

May 28, 2018

AIA Ohio Honor Awards Committee
17 S. High Street, Suite 200
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my distinct pleasure to nominate Sara Boyer, AIA for the 2018 AIA Ohio Mentor Award. Sara is an architect of high character and great compassion who has advanced the next generation of architects through mentorship programs.

Sara and her Generation X peers at Moody Nolan realized that emerging professionals required a stronger mentorship experience. Recognizing that one-on-one mentorship is effective, but limited in impact, Sara developed, modeled, and prototyped a series of structured mentorship programs which prioritize group interaction and networking. The programs have influenced recruitment efforts, elevated project quality, and helped to advance career growth for emerging professionals within Moody Nolan.

Since, Sara has expanded her sphere of influence through participation on the AIA Columbus Board of Directors and the AIA's National Practice Management Knowledge Committee Advisory Board. Sara has become a strong advocate for her emerging peers and now advocates for expansive mentorship programs on a local and national level within the AIA.

I would strongly encourage your committee to honor Sara for her empathy and her willingness to share. She holds a unique perspective and an approach to mentorship which is resonating with the next generation of architects.

Yours very truly



Timothy C. Hawk, FAIA
AIA Strategic Council, Ohio Valley Representative
thawk@wsastudio.com

AIA Ohio Awards Committee
AIA Ohio
17 S. High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

May 30, 2018

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Sara Boyer of Moody Nolan for the 2018 AIA Mentor Award. I have known Sara for 13 years and I've know her to display the leadership, guidance and service traits required to be an exemplary mentor – not only to fellow professionals, but also to fellow employees, and in her community.

Sara is committed to learning new ideas that can help our profession grow and she is excited to then share that knowledge to help others develop their knowledge and skills. Some of Sara's recent accomplishments include:

- Originated the Moody Nolan Emerging Professional committee and group.
- Contributed and advocated the MNI Licensure Initiative Committee and action plan for 2018 benefits and incentives.
- Spoke at the AIA Ohio Valley regional convention in the seminar about mentorship called "Foster the People".
- Spearheaded the Moody Nolan Project Architect Forum committee and group.
- Sought out and elected to the AIA Columbus Board of Directors in an effort to reach more mentees.
- Sought out and selected for the AIA Practice Management Knowledge Community Advisory Group; serving as the Practice Management Digest editor.

In short, as a mentor she provides insights gained through years of experience, while providing the advice and perspective necessary to help people think differently.

Sincerely



John L. Meegan
AIA Columbus President 2018

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Columbus
50 West Town Street, Suite 110
Columbus, OH 43215

T (614) 469-1973

www.aiacolumbus.org

Sara R. Boyer, AIA

Sara R. Boyer, AIA, advocates for mentorship and cultural change both inside her firm and in the profession. She leads as a role model, through changing a firm culture, and by reaching out to the local, state, and national AIA entities.

FIRM MENTORSHIP AND CULTURE – Moody Nolan Emerging Professionals

Beginning in 2014 Sara has led, as Project Manager, an \$85M sports arena renovation at the University of Cincinnati. Such a large project automatically includes co-ops and student interns. As project leader, Sara observed that, while her firm's process trained young architects in the design and documents production process, there was no mentorship, no leadership or organizational training, no professional life-skills mentorship.

Sara realized that the firm was missing out – how many promising interns went on to employment in other firms? Those young professionals employed in the firm needed to develop valuable skills that would make them better architects, better leaders both inside and outside the firm, **and** would make the firm better – at serving clients and at producing cutting-edge architecture.

Consequently, Sara formed an advisory committee of three Architects and an Interior Designer to create what would become the **Moody Nolan Emerging Professionals**. Under Sara's leadership and vision, the team established clear goals:

- Enhance a Culture of Continuous and Obsessive Improvement with a staff striving for excellence.
- Support a Good Experience for the EP's by providing social, technical, and professional development opportunities.
- Learn about "the Moody Nolan way" and Design and Construction Process and Training.
- Foster a Peer Network encouraging collaboration and resourcefulness amongst EP's.
- Grow Communication both laterally amongst EP's and vertically throughout the firm by getting to know each other.

Outcomes: Since inception in March of 2017, the Emerging Professionals have demonstrated:

- Increased participation across the 12 Moody Nolan offices nationwide,
- Increased communication with the implementation of office liaisons,
- Increased social interaction as they now organize their own social outings, and
- Increased sense of their identity as an important cohort within the firm – they have designed for themselves a logo through a design competition.

The EP group is a component of Moody Nolan's overall culture of support for entry-level and young professionals. Creating a space where the conversation is focused around or even led by young professionals shows them that their input and ideas are valued. That confidence and sense of value can translate into other spaces like design charrettes or client meetings. As a discipline, architecture can be very exploitative of young people. I feel that at Moody Nolan, I learned what I deserve and should expect from my employers, even as an entry-level employee, and that was just as important as the technical skills that I learned.

Katie Lau, 2016-2017 intern, currently pursuing her Master of Architecture at Yale.

In addition, the firm provides the following ongoing programs:

- Monthly professional development sessions,
- A monthly “hotline” conference call during which EP’s multi-task from their desk while listening into the current topic, and
- Biweekly “coffee break” sessions. The coffee break gives each office an opportunity to gather on a more social pretense, with a thirty-minute time limit. Various members across the firm are called up to host a coffee break, further deepening the level of mentorship and communication, through sharing something more personal, such as a sketch, two truths and a lie, or childhood artwork.



For Moody Nolan’s culture, group mentoring across the firm has proven exceedingly successful. The group includes ALL emerging professionals, including a CPA in the office, with a roster of **45 Emerging Professionals** across the firm of over 200 employees.

Clearly, Sara’s initiative has fulfilled a need, evidenced by recent interviews with candidates for summer internship positions in which **75% of those interviewed asked if the firm had a mentorship program.**

Sara goes above and beyond to create a collaborative and engaging culture within the firm. She always takes time to offer advice, give feedback, and to listen to the goals and input others may bring to the table. There is something to be said for a leader and a mentor that ensures everyone’s voice is heard both in group settings and especially in one on ones—and she is just that. For me specifically, Sara has helped to open doors and facilitate opportunities for my personal and professional growth that otherwise would not have been possible. She was integral in creating the Emerging Professionals group—just over a year ago—where designers and professionals can come together and share experiences and learn from one another. This group has shaped and molded the platform by which new individuals to the profession, alongside interns, can begin to collaborate and gain experience within the firm and be welcomed as part of the team.

Mason Johnson, Project Coordinator, will pursue his Master of Architecture at The Ohio State University in the fall.

MOODY NOLAN LICENSURE INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

As an outgrowth of the Emerging Professionals formation and trajectory, Sara was an instrumental member of the firm’s licensure initiative. Realizing that many interns had a deadline and opportunity to complete the exams, the Emerging Professional committee initiated the spin-off **Moody Nolan Licensure Initiative Committee**, with the most recently licensed architect, Karen Danko, as it’s Champion. The committee included a Partner, three Architects including Sara, and the Director of Human Resources. Over the course of six weeks, the committee surveyed, researched, and vetted proposals of benefit and incentive options to present to firm leadership. As a consummate supporter of licensure, Sara lobbied various partners about the effort and forthcoming proposal. The committee created a menu of proposals for support credentialing of any type (ARE, NCIDQ, LEED, etc.) in 2018.

Outcomes: Firm leadership chose to purchase study materials, pay for each exam upfront, instead of by a reimbursement timeframe, and a spot bonus if completed in 2018. Additionally, there is a tablet raffle to encourage test taking and a reimbursement of one failed exam in 2018 only. The efforts of this committee have promoted the value of licensure as an integral component Moody Nolan’s culture. To date, five became licensed and one EP passed the LEED exam in 2018.

MOODY NOLAN PROJECT ARCHITECT FORUM

Over the course of 2017, the Emerging Professionals became known as an entity. Sara saw her own peers as another source for growth and cultural change. Sara formed and spearheaded an advisory committee of five Architects to create what would become the **Moody Nolan Project Architect Forum**. Under Sara's leadership and vision, the team established clear goals:

- Create a consistent firm culture across all studios, because the firm shall speak with one voice.
- Promote a culture of continuous and obsessive improvement, because our clients deserve excellence.
- Empower mid-level leadership, after all, this leadership group is the future of the firm.
- Share knowledge, best practices, and the tough lessons learned through our own vast experience.
- Develop a peer network to improve quality control and technical and professional development.

The advisory committee conducted a survey to confirm assumptions and to listen to this specific demographic of *Emerged Professionals*. Technical development and best practices are wanted; wasting time and yet another meeting are not.

Outcomes:

The PA Forum, in its inaugural year, concisely structures discussions around 10 themes annually. In January, the kick-off introduced the committee, goals, themes, and structure of The Forum idea. February focused relationships, contractor, coworker, etc. "March Madness" was geared towards deadlines and time management. April's discussion concerned presenting, interviewing, and public speaking. Upcoming Forums will focus on BIM Management and the Realities of Risk Management. The Forum reaches about 60 licensed architects and those on the path to licensure, with roughly **60%** actively participating. Materials produced for the Forums are available to all employees via the company intranet.

LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL AIA PLATFORMS

Eager to reach more people, specifically to take the message of mentoring and leadership development beyond the firm to the profession, Sara joined the **AIA Columbus** Board of Directors for 2018-2019, as Director for the Diversity by Design Task Force. In this capacity:

- Sara is advocating for and assisting with the advancement of the forthcoming harassment policy and potential for harassment training.
- She has supported, and advises a new chapter-wide mentorship program and continues to participate as a senior mentor.

In September 2017, Sara spoke at the **AIA Ohio Valley** Convention, with Jenn Rittler and Todd Boyer. The session – *Foster the People (not the band)* – discussed enhancing firm culture, professional development, growing communication, and fostering a peer network among Emerging Professionals.

Sara sought an opportunity to advance mentorship and leadership training as an integral part of every practice. Sara was selected for the National **AIA Practice Management Knowledge Community Advisory Group**. She is currently the Practice Management Digest Editor and plans to focus two of the four quarterly issues on firm culture and the *Emerged Professional*, the demographic between the Emerging Professional and the FAIA's.

Conclusion

As an advocate for mentorship and cultural change stemming from inside her firm and reaching beyond into various AIA entities, Sara R. Boyer, AIA, creates structure and manages a process to influence both Emerging and Emerged Professionals as they embark and continue through the profession of architecture.



Lincoln Street Studio

architects & planners

45 East Lincoln Street
Columbus OH 43215

29 May 2018

2018 Jury: Alexander Christoforidis, AIA Aaron Hill, AIA
 Curt Moody, FAIA (recuse) Doug Richards, AIA
 Charlie Rodenfels, AIA

RE: **Ohio Mentor Award - Sara R. Boyer, AIA**

To the Ohio Mentor Award Selection Committee:

I am honored to recommend Sara R Boyer, AIA for the Ohio Mentor Award. I have known Sara for more than ten years, as she was a member of Lincoln Street when she first came to Columbus. Sara's most compelling trait is to strive for excellence; she is a natural leader – whether as leader of a project team, a role she held in my firm, leader of professional development initiative inside a firm, or leader for best practices in the profession as a whole.

I am pleased but not surprised to note Sara's accomplishments since she left Lincoln Street for Moody Nolan. These are but a few:

- Sara initiated the Moody Nolan Emerging Professional Program. Aimed at young professionals within the firm, this mentoring program fills a void – young professionals learn valuable skills of collaboration, leadership, client service, and organization, skills beyond those technical ones needed to produce an excellent project. Not only does this program teach needed skills, it enhances firm culture and cohesiveness, creating better professionals who serve clients better.
- Sara has pushed this initiative into other arenas, as a catalyst of the firm's licensure initiative.
- She spearheaded the Moody Nolan Project Architects Forum – a leadership development program for her peers, and a program which contributes to the development of a firm culture.
- Beyond Moody Nolan, Sara takes the recognition that mentorship and leadership training elevates the whole profession to the Board of AIA Columbus where she leads Diversity and Inclusion efforts to the AIA Ohio Valley Regional Convention, where she has spoken on professional development training, and to the AIA Ohio Practice Management Digest, where she acts as editor. I have been pleased to learn that she now has an opportunity to contribute her ideas on a wide scale as member of the AIA National Practice Management Knowledge Community Advisory Group.

I am delighted to acknowledge Sara's commitment to the profession, and wholeheartedly recommend her for the Ohio Mentor Award. She stands as a role model for others to follow and I look forward to great things in her future.

Sincerely,

Ruth M. Gless, FAIA
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C 614-507-1130
Lincoln Street Studio, LTD

May 31, 2018

2018 Jury
Alexander Christoforidis, AIA
Aaron Hill, AIA
Curt Moody, FAIA (recuse)
Doug Richards, AIA
Charlie Rodenfels, AIA

RE: Ohio Mentor Award
Sara R. Boyer, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

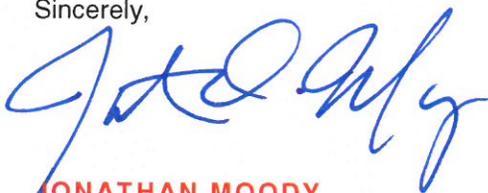
Ohio Mentor Award Selection Committee:

Sara Boyer is a great mentor within our firm. I am proud to send you this letter of support for her for the Ohio Mentor Award. Sara embodies the current needs of our profession and leads by example for what the future of our profession should be. Our emerging professionals are inspired by witnessing Sara's growth and leadership. Sara takes it upon herself to bridge the gap between generations within the profession, promote mentorship, and cultural change. This is a great value for our firm, but it responds to a greater need within the profession.

Some things that stand out to me are Sara's efforts with our Emerging Professionals group, our licensure initiative program, and generational differences across the firm. Sara helped to create our own internal network for emerging professionals that serves as a forum for engagement, education, and mentoring for all emerging professionals within our firm. This past year, Sara helped us to organize and establish a new direction and process to get more people licensed firmwide. We've already seen great results from this. Sara also works each year to help us organize a summit on future changes coming to our profession. As part of this summit, Sara organized and lead a firmwide seminar on how we can be culturally prepared and accommodating for generational differences within the workplace. Each of these efforts has had an immediate and lasting impression on our firm.

I'm excited by the changes Sara has inspired within our firm. We've seen a national decline in our overall numbers as a profession. This is concerning as we are already underrepresented and undervalued. I believe that we must work harder to remove barriers for emerging professionals and encourage them to make the profession better than it is. The work that Sara has done and her leadership by example is what I feel we need more of. Again, I am proud to send you this letter of support for Sara for the Ohio Mentor Award.

Sincerely,



JONATHAN MOODY
AIA, NOMA, NCARB, LEED AP
PRESIDENT
PARTNER



May 30, 2018

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to offer this letter of support for Sara Boyer for the AIA Ohio Mentor Award.

Sara and I have been co-workers for more than five years. Last year, we worked together to establish the firm's Licensure Initiative, and her interest in peer-to-peer mentorship has continued this year with a new Project Architect Forum.

Sara is always willing to collaborate with others and share her knowledge. She is a consistent presenter during the firm's Technology and Leadership Summits, which provide opportunities to learn from our peers in the firm. The advice she shares is always relevant, too -- I often think back on her advice for producing a well-organized set of construction documents when approaching my own projects!

In 2017, Sara was a member of the Emerging Professionals (EP) Committee, creating an inter-office network for young professionals across Moody Nolan. Once the framework of the EP group was in place, Sara asked that I join the EP committee last summer to help establish the Licensure Initiative. She provided invaluable insight and support while we set the goals for the Initiative, crafted a presentation to the Partnership, and ultimately put resources and incentives in place to set up exam candidates for success.

Sara's most recent mentorship effort is the PA (Project Architect) Forum, and her strong leadership has made it a success from the start. Participants can volunteer to lead a monthly roundtable, share best practices, or participate more informally during the Q&A portion of each discussion. I think these roundtables are a wonderful way to connect with and learn from my peers in other studios and offices, and serve as a great resource for strengthening day-to-day skills.

Sara's leadership and guidance over the past year and a half has truly re-shaped—and strengthened—the mentorship culture within the firm. I am happy to recommend her without reservation for the AIA Ohio Mentor Award.

Sincerely,



Karen E. Danko, RA
Senior Associate



May 24, 2018

2018 Jury

Alexander Christoforidis, AIA

Aaron Hill, AIA

Curt Moody, FAIA (recuse)

Doug Richards, AIA

Charlie Rodenfels, AIA

RE: Ohio Mentor Award
Sara R. Boyer, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

Ohio Mentor Award Selection Committee:

Sara Boyer has demonstrated the attributes of a mentor in many ways. I am pleased to send you this letter of recommendation for her for the Ohio Mentor Award. I have known Sara for 10 years and she has continually set aside time for graduates, giving them guidance in not only our firm's practices, but of the architectural profession as a whole. Emerging professionals seek her advice on the many topics of careers in our field. She always finds time to counsel them even while juggling a demanding project load. We are proud to have her in our firm.

Examples of her efforts include

- Creating our firm's Project Architect Forum, an ongoing and well-received series of presentations from project architects from our ten offices in a live video presentation format.
- Providing an active voice on the Moody Nolan Licensure Initiative Committee. This new direction for our firm received her full support and direction to create our Licensure Initiative program in place this year at Moody Nolan.
- Editing the Practice Management Digest for the Ohio AIA Practice Management Knowledge Community Advisory Group. Sara carries out this detailed assignment after hours, and has received great feedback for her work.
- Speaking as one of a panel at the AIA Ohio Valley Regional Convention on the topic mentorship called "Foster the People".
- Seeking a position on the AIA Columbus Board of Directors in a specific effort to ready more emerging professionals to mentor. As President of AIA Tennessee, I know firsthand how important it is to have interested Board Members who actively seek out responsibilities.
- Creating Moody Nolan's own Emerging Professionals' employee group and serving on its steering committee.

The last item exemplifies her drive to reach out to younger upcoming architects and provide assistance they may need in starting a well-rounded career.

Please accept my wholehearted recommendation of Sara for the Ohio Mentor Award. Sara represents the dedicated leader for those she mentors and helps to succeed.

Sincerely,
Moody Nolan, Inc



Elizabeth A. Thompson, AIA
Partner, Director of Nashville Operations

