Sincerely,

[Signature]

William C. Ayars
AIA, ACHA, MBA

Letter of Nomination | AIA Ohio
Throughout his career, Bill Ayars has demonstrated unwavering dedication to making a positive impact in his community through high quality design, professional development, and service.

Registered Architect in Ohio & Wisconsin
AIA Member
National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB)
American Society for Healthcare Engineering (ASHHE)
Committee of Architecture for Health
John Carroll University Entrepreneurs Association

U.S. Attorney’s Office Heroin & Opioid Action Plan Committee
Mental Health and Addiction Advocacy Coalition (MHAC)
Cuyahoga County Board of Health Opiate Task Force
Kent State Architecture Studio Jury Member
2018 Smart Business Smart 50 Award Winner

II, June 2020
AIA Ohio 2020 Honor Awards Committee
17 South High Street, Suite 200, Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: AIA Ohio 2020 Public Service Award
William Ayars, AIA Nomination

Committee Members,

It is the charge of all licensed Architects to care for the Health, Safety and Welfare of the public, but few actually walk it out in a such a tangible way as William (Bill) Ayars. Bill has centered his life around serving for the public, both in the profession as an Architect specializing in Health Care, and in philanthropy as the Co-Founder and President of the Emerald Jenny Foundation, an addiction support service based out of Cleveland.

I believe this application will demonstrate how Bill would be an excellent candidate for this award purely on the work he’s firm, Perpetuum Architecture, has been doing for the last two decades. In the office, Bill and his team at Perpetuum have been advancing health care design for some of the nation’s top health systems here in Northeast Ohio. Outside the office, Perpetuum has proven their dedication to the future of our profession with their continued support of the Kent State University- College of Architecture and Environmental Design lecture series to help advance architectural education and inspire designers young and old.

However, Bill’s greatest impact to the community has gone well beyond his work through the firm or his active roles in professional affiliations such as the AIA, the American College of Healthcare Architects, or the American Society of Healthcare Engineering. The greatest impact Bill has made is through the foundation he started to help families across Ohio, and now Nationwide, be connected with services to help their loved ones struggling with addictions. I believe Bill’s foundation embodies the spirit of Architecture at its most basic level, which is to provide shelter for people. In this case, not from the literal storms outside, but from the unpredictable challenges many of us may face as we try to build a life together with others.

I cannot imagine a more worthy candidate for consideration of the AIA Ohio 2020 Public Service Award. On behalf of AIA Cleveland, I do fully support the nomination for Bill Ayars.

David W. Cruise, AIA
AIA Cleveland First Vice President

www.aiacleveland.com
AIA CLEVELAND | OHIO | NATIONAL
A long-time member of the AIA – Bill highly encourages all employees to be members of the AIA and makes sure that Perspectus covers a portion of membership cost.

Bill and the Perspectus team are active at the local, state and national level through sponsorship, committee membership, mentorship, enthusiastic participation and by regularly attending events ranging from local Happy Hours to the National Conference.

ARE / EMERGING PROFESSIONAL MENTORING
Bill has taken many steps over the years to assist and properly equip graduates and Emerging Professionals to advance toward licensure.

The program he has established, not only provides study materials, but pairs new graduates and EP’s with principals of the firm who offer their support, guidance and expertise through one-on-one mentorship. Group sessions are held monthly for mentees to ask questions, compare notes and share study tips. The Perspectus program rewards successful test results by reimbursing mentees for the cost of each passed test.

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HEALTHCARE ARCHITECTS (ACHA)
The American College of Healthcare Architects provides a board certification for architects who practice as healthcare specialists. Architects from both the United States and Canada who have specialized skills and proven expertise are eligible to apply. At the time of becoming board certified, Bill was one of only 40 architects in Ohio to have achieved this distinction.

ACHA requires its Certificate Holders to work towards the improvement of healthcare architecture on behalf of the public, to practice in an ethical manner, to maintain high standards of specialized continuing education, and to add to the body of knowledge. The ACHA keeps a Certificate Holder Directory available to healthcare organizations so that they may connect and enlist the services of its members.

For Bill, achieving ACHA certification was another important step in his journey of making his expertise in healthcare available to the community. The ACHA Certificate Holder Directory allows healthcare organizations to search for certificate holders by the states in which they are licensed in and by their specialties.

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES (ACHE)
The American College of Healthcare Executives is the professional society for healthcare leaders committed to improving health. The organization is committed to leading with intent, integrity and vision. These pillars align with Bill’s values, and are one of the reasons he has sought membership with the organization.

Being a member of the ACHE allows Bill to share and learn best practices across the United States and it’s territories. Bill has been able to take these best practices and apply them to his work in Northeast Ohio, improving the patient care module for the communities in which we live and serve.

PERSPECTUS UNIVERSITY
In 2019, Bill and the other firm principals established Perspectus University. This internal presentation series was created to share as much information as possible about important aspects of an Architectural practice that may not be thoroughly covered in school. The goal is to provide everyone the necessary tools to expand their skill sets and advance professionally.

Each monthly “course” is presented by an employee (or several) of the firm who has advanced knowledge of a particular subject. So far, the luncheon series has covered topics such as: effective project management; productive client engagement; contract and proposal management; construction administration; marketing and business development efforts; proper construction documentation; knowledge of codes; emerging best practices for building enclosure; and most recently, a virtual presentation on Customer Relationship Management software.

14 designers have achieved Architectural or Interior Design Registration under Bill’s mentorship

10 designers have become LEED-credentialed under Bill’s guidance

2020 Public Service Award Nomination

William C. Ayars | AIA, ACHA, MBA

Community Impact (continued...)
SPONSOR OF KENT STATE UNIVERSITY’S CAED LECTURE SERIES

Through Perspectus, Bill has been sponsoring the on-going lecture series at Kent State University’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED) for almost 5 years.

The annual Spring and Fall lecture series seek to advance architectural education by featuring high-design influences that are architects, professors, scholars, entrepreneurs, artists and designers from across the world.

By serving as a sponsor of the lectures, the onus of financial responsibility is not passed down to attendees in the form of high ticket prices, allowing students and others to attend for free.

JENNIFER’S STORY

The Emerald Jenny Foundation was founded in memory of Bay Village native Jennifer Emerald Ayars, who lost her battle with drug addiction in 2016 at age 28. The website went live on May 14th, 2017 – Jennifer’s birthday.

Jennifer’s sister, Jackie, says: “My sister was a chef, artist, writer, designer, loving family member and friend. She was a giver who could always be counted on to lend a helping hand to friends, acquaintances or strangers. Our efforts won’t bring Jennifer back, but her memory will live on to aid others.”

THE EMERALD JENNY FOUNDATION

When Bill’s eldest daughter, Jennifer Emerald Ayars, died of a drug overdose in 2016 at age 28, Bill channeled the grief of losing his daughter in a focused effort to help other Ohioans facing the opioid epidemic find immediate support.

MY JOURNEY DOWN THE BIG MUDDY: Love, Heartbreak and Triumph Jet-skiing the Mississippi River” Bill Ayars and Susan Valerian, 2017

After surviving a fight with cancer, Bill wanted a way to celebrate his life and to nurture his relationship with his daughters.

This book, written by Bill, is the story of their 1,700 mile journey down the Mississippi River, an inspiring tale about overcoming obstacles and strengthening family bonds. Ten dollars of every copy sold is donated to the Emerald Jenny Foundation.

DID YOU KNOW?

At the 2019 Convention for the AIA Ohio Valley Region, Bill presented how he used “design-thinking” to create the Emerald Jenny Foundation. His presentation was called Dream, Plan, Journey, Focus, Celebrate: Design Thinking Beyond the Built Environment.
LASTING IMPACT
Recognizing a critical gap in access to support resources, Bill established The Emerald Jenny Foundation with a mission to support people struggling with substance abuse disorders. Channeling his proven process for solving problems beyond design projects, Bill worked to launch a life-saving recovery tool that transcends the boundaries of his design portfolio. He understands from firsthand experience how overwhelming it can be to navigate resources and find treatment for a loved one in need. Bill applied his design thinking to analyze and find a way to diminish the challenge that families like his own face when afflicted by addiction. In just 3 years, his foundation has made a measurable impact on the nation’s fight against addiction, and its website is now the State of Ohio’s official on-line resource for connecting families to more than 1,200 addiction treatment centers.

After Jennifer’s death, Bill took time to process what he and his family had just been through. Out of this was born a new mission: to help others find answers that he and his family had not been able to. “It’s really difficult to make decisions. Where to call? Who to call? We just thought the only thing we could do is to keep the website updated, the team at the foundation reached out every six months to all 1,200+ providers and treatment options to confirm that the information in the database was still accurate.

But the work did not stop there. To keep the website updated, the team at the foundation reached out every six months to all 1,200+ providers and treatment options to confirm that the information in the database was still accurate.

Being an architect, Bill also put great care and thought into the design of the website; “We’re not showing statistics or scare tactics. We spent a lot of time on the design of the website. There were huge conversations about what the feel should be. I even thought, ‘You have to get their attention.’ But we’re not going down that road. It’s about softly showing someone how to go from darkness to the light. It’s very subtle in its appearance, but it’s trying to help people move toward something. Reaching out is a difficult experience.”

Wanting to spread the message beyond their ad- and tracking-free website, EJF also developed pamphlets and billboards to promote the resource database. The Emerald Jenny Foundation website has logged more than 425,000 page views since its launch. In addition, the Cleveland Clinic’s Emergency Department lists the foundation’s website in its discharge instructions.

Through his work as the Co-Founder and President of the Emerald Jenny Foundation, Bill is now also a part of the U.S. Attorney’s Office Heroin and Opioid Action Task Force, the Mental Health and Addiction Coalition (MHAC Ohio) and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health Opiate Task Force.

“Our goal is that if people are starting to discuss this more openly, we can enhance that conversation and make it clear that it’s OK to talk about it and seek advice. We’re doing what we can to allow it to be a topic of conversation.”

The foundation set their sights on listing all available treatment options in Cuyahoga County. When they accomplished that goal, they expanded the database to include the counties that made up Northeast Ohio. The team completed this goal in time for the website’s launch on Jennifer’s birthday.

EJF then set their sights on a new goal: to have every treatment option in the state of Ohio listed in the database in the next year. After countless hours of calling treatment centers and programs, asking questions about their services and filing out the matrix that populates the database, the foundation reached its goal.

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WILLIAM C. AYARS | ARCHITECT | AIA, ACHA, MBA

The Arabian Design Firm LLC
Bill Ayars, Jackie Ayars & Susan Tarry

Bill Ayars, Jackie Ayars & Susan Tarry
The work that Bill and the EJF team are doing, has been featured multiple times in numerous different publications, and programs:

**PUBLICATIONS & NEWS COVERAGE**

**Prognosis Ohio:** August 2019, Addiction Treatment Resources with Emerald Jenny Foundation founders, Bill and Jackie Ayars

**WOSU 89.7:** August 2019, All Sides with Ann Fisher – Wellness Wednesday - Interview

**WKYC Channel 3:** April 2019, We the People - Interview

**WOIO Cleveland 19 News:** February 2019, Opioid Crisis – Helping People Find Treatment

**The Gazette (Medina, Oh.):** January 2019, Website shows where to find help amid opioid crisis

**WDOK FM Radio:** December 2018, Cleveland Connection with Michelle O’Dell - The Emerald Jenny Foundation

**Dayton Daily News:** December 2018, Opioid crisis: Finding quality treatment a challenge

**WVIZ-TV (PBS Ideastream):** April 2018, Emerald Jenny Foundation - Local Family Turns Heartbreak into Plan to Stop Opioid Deaths

**Smart Business:** January 2018, Emerald Jenny Foundation offers guidance to families fighting addiction

**The Plain Dealer/Cleveland.com:** January 2018, Emerald Jenny Foundation creates addiction treatment search tool

**Rumble.com / WEWS:** December 2017, Emerald Jenny Foundation helping fight addiction

**WEWS-TV (ABC):** December 2017, Emerald Jenny Foundation helps addicts, families connect with nearby resources

**Cover 2 Resources Podcast:** July 2017, Building an Accessible Resource: Bill Ayars, The Emerald Jenny Foundation

**Crain’s Cleveland Business:** November 2017, Database provides help for fight against opiates

"As a parent, I would tend to focus on the behavior. Just stop doing that. Go get help... never really accepting addiction as a disease was my biggest misconception."

Bill Ayars, Founder & President of The Emerald Jenny Foundation

"...The work you are doing to catalogue Ohio's treatment options and to make that information usable for the public is outstanding."

Jamie Carmichael, Deputy Director, Office of Public Affairs | Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

"The Plain Dealer/Cleveland.com: January 2018, Fentanyl-laced cocaine is Ohio’s newest killer - but we can combat this scourge. Dennis Cauchon (Opinion)"
Letters of Support

AIA Ohio Public Service Award Committee

Dear Committee Members:

I met Bill Ayars in 2016. Bill's purpose in seeking me out was to find a way to dedicate himself to helping people caught up in the addiction epidemic raging in our country and our community. He had suffered the loss of his own daughter to this epidemic and wanted to make a difference.

His goal was to create a foundation that would help the vulnerable loved ones of the addicted person find treatment and recovery options that could save their lives. Bill created a foundation, the Emerald Jenny Foundation (EJF). Bill Ayars, as busy as he was—a renowned, successful architect—devoted an inordinate amount of time and treasure to EJF. In our first meeting I explained to Bill that many parents learned that their beloved children are addicted to extremely dangerous drugs in courtrooms. I had witnessed their despair and how lost they were in trying to find a solution. EJF created an online addiction treatment provider database that provided a navigation tool for addicted persons and/or their families.

I am proud to say I serve on the EJF Board. To our amazement the navigation tool offered was the only resource available to people caught up in this epidemic. So successful was the EJF model that it expanded throughout the State of Ohio and eventually was replicated by the federal government. Hospitals, treatment programs, first responder organizations and state and local governmental agencies used this navigation tool.

For more than three years EJF filled a huge gap supporting over 200,000 people seeking hope and help with addiction.

Bill Ayars did not create a foundation and then sit back and watch other people do the work. He and his fiancée Susan Tarry worked tirelessly every day to make this work and devoted enormous financial resources. The federal government eventually took notice of the EJF database and replicated it so it is available as a navigation tool throughout the United States. One cannot overstate how much Bill has helped the addicted and their families in the State of Ohio and the United States.

Sincerely,

Judge Donna Congeni Fitzsimmons
Rocky River Municipal Court

June 9, 2020

To: AIA Ohio Public Service Award Jury

May 30, 2020

Dear Members of the Public Service Award Jury,

William (Bill) Ayars, AIA, supporter, advisor and friend of Kent State University’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design has made significant contributions to the growth and distinction of the college, and to the professional development of interns and recent graduates. As co-founder and managing principal of Firehouse, a leading healthcare design firm in northeast Ohio, his impact has been profound—on the architecture program, on the quality and relevance of patient-centered healthcare design for the likes of the Cleveland Clinic, and on emerging professionals through the creation and support of well-structured career paths. Ayars ensures that students and graduates on a path to licensure have opportunities to work on high profile, innovative projects with the support and mentorship of experienced professionals. His encouragement of young professionals such as Adam Yarac, who was granted significant time away from the firm to teach at Kent State, has had a profound impact. It gave students access to a highly motivated professional operating within an aspirational practice, but that’s not all. Ayars’ support contributed to Yarac’s ascendency to 2018 President of AIA’s Cleveland Chapter and to receiving a 2019 AIA National Young Architects Award.

In 2017 (with a commitment through 2023) Bill and his partners were the first to create a firm-sponsored lecture at Kent State—an initiative that substantially enriched discourse at the college and in the professional community of northeast Ohio. Perspective lecture laureates include Fairchild Mousavi, British architect, author and educator, Pariyachot Manasseh Guadeux, winner of the European Prize for Architecture, and Dutch Architect Frans Houben, Design Director of Mecanoo. As the first to partner with the college in this way, Ayars and partners modeled leadership that has resulted in three additional firm-sponsored lectures and a growing relationship between practice and the academy in our region. His role as supporter and mentor in the Master of Healthcare Design program has been vital to its founding, direction, and structure. Designed to ready professionals with evidence-based design skills, first principles, and research acumen for this important, growing sector, he has shared his extensive experience and contacts in this healthcare-centric region and advised the college on how to set up a program focused on health care delivery from patient, provider, and family-centric points of view.

Beyond architecture Ayars is a proactive and impactful leader and voice in the battle against opioid addiction. He created and commits countless hours to leadership of the Emerald Jenny Foundation that connects families to addiction treatment centers at the state level and beyond. In this endeavor, his commitment to raising the quality of health care through design, and in his impactful support of the college, its students and young professionals, Ayars is a model figure in the profession. I extend my enthusiastic support of William Ayars for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award on the basis of what he has done for healthcare design, how he contributes to the development of young professionals, his impactful support of the Architecture program at Kent State University, and for his deep commitment to the community of those who need and deserve meaningful support.

Sincerely,

Mark Mishur, AIA
Dean and Professor

Office of the Dean
Center for Architecture and Environmental Design
P.O. Box 5190 • Kent, Ohio 44242-0519 • 330-672-9937 • Fax: 330-672-9956 • www.kent.edu/dacd
May 27, 2020
AIA Ohio
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road, Ste. 120
Worthington, OH 43085

Letter of Support for: William C. Ayars, AIA
2020 AIA Ohio Public Service Award

June 1, 2020

Re: William (Bill) Ayars nomination for AIA Public Service Award

Dear AIA Ohio Board,

I am writing this letter in support of Bill Ayars to receive the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

In my last semester, before completing my master’s from the Ursuline Historic Preservation Program, I met Bill at a speed mentoring event sponsored by the Association for Preservation Technology International, Eastern Great Lakes Chapter, Northeast Ohio. The goal of the event was to provide various perspectives to students on different fields and business lines which needed to integrate to successfully complete preservation projects. Bill was one of six mentors, providing his perspective on the architectural contribution, and providing coaching and advice to the job search process.

Since this event, I have had the opportunity to continue our discussions with Bill while beginning a job search during one of the worst periods of unemployment in our nation dealing with the Covid 19 pandemic. His advice and experience, willingness to listen and openness to mentor students contributes to the Cleveland architectural community. Bill’s ability to connect with students and provide time to counsel them as they enter the industry is invaluable. It reflects his passion for the field and encourages others in his firm and in the Cleveland area to support this mentoring of the next generation.

I and other students benefited from Bill’s commitment to this industry and his generous sharing of his time. I am grateful for his service to me and others, and for this reason support this nomination of the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

Respectfully yours,

Polly Bloom

Peter L. Bankwell, FAIA, FACHA
Principal
2700 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43209-1844
mobile 614-560-0081
pbankwell@bardwellassociates.com
www.bardwellassociates.com