor environmental conditions and energy use in MA K12 public schools among many other priorities. In the coming 2023/24 session Senator Comerford will begin working with our representatives on the AIA MA Board to explore ways of raising carbon literacy in the architectural profession and in the legislature.



NEWLY LICENSED 2022 ARCHITECTS

We were pleased to acknowledge the newly licensed architects in our chapter: Mohamed Ibrahim AIA, Kayla Farrell Kickery AIA, and Kristin Russell AIA. Congratulations!

NEW FROM PELLA

Pella Windows & Doors announced an exciting change to the Pella + Purpose Program to support our WMAIA Scholarship funds. Pella + Purpose consists of an AIA approved 1 hour CEU presentation and a product demo session.

For 2023 Pella Products, Inc. will make a \$150 donation to the local WMAIA scholarship fund for EACH ATTENDEE who completes both sessions! Pella Products, Inc. is dedicated to development of new talent, and we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to partner with us in giving back. Please call or email Mary Lynn at 413.824.2422, mhadix@pellasales.com to book a P+P Session at your office!

KEYNOTE

In her first official engagement, newly inaugurated as AIA's 99th youngest, female president, Emily Grandstaff-Rice FAIA, provided the keynote at our 2022 Annual Meeting. A former BSA president with years of service to the profession, Emily has been instrumental in bringing the Guides for Equitable Practice to life. In her address, Emily put forth her belief in the power of design to address our greatest challenges, using our empathy and listening skills as architects to engage with communities. We wish her luck and look forward to supporting her in bringing her vision to life as 2023 AIA President!



Photo from AIA.org: Paige McWhorter Photography

THE JURY This year's design awards were juried by colleagues from Virginia: Edward Becker, Phoebe Crisman AIA, Carla Ellern ASLA, LEED® AP BD+C, and Whitney Hudson. We were particularly pleased to have Edward Becker present the awards.

General notes from the Jury

- There were an impressive array of building types and intentions.
- There was a high attention to sustainability, social accessibility, and social equity.
- Several of the designs included community spaces.
- "There's clearly something going on in Western Massachusetts about the way people live in communities."
- Western MA seems to have a lot of focus on community, and it is refreshing to see that. "There's community there."
- There was much discussion on how it was difficult to judge in general with vastly different budgets. Especially comparing low budget projects with very large budget projects of the same type.

WMAIA DESIGN AWARDS 2022



Photo by Sean Kernan

HONOR AWARD

Maier Camerlenghi Addition
Naomi Darling Architecture

- Renovation and addition was extremely tasteful, achieved goal of blending in with the existing modern architecture
- Careful transformation, notably the attention to light and proportion.
- Stair is really exceptional. Stair really opened up the space and connected the spaces of the house. Appreciated bringing in more light by opening up the great room.
- Really lovely project, "I would like to live there."
- See cover for additional photo



Photo by Raj Das

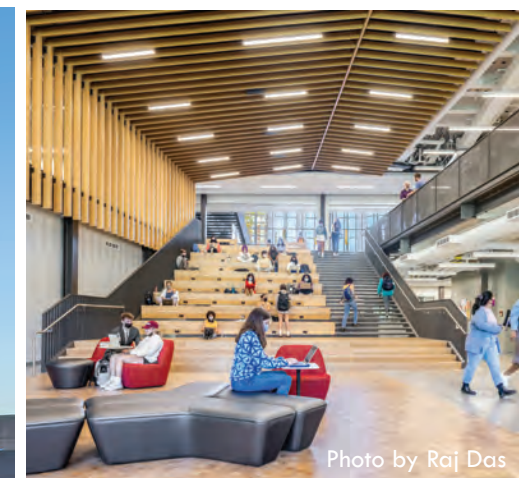


Photo by Raj Das

HONOR AWARD

UMass Amherst Student Union Renovation
Shepley Bulfinch Architects

- Love the integration of the landscape into the project, and the openness of the auditorium.
- Bright and airy, refreshing addition to the campus, with Breuer's work nearby
- Really important contribution to campus (not an easy campus to work on). Existing exterior and new work very well together.
- Renovation integrates with the historic building on a human scale, good sectional strategy
- Told the story really well in the way they assembled their images.



Many thanks to our evening's sponsors:

Pella and Keiter and to the UMass Department of Architecture for hosting us!

Jury comments are provided here.

For complete project descriptions visit wmaia.org





Photo: Jason Wessel



Photo: Jason Wessel

HONOR AWARD

1492 Westminster

Truth Box Architects

- The program strategy was doing so many things, mixed use, multi-family, urban infill, passive house, walkable community.
- Worked really well with the context through the use of color, and siding choices. Also, the bay window. Pleased with how it fit in with the surrounding buildings.
- Really like the corner, the way it opened up the restaurant with the big window to create a public gathering space. Could see people wanting to hang out there. A really lively contribution to the street front. One of the best moves: the way the building pulls around the corner with the canopy roof.
- The units seemed to work well. A lot of natural daylight for a pretty affordable price.
- Loved the project. Think it will age well stylistically.



Photo by Leigh Chodos

CITATION AWARD

Northfield Mount Hermon Wrestling Facility

Jones Whitsett Architects

- Loved the way they arranged the two buildings to create communal space in between.
- The outdoor gathering space addresses the inside/outside, giving a sense of community.
- Really enjoyed the exterior, how warm it is, the way they humanized the steel with wood.
- Innovation of an off-the-shelf industrial building.
- Appreciated the way coloring and roof pitch reference the other building nearby



Photo by Ethan Drinker

MERIT AWARD

New England Farmhouse

C & H Architects

- Appreciated that for new home construction they stayed true to the New England vernacular. Liked big house/back house barn idea.
- Appreciated care put forward for low embodied energy and energy efficiency. Thoughtfulness about reducing carbon impact. Impressive.
- The design is simple but put so much thought into it.
- Very nice drawings. Very clear about how the building works and how they were approaching it from an energy standpoint.

MERIT AWARD + ARCHITECT'S CHOICE AWARD

River Valley Coop

Thomas Douglas Architects



Photo by Leigh Chodos

- Well-designed grocery store. Engages the exterior, softens the threshold of the stark edge we often see in this typology. Design Excellence when it comes to envelope-inside to outside, life at the edge of the building
- All jurors appreciated diligence with environmental considerations
- Excited about the landscape aspects: stormwater, native plants, communal spaces
- All appreciated creation of communal spaces
- Really nice project, great job

Jury comments are provided here.

For complete project descriptions visit wmaia.org

WMAIA DESIGN AWARDS 2022



Photo by Peter Pierce

Perlman Residence Stephen Gerard Dietemann Architect



Photo by Leigh Chodos

Chicopee City Hall Dietz & Company

WMAIA DESIGN AWARDS 2022



Photo by Leigh Chodos

Gawith Hall Thomas Douglas Architects



Photo by Rob Marcalow AIA

Hill House Rob Marcalow AIA



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Hygge House UMass Design Build



Photo by Julie Bidwell

Springfield Prep Jones Whitsett Architects



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NMH Caligione Fitness Jones Whitsett Architects



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WMAIA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS 2022



Xiaoyan Lang: Artists Dreamy House

This year, in conjunction with AIA National and with the support of Pella, we were able to offer two \$1000 scholarship to M.Arch students at UMass. Submissions were screened by the UMass faculty and then submitted to the WMAIA board for review. Judging criteria was design excellence and clarity of presentation.



This year's WMAIA scholarships were presented to Xiaoyan Lang and Connor Tiches.



Connor Tiches: U.S. Mission to Geneva

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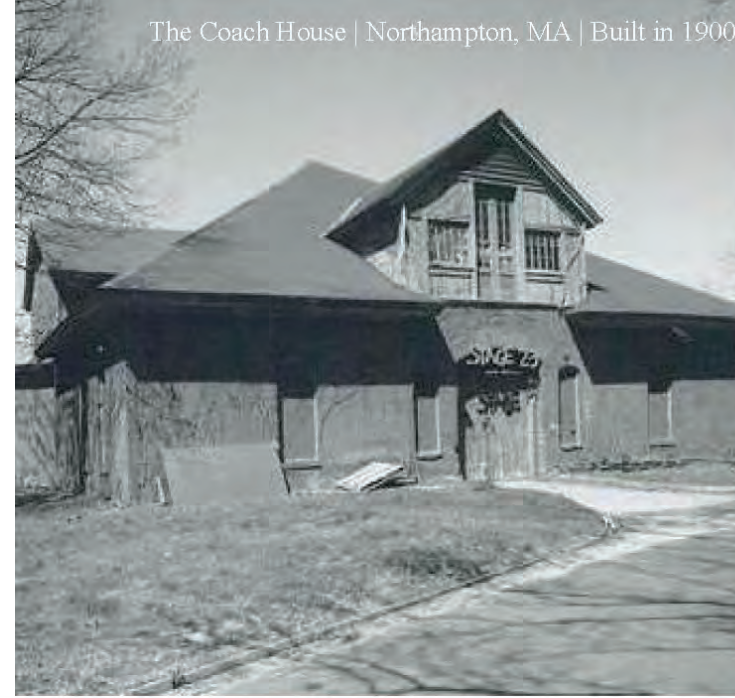


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The Coach House | Northampton, MA | Built in 1900



Historical Renovation | Completed in 2019

Design by Juster Pope Frazier Architects
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2022 WOMAN OF IMPACT AELAN TIERNEY AIA

Aelan Tierney AIA, President of Kuhn Riddle Architects, was selected as a “2022 Woman of Impact” by BusinessWest.

The awards were created four years ago, to honor women who have the authority and power to move the needle in their business, are respected for accomplishments within their industries, give back to the community, and are sought out as respected advisors and mentors within their field of influence.

Congratulations Aelan!



Photo: Leah Martin Photography



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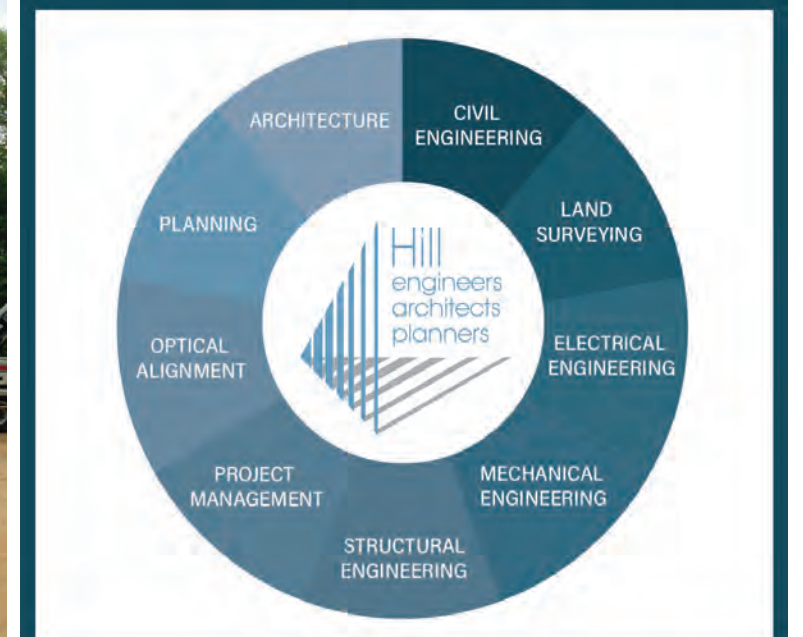
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Laura + Lyons



Kroka Expeditions Farm Barn Sketch

Laura E. Fitch AIA, LEED BD+C, principal of Fitch Architecture and Community Design, died unexpectedly on January 1, 2023. Born in Concord, MA, she is survived by her husband of 39 years, Lyons Witten; two sons, a foster daughter; two grandchildren; her mother, a sister and four brothers; and a host of grieving friends and colleagues.

Laura is remembered by colleagues as an expert in cohousing design, a fierce environmental advocate, and a lively, intelligent, and valued participant in WMAIA. An outdoor enthusiast who was deeply engaged in all that life has to offer, she cooked, sailed, danced, gardened, and skied with her husband, Lyons. Together they climbed all the 48 NH 4,000-footers and traveled the world extensively. She attended rallies for climate change, women's rights, and social justice.

Laura was first inspired to study architecture and environmental design as a teen in the 1970s, watching the construction of an experimental passive/active solar house in her Concord neighborhood. She received her Bachelor of Environmental Design in 1982 from University of Colorado in Boulder. She studied architecture abroad in Denmark, and then at Boston Architectural College, receiving her Bachelor of Architecture in 1991. She became LEED certified in 2003.

Inspired by Danish examples of cohousing, Laura participated in planning and development of the first east-coast community, Cherry Hill Cohousing (formerly Pioneer Valley Cohousing) in Amherst, where she and her family have resided since its completion in 1994. She worked with emerging cohousing communities in Alaska, New England, Brazil, Greece and beyond, and served on the National Cohousing Board from 2010-2015.

Laura began her architectural career in the Pioneer Valley in 1990, working at Margo Jones Architects (now Jones Whitsett Architects) where she finished her degree and became a registered architect. Margo Jones FAIA called her "my right-hand woman," and "a true friend and beloved colleague."

In 2002, Laura established the firm of Kraus Fitch Architects with architect Mary Kraus AIA; the firm focused on cohousing communities. Eventually she carried that company forward as Fitch Architecture and Community Design, and expanded the firm's work to include a myriad of projects at Smith College.

She won design awards from WMAIA, the Northampton Historic Commission, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the Boston Society of Architects, was listed as one of the "Top 10 Green Architects" in Natural Home and Garden Magazine, and was proud to have received the 2006 Boston Architectural College Distinguished Alumni in Practice Award.

Although Laura was intensely committed to all her work, one of her deepest architectural passions was working with Kroka Expeditions, a non-profit wilderness school in Marlowe, NH. Both of her sons had attended Kroka and later joined as summer staff. At Kroka, Laura designed the Boathouse in 2009, the Director's House in 2011 and the Farm Barn in 2015. Most recently Laura drew the plans for the 2019 renovation of Kroka's historic Farmhouse into a sustainability education center for the next 200 years.

Laura was a WMAIA board member, an editor of the WMAIAnews, and a founder and co-chair of the WMAIA COTE, where she sought out educational opportunities to encourage us to be better, greener, more sustainable architectural practitioners. She was the inspiration for the Green Giants Awards program, recognizing that we should celebrate our many collaborators in our quest to build more sustainably. WMAIA Executive Director Lorin Starr says "Laura was involved in WMAIA for as long as I can remember. Her enthusiasm for learning and her commitment to share that knowledge in an ongoing chain of mentoring of a young, diverse community of practitioners was something I truly admired."

Boston Architectural College said of Laura: "You are an Architect, Facilitator, Visionary. You have been an essential force in forming dynamic, new communities. Your exceptional skill as a mediator has earned you the respect and admiration of your clients and colleagues. Because of you, Laura, many people have found more neighborly and sustainable ways to live. Through your work, our world is a better place."

Kroka Expeditions' memorial notice about her says: "Laura's passion for functional community design and green building, combined with a lifelong love of the outdoors, has helped the Kroka campus and community grow and thrive. She will be dearly missed."

The family requests that gifts in Laura Fitch's honor be made to Kroka Expeditions. <https://kroka.org/laura-fitch/>

A LIVING BUILDING FOR THE NEXT 200 YEARS



Kroka Expeditions Farm Barn



Kroka Expeditions Farmhouse



Kroka Expeditions Boathouse



Kroka Expeditions Farmhouse Exterior Walkway



Ravens Roost Cohousing Community, Anchorage Alaska

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WMAIA COMMUNITY NEWS
WINTER 2023

Check **WMAIA enews** to see upcoming WMAIA programming!

A note about WMAIA's enews:

Are you receiving our regular enews?

The enews is sent several times a month and is used to communicate information about programs and other opportunities. If you are not receiving this information, please contact director@wmaia.org

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