

zachary forney



Community is when people with similar interests come together to help, educate, and support one another. Any designer is capable of creating effective buildings, but I take pride in establishing a sense of community both inside and outside of the work environment. That is what leaders bring to the table, and that is what I strive for. Communication is key, and maintaining an environment that is collaborative and professional while still showing that it takes a team to complete a project is of utmost importance. This creates successful and enjoyable projects where everyone involved leaves with the feeling that they are part of something bigger. That is how I create community in design.

experience PRIME AE Group, Inc.: 2019 - present, architectural designer; *produces SD, DD, and CD sets for prototypical hotels, community center renovations and additions, new build recreational facilities, and mixed use campuses, as well as pre-design items like code research, community outreach, and presentations*

Kent State University: 2019 - present, caed adjunct professor; *instructs first year design studios that introduce students to foundational design elements such as point/line/plane, space, scale, composition, and material*

The Better Block Foundation: 2018 - 2019, architectural designer/ohio branch director; *focused on community engaged design by working on and managing projects that educated, equipped, and empowered communities and their leaders so they could reshape and reactivate their built environments while also promoting economic and social growth, the main example project being the Exchange House, a multicultural hub in North Akron*

TC Architects: 2015 - 2018, architectural associate; *produced SD, DD, and CD sets for health and wellness center new builds, hospital remodels, multi-family residential renovations, and veterinary clinics, as well as code research and construction administration*

involvement American Institute of Architects - Akron: 2015 - 2022; *member of multiple committees and served on the board as AIAS kent liaison and associate director, currently serving on the board as one-year director for 2022*

ACE Mentor Program - Akron/Canton: 2021 - 2022; *participates in the mentor program with high school students from Canton-McKinley and Kenmore-Garfield who are interested in architecture, construction, engineering, and the allied fields*

PRIME AE - PRIME Community Committee: 2021; *guides the company's understanding of the term community and create the strategic plan to help with implementing a better perception of community both within the company as well as outside of the company*

software fluent in: *revit, autocad, rhinoceros, sketchup, photoshop, illustrator, indesign, ms teams*
proficient in: *grasshopper, adobe creative suite, bluebeam, lumion*

education Kent State University: master of architecture, 2016
Kent State University: bachelor of science, 2015, *magna cum laude*

licensure AXP hours: *100% complete* exam progress: *3/6 passed*



Akron Office

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P: 330.864.7755

June 21, 2022

AIA Ohio
Honor Awards Jury
400 W. Wilson Bridge Rd., Suite 120
Worthington, OH 43085

Dear Honor Awards Jury:

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this nomination of Zachary Forney, Associate AIA, for the AIA Ohio Emerging Professionals Award. In fact, in that he has demonstrated both Leadership in Practice and Service, I am actually nominating him for both of those categories of the Emerging Professionals Award.

I first had the pleasure of meeting Zachary at the 2016 AIA Akron annual meeting. I was very impressed by his insight of the issues of the day and was compelled to approach him after the meeting to introduce myself. During that conversation, I learned that Zachary had served on the KSU AIAS Board as a student and was already involved with AIA Akron after graduation serving on multiple committees. He now serves on the AIA Akron Board as a Director.

Since that time, I have observed his accomplishments as a leader with The Better Block Foundation as he helped empower communities to improve their neighborhoods through design. In addition, Zachary has been a volunteer with the ACE program that provides mentorship to high school students considering design careers and for the past three years, Zachary has been teaching design classes at Kent State University College of Architecture and Environmental Design.

In 2019, we were able to recruit Zachary to join our firm where, since day one, he has emerged as a reliable team player and has established himself as a valued resource to coworkers. He has advanced our technology uses and has developed trusted client relationships. When recruiting volunteers for internal company advancement committees, Zachary was one of the first to volunteer and was a key contributor to the effort.

In summary, Zachary is truly dedicated to the advancement of the profession and has significantly impacted this profession with leadership and service with great enthusiasm. I am certain that he will be a driving force for many years to come. It is for all these reasons, I urge you to consider Zachary Forney, Associate AIA for the 2022 AIA Ohio Emerging Professionals Award.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Schreckenberger, FAIA
AIA Ohio Past President
OVR Past Regional Director
2012 Richard Upjohn Fellow



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AIA Ohio Honor Awards - Emerging Professional Award

Letter of Acknowledgement

Dana Adkins
540 White Pond Drive
Akron, OH 44320

06/03/2022

Dear Jurors,

It is without reservation that I acknowledge Zachary Forney's nomination for the emerging professional award and with great pride that I recommend my colleague and friend for this award. It has been a distinct pleasure knowing Zachary for the past ten years and growing with him in our profession.

Zachary showed his strengths as a leader even when we were both still in school, often by example, gaining top marks in classes, communicating with respect, and showing a willingness to help others. As a professional, Zachary shows that same respect and eagerness in the workplace. He has made his passion for community service known and actively advocates for projects that serve the local people. Zachary also uses these talents and connections to bring local projects to the office and leads the effort in getting our community what it needs. As an educator, Zachary gives of himself and his personal and professional knowledge to support the local architectural community. I have seen firsthand the way students look to him as a mentor and role model and seek him out to help them cultivate similar lifestyles and philosophies. There is no greater compliment than students seeking to model themselves after his example.

Zachary brings energy and passion to the groups he volunteers with and establishes himself as a leader among his peers in these groups. Zachary has volunteered on the AIA Akron board numerous times, currently serving on the Emerging Professionals committee. In this role he attends regular meetings with the emerging professional directors around the state and takes part in planning joint meetings and sharing of ideas and encouragement with other leaders. In his role as an ACE mentor, Zachary has not only given of himself to help students and to educate the next generation about the architecture, construction, and engineering fields, but he was also quick to volunteer when local schools were short on mentors. Zachary was willing to leave the school his office sponsored and take charge of a school system that needed more help.

In closing, I believe Zachary is a prime example of what an emerging professional can be and a born leader in this community. I gladly reiterate my recommendation of him, and I am proud of everything he does as a member of AIA Akron.

Respectfully,

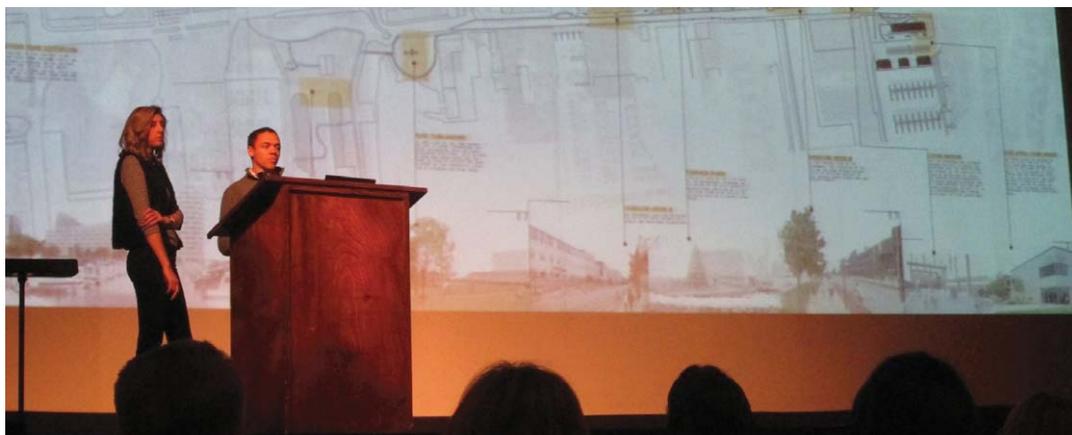
Dana Adkins



2022 AIA Akron President

zachary forney

collegiate
leadership



Shoreline Community Stakeholders Presentation, 2014, Sandusky, OH - the fourth year students of Kent State's CAED had an adaptive reuse project that redeveloped the Lake Erie Shoreline to become a lively mixed use district. Zachary was one of few students to present those ideas and designs to the stakeholders, explaining the importance of creating a diverse Shoreline Community.

leadership
in student
organizations



AIA Akron Strategic Planning Meeting, 2015, Akron, OH - Since 2013, Zachary has been involved with either AIAS or AIA. In 2015, he became the AIA Akron Liaison for AIAS Kent, serving as the middle-man between the two chapters. This helped form partnerships and relationships between the students and professionals, which forged a way for Zachary to find his place on the Board of Directors for the Akron Chapter of AIA in years to come. The image above shows him presenting ideas as to how AIAS could contribute to AIA Akron's Strategic Plan.

zachary
forney

collegiate
community
service



Cuyahoga Falls Better Block, 2016, Cuyahoga Falls, OH - Zachary's graduate studio partnered with The Better Block Foundation, an urban design non profit, to create a "block party" experience that implemented digitally fabricated plywood kiosks as the main form of "storefronts" for local small businesses. This showed the community that they had the resources to create a downtown streetscape that was activated by people, not just cars.

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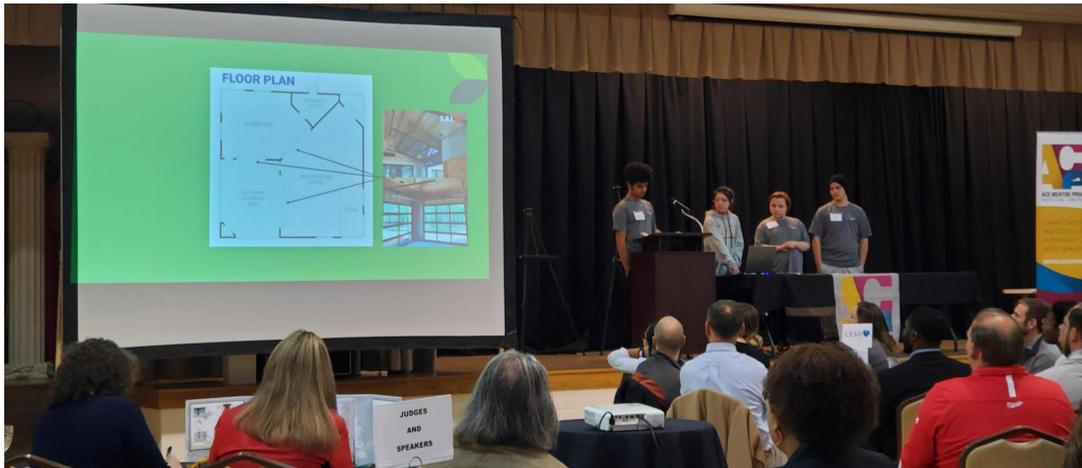
dedication
to education



CAED Second Year Reviews, 2017, Kent, OH - The College of Architecture and Environmental Design forged Zachary into the disciplined designer that he is today, and after graduating, he made sure to attend as many reviews as possible to continuously give back to his less experienced peers.

First Year Design Studio at CAED, 2019, Kent, OH - regular attendance at end of semester reviews garnered Zachary a position as adjunct professor at Kent State University. His respect for the students and clear dedication to understanding where the students are coming from continues to make him a valuable member on the CAED's skilled and knowledgeable team of educators.

high school
mentorship



ACE Mentorship Project Presentations, 2022, Akron, OH - alongside teaching and working, Zachary also volunteered at area high schools since 2021, showing local teenagers what it means to be an architect, an engineer, or a contractor. The above image shows his students from Kenmore-Garfield giving their response to an RFP at the culmination of the ACE Program. While these four freshman did not win any awards for their design, they all developed their skillsets throughout the school year, and were all eager to return to the program next year as sophomores with high hopes of taking home the gold medal.

zachary forney

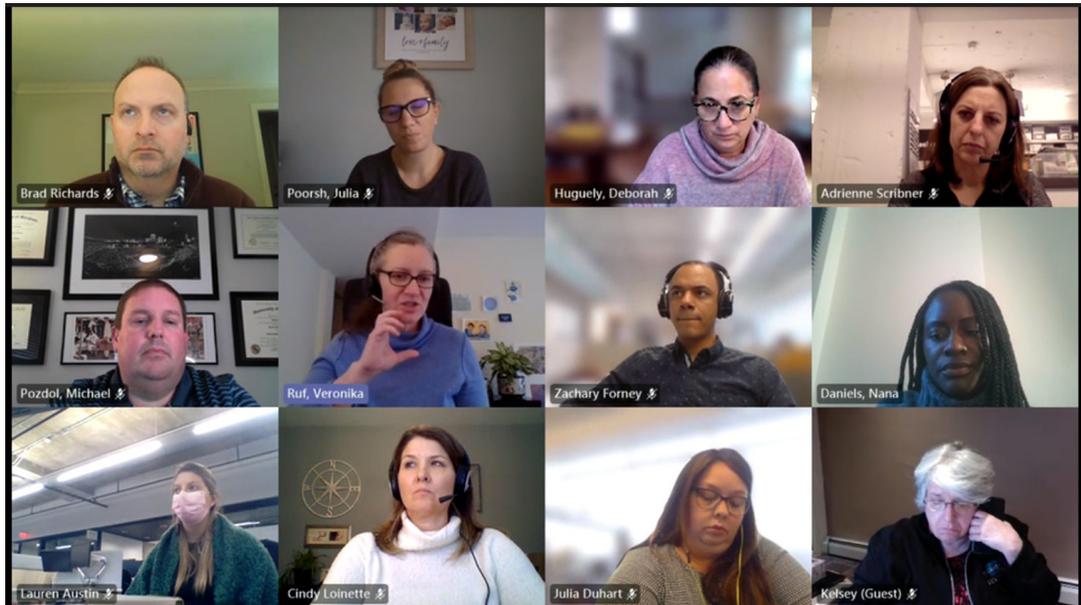
community
building



The Exchange House (Better Block), 2018, Akron, OH - working with the Better Block Foundation in his graduate design studio, Zachary pursued a job with the non profit urban design company a few years later. This hands on job placed him right in the middle of real, grassroots activism that truly formed Zachary into the intentionally conscientious citizen he is today. The key takeaways were to listen, to learn, and to show up. Listening is how you gain all of the knowledge and wisdom that one needs to thrive in any environment, and it also lets the other people know that you are there for them. This leads to learning, proving to be far more important than teaching, because even a good teacher is constantly learning from their students. Bringing us to showing up. Building relationships in community means showing up to support your friends and family around you.

zachary forney

office leadership



Marriott Consultant Meeting, 2020, Zoom - with the forced change of pace that a pandemic brought, Zachary was able to sit in on more client meetings. This led to more exposure, propelling him towards his role of being front-facing with clients and supporting his goal of creating community in all roles and levels of design.

office culture



PRIME AE Bakeoff* and Gingerbread Decorating, 2022, Akron, OH - prior to the pandemic, employees at PRIME AE would typically eat lunch together in the training room. That changed during the pandemic, but something needed to be done to bring people together again. Zachary put together a month long bakeoff to give everyone a chance to show off their quarantine baking skills, while also giving everyone a little extra incentive to go in to the office while still being safe and health conscious. This sentiment also applied to the holiday gingerbread party, where he hired a chef to come in and explain how to make gingerbread cookies to be used for “construction.” Both events were open to everyone in the office (designers, engineers, and administration) to really bring everyone together.

*It should be noted that Zachary didn't actually win any baking awards.

zachary forney

AIA Akron
chapter
events



AIA Ohio
EP Committee



AIA National
Grassroots
and National
Conference



The American Institute of Architects, 2022, USA - being involved in a diverse and energetic community of similarly minded people is important when it comes to constantly improving and bettering one's self. That's what Zachary loves about AIA as he continues to strive to be his best self.

June 18, 2022

Review Committee the AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award;

I have known Zachary Forney since 2013, when I arrived at Kent State University. I have seen his maturation, growth, and excellence evolve for almost a decade. While I don't consider myself a formal mentor of Zachary, he and I have connected in a variety of professional and academic settings:

1. When he was still a student and I served as a reviewer in his community engagement studio;
2. When he joined The Better Block Foundation in Akron and was empowering communities, he and I worked on collaborations with the College of Architecture and Environmental Design;
3. As colleagues at the College of Architecture and Environmental Design at Kent State University since 2019;
4. Through our AIA Akron chapter, where Zachary and I have served in multiple roles during our combined tenures on the board;
5. As supporters of our local ACE Mentor Program where I serve as a university-based board member and Zachary is a highly motivated mentor.

I can attest that Zachary is immersed in cultivating and serving communities. I use the word in the plural because Zachary engages a diverse range of communities and on many levels: from the scale of neighborhood groups to communities with shared cultural roots, to academic settings and professional organizations.

I believe he and I both recognize that architecture is an extension of society and serves an essential role in the formation and continuity of community life. Not only does Zachary serve as a role model and mentor to youth who aspire to enter the Architecture/Construction/Engineering field, but he engages with university students through his teaching and by engagement through the AIA as an emerging professional. Zachary understands how mutually supportive and entangled relationships make for strong communities; he promotes this through community-building within PRIME AE and facilitating community outreach to the region.

I have directly witnessed Zachary find creative and inventive ways to connect communities; his promotion of the AIA Akron/AIAS Kent State program "Conjecture After the Lecture," which connects architecture students to professionals through the shared medium of lectures by celebrated architects. Zachary has been an exceptional facilitator, organizer, and spokesperson at these events. Personally, I could see other AIA chapters with a strong association to their regional university academic program replicate this program. This program directly reflects the mission of AIA Akron: to connect architects and aspiring architects through fellowship, education, equity, and outreach with the goal of positive change through design.

As a licensed architect educator with nearly 30 years of experience, my endorsement of Zachary Forney for the AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award related to his service to communities and the profession should carry some verity and weight when I state that due to his commitment to community service I cannot think of anyone more deserving than Zachary Forney—to me, he sets the bar high.

Respectfully Submitted,



William T. Willoughby, AIA, NCARB
AIA Akron, President-elect (2022)
Associate Professor



June 29, 2022

Eric F. Pros
DS Architecture
1020 Huron Road East Suite #101
Cleveland Ohio, 44115

Re: Zachary Forney AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award

Dear Honor Awards Selection Committee,

I am pleased to offer this letter to support Zachary Forney for consideration for the 2022 AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award. I consider it a privilege to have known Mr. Forney for the past ten years, and I am honored to provide this letter of endorsement for such a worthy candidate. Over the past decade I have had the opportunity to collaborate with Zachary in a variety of ways from teaching together locally, to volunteering alongside one another regionally, and in service to the American Institute of Architects.

I first had the opportunity to teach alongside Zachary at Kent State University at the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED) where Zachary served as a teaching assistant to the First Year Design Studio. Zach was a tremendous asset to the course offering his insight during and after class. I could always count on him to guide the students and push their projects to explore innovative solutions to each design prompt. Since my time first working together with Zach, he has gone on to serve as an adjunct faculty member to the CAED and continues to serve as a studio professor to this day. Zach connects with his students and encourages them through his genuine passion for teaching.

As a past-president and board member of AIA Akron, I have been fortunate enough to collaborate with Zachary through the local component where he has been a member of the board for several years. Mr. Forney is always the first to raise his hand to support initiatives that engage and inspire students and young professionals. Zach's involvement has been instrumental in the "Conjecture After the Lecture" series, regional Career Fairs, and STEM career days at local schools in Akron.

Zach's passion for inspiration and leadership is not limited to the local level however, he is also active in the AIA Ohio Young Architects Forum (YAF) and is active at the National level, participating in Grassroots and national conferences, while balancing family commitments and serving as a practicing architect full time. He is a model of what an emerging professional should look like, the profession needs more multidimensional young leaders like Zach, and as such they should be recognized for their contributions. I trust that you will strongly consider Zachary Forney for the 2022 AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award.

All the best,

ERIC F. PROS, AIA, MBA, CPD
Director of Design
AIA Ohio Treasurer
AIA Akron Immediate Past President
2019 AIA Akron Emerging Talent Award Recipient
2021 AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award Recipient
2022 AIA National Young Architect Award Recipient

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To the Review Committee of the AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award;

I have known Zachary Forney since 2018, when we worked together for the Better Block Foundation. I have witnessed his creativity with design and collaboration with community members from all walks of life. Since we first met, I have found him to be an absolute joy to work with and know.

When we were working at Better Block Foundation, I had the gift of witnessing the assets that Zachary brought to the community. Our collaboration began at the Exchange House which was a cultural hub and international hostel in the North Hill neighborhood of Akron, one of the most racially diverse and economically mixed neighborhoods in the country. He designed and helped to implement the construction of a pocket park behind the house. What started as a gravel parking lot transformed into a public space for neighbors to enjoy. It included a stage, seating area, market stalls, and greenery that was a throughway from the neighborhood street to the business district. Zachary laser cut a mini prototype of the market stalls and had it in the house for kids to play with and explore architecture. He also took time to understand the community's needs and cultural heritage. For example, he built a chautara, which is a Bhutanese-Nepali inspired round structure, that serves as a gathering place for pursuing love and having tough conversations.

After Zachary left his position and started working for AE Prime, I can attest to his continued work in the North Hill community. The City of Akron is investing in rebuilding some community centers in underserved areas, including Patterson Park Community Center in North Hill. When they began the design process, Zachary was a fierce advocate for collecting community feedback in order to inform the decisions being made about the new building. He helped to facilitate a listening session on Zoom with the City to hear aspirations from neighbors about what they wanted to see in the new building. This was an important part of the process that will reflect the community, elevate space, and cultivate activity.

As a creative community builder with deep roots in organizing collectively and cultivating place, I endorse Zachary Forney for the AIA Ohio Emerging Professional Award because of his commitment to the care of community through design and architecture.

Sincerely,

Katie Beck
Co-Artistic Director of Gum-Dip Theatre
Former Executive Director of North Hill Community Development Corporation
330-962-2690