March 19, 2014

Governance and Administration

This Friday, President Mark A. Focht, FASLA, will be speaking before the board of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), an association with over 140,000 members. This is the first opportunity ASLA has had before the ASCE Board. Focht’s presentation will focus on ASLA priorities and programs, as well as opportunities for collaboration. Both Focht and EVP Nancy Somerville, Hon. ASLA, will attend ASCE’s awards gala tomorrow evening and will present on Friday.

President-Elect Dick Zweifel, FASLA, was a guest speaker at the Mississippi and Alabama Annual Conference, March 14, on the evolving role of landscape architects in today’s culture and provided an update on national ASLA activities.

Also, President-Elect Zweifel has been named by DesignIntelligence as one of the 30 “Most Admired Educators of 2014.” The article states that Zweifel “understands the profession and the interaction between disciplines. He is admired for his leadership and his work with the American Society of Landscape Architects. His consistency and vision have kept Cal Poly SLO among the best education programs in multidisciplinary design professions.” Congratulations to Dick!

EVP Somerville met with U.S. General Services Administrator Dan Tangherlini and other design and real estate industry association CEOs recently as part of a new GSA Industry Associations Roundtable. The meeting focused primarily on GSA’s proposed capital program for FY 15, which, in Tangherlini’s words, “…allows GSA to invest in the nation’s infrastructure to meet important national goals.” Topics of future meetings will include: energy savings and environmental conservation; resiliency planning and practices; public-private partnerships; and workplace transformation and productivity.

Past-President Perry Howard, FASLA, and his students from North Carolina visited Headquarters recently. Several staff provided the group with updates on ASLA priorities, professional practice resources, public relations initiatives, the green roof, and the Chinatown Green Streets Project.

The 2014 call for nominations to the Council of Fellows (COF) closed on March 7. In total, 82 nominations were received. Review materials were sent out to the COF jury committee in preparation for the meeting in Washington, April 24-25.

In preparation for the midyear meeting, the 2014 Strategic Objectives and ASLA Programs surveys were sent to the Board of Trustees and similar surveys to chapter presidents and ASLA staff. Results of and discussion about the surveys will be included in the midyear meeting agenda.

Corporate Secretary Curt Millay, ASLA, provided building tours to four of the architecture/interiors firms invited to submit proposals for the interior renovation of the headquarters building.
Database Operations Manager Rosa Spencer and Professional Practice Manager Debbie Steinberg, ASLA, recently led peer-to-peer workshops in Microsoft Access and Microsoft Word. With approximately 30 percent of the staff participating, the workshops provided an excellent learning experience and an opportunity to collaborate on specific issues. The focus of the Access training was the creation of a member experts database for use by PR and Communications when they get calls for experts by news organizations. Still a work in process, the database will include information from the annual meeting education sessions, input from the professional practice networks, and the membership database, as well as the original PR and Communications data. In Word, the focus was on charts, formatting, and following the standard office reporting standards when completing the AOP, the E-Weekly, or the E-Express. Future planned training sessions include Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Outlook. Collectively this is referred to around the office as “ASLA March Madness.”

Finance

CFO Mike O’Brien has closed out February 2014 and reports to the Finance and Investments Committee tomorrow. The February results are in line with the budget and slightly above the same period of 2013.

Government Affairs

Government Affairs welcomes Mark Cason as the department’s new Government Affairs Manager. Mark brings 10 years of federal policy and advocacy experience, most recently serving as the Senior Government Affairs Representative for the independent sector here in Washington, D.C. Mark has a B.S. in Business Administration from Alabama A&M University and will soon hold a M.A. in Public Policy from New England College.

RSVP for ASLA Advocacy Day 2014 today as the Friday, April 4, deadline is fast approaching. Your RSVP will assist staff in securing congressional meetings and BOT members may use this 2014 Advocacy Day BOT RSVP form to RSVP; chapter presidents may use this 2014 Advocacy Day CPC RSVP form. For assistance with the survey or your RSVP, please contact Government Affairs Manager Mark Cason; phone, 202-216-2370.

Tell ASLA what federal policy issues are important to you! Recently, President Focht sent out a “Call For Issues” asking ASLA members to tell ASLA what federal policy issues are important to them, as the ASLA Advocacy Department prepares for the new 114 Congress (2015-2016). All ASLA leaders are encouraged to complete the ASLA 2015-2016 Federal Priorities Survey and to urge their Chapter members to complete it, too. Questions? Please contact Federal Government Affairs Director Roxanne Blackwell; phone, 202-216-2334.

Recently, President Barack Obama released his fiscal year 2015 budget, which included some significant requests that could benefit landscape architects including increased funding for the National Parks Service, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and TIGER grants. ASLA has prepared an analysis of the budget.

ASLA has joined with other allied organizations in sending a letter to Congress urging members to cosponsor the Safe Streets Act (H.R. 2468, S. 2004). The House version of the legislation, H.R. 2468
continues to gain bipartisan support with 33 cosponsors. However, the Senate version has just two cosponsors: Mark Begich (AK) and Brian Schatz (HI).

- Director Blackwell attended a House Transportation and Infrastructure’s Subcommittee on Highways and Transit hearing on Oversight of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Implementation of MAP-21 and Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request for Surface Transportation. During the hearing transportation officials from the Obama administration testified about the need for Congress to pass a long-term surface transportation bill and to address the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund before current law, MAP-21, expires in September 2014. President Obama is expected to send his recommendations for a long-term surface transportation bill to Congress in April. Both the House and Senate have indicated that they plan to have their versions of a bill on the floor by early summer 2014.

- Manager Cason and Professional Practice Manager Steinberg attended an informational session regarding D.C. Stormwater Regulations and Credit Bank. The session, hosted by the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) National Capital Chapter outlined the District’s efforts in low-impact and sustainable infrastructure through the implementation of new stormwater regulations. Panelists also shared information on the credit bank, which could be a vital reference for the Society’s Green Street Project.

- Manager Cason also attended the Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition (SUFC) Policy Working Group to discuss President Obama’s FY2015 budget request and to develop an advocacy strategy for the coalition’s federal funding priorities. The group also reviewed SUFC Research Priorities and identified SUFC consensus on forestry, transportation, urban development, water programs, and conservation appropriations.

- Legislative Analyst Leighton Yates participated in a conference call of the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK). The discussion included a briefing on the budget of the Department of Interior outlined in President Barack Obama’s Fiscal Year 2015 (FY 2015) Budget Proposal. OAK also announced its full support of the Community Parks Revitalization Act, H.R. 2424, which ASLA has advocated for since its initial introduction in 2013.

- The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and Virginia Tech University’s Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability are conducting a national survey, on behalf of the U.S. Forest Service, to outline current trends for green infrastructure and urban forestry. Survey data will provide insight on ways communities can foster progress in green infrastructure and urban forestry. At least seven different organizations and professional groups are currently participating in the survey—an unusually broad cross-section of stakeholders. Landscape architects are deeply familiar with the challenges and the social, environmental, and economic benefits of greening communities. Sharing that knowledge through the survey will enrich its results and could have an enormous impact on strategy and policy at the local, state, and federal levels.
Public Relations and Communications

- Staff put Washington-based members Past President Dennis Carmichael, FASLA, Charles Birnbaum, FASLA, and Elizabeth Miller, ASLA, in touch with a *Washington Business Journal* reporter regarding an upcoming feature on the look and maintenance of local D.C. landscapes.

- Director Terry Poltrack, Senior Manager Green, and Web and Graphic Designer Gretchen Ward met with students and faculty from Ball State University to review an app under development detailing the history, features, and landscape of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The effort is a project of an interdisciplinary team that includes landscape architecture students.

- A March 4 *Wall Street Journal* article quotes member Lynn Mason, ASLA, about popular residential play space features.

- Spreading *The Dirt: Streetsblog* mentioned the review of Kaid Benfield’s new book; *Landscape + Urbanism* featured a recent post on teaching ecological restoration; ArchNewsNow featured the new review of Benfield’s book; and Andrew Sullivan of the *Daily Dish* featured a post on D.C.’s bikeshare system.

Landscape Architecture Magazine

- The April issue of *LAM* is in production and will arrive soon. This month, we look at projects at widely varying scales. A story on the Lakewood Cemetery addition by Halvorson Design Partnership with the architecture firm HGA in Minneapolis explores how a landscape architect-led collaboration with the architects repositions a historic memorial-park cemetery with a completely modern new landscape and mausoleum in response to the declining preference for traditional burial. The project received the Award of Excellence in the 2013 ASLA Professional Awards for General Design and includes a number of innovative details. In Paris, the large and traffic-choked Place de la Republique, which connects several arrondissements and metro lines, has undergone a marvelous makeover, by the architects TVK with Martha Schwartz Partners and AREAL Landscape Architecture of Luxembourg, geared toward making an enormous new square that is principally pedestrian. And a major update on the Los Angeles River covers the most recent proposals favored by conservation groups, Mayor Eric Garcetti, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to return large sections of the river and its banks to parkland and stormwater infrastructure. The proposals, which will be forwarded to Congress for funding consideration, include work by Hargreaves Associates as well as the Piggyback Yard proposal by Mia Lehrer + Associates, which won a 2013 ASLA Professional Award for Analysis and Planning.

Publishing and Resource Development

- A total of 614 entry forms have been received for the 2014 professional awards, including 40 from professionals who joined ASLA or reinstated their lapsed memberships in order to enter. The jury meets April 11-13 at ASLA headquarters in Washington, D.C.

- An abundance of excellent nominations for ASLA Honors have arrived and staff are working on organizing the materials for viewing by the ExCom and BOT.
JobLink job postings have hovered around 90 for the last two weeks, around 70 of which are for full-time, professional positions, while around 20 are internships. Job postings for the year to date continue to trend much higher than the previous five years. During the months of February, March, and April, ASLA members may post one free intern position per firm, agency, or organization.

The sales team is focusing on increasing corporate memberships, starting with outreach to all companies that lapsed in the past year. Corporate Membership revenue for the year has increased to 57 percent (113) of the annual budget goal of 200 corporate members.

Advertising contracts for LAM now total 76 percent of the annual budget goal. Sales for the first three issues of the fiscal year (February, March, and April) were two percent ahead of goal. The May issue will have a lighting focus and will be distributed at LIGHTFAIR and Hospitality Design Expo, so the sales team is targeting top lighting product manufacturers to encourage them to advertise.

Work to increase LAM subscriptions continues: staff is considering three subscription fundraising companies to include the magazine among their offerings. Also, renewal emails were sent to 188 complimentary subscribers (gifts and allied organizations) so they may be counted in the annual audit. Thirty-one have responded so far.

EXPO and sponsorship sales now total 64 percent of the annual budget goal. Meeting and Marketing staff are redesigning the annual meeting website and online registration. A save-the-date postcard will go out later this month to more than 60,000 members, former and prospective members, and allied design professionals. Registration is scheduled to launch in early May when the print registration brochure is mailed.

Membership and Chapter Services

Today’s membership total is 15,337 (see details below):

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<th>MEMBER CATEGORY</th>
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The ASLA member satisfaction survey closes tonight. If you haven’t already done so, please participate. Follow this link to take part in the short, 10-minute survey.
The Members Services Committee met via conference call on Monday. Representatives from the Finance committee joined the call for the bi-annual dues rate discussion. A consensus was reached and the next step is for the Finance committee to discuss.

Billing reports were completed and invoices were mailed to:
- Membership first renewal (5/31/14) – 1,194 members
- Membership second renewal (4/30/14) – 949 members
- Membership final renewal (2/28/14) – 394 members
- Firm Finder first renewal (2/28/14) – 1 firm
- Firm Finder second renewal (1/31/14) – 2 firms
- Firm Finder final renewal (11/30/13) – 0 firms
- LAM subscription first renewal (2/28/14) – 123 subscribers
- LAM subscription second renewal (1/31/14) – 111 subscribers
- LAM subscription final renewal (11/30/13) – 127 subscribers.

LABash preparations continue with an invitation to the Student Chapter President Brunch distributed. The brunch will be hosted by Student Representative Andrew Bernard, Student ASLA, on March 28. A new event was organized by PR and Communications Coordinator, Phil Stamper. ASLA will host its first LABash tweet-up, #LABASH. LABash is March 27-29 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Education Programs

- The Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System (LA CES™) has 188 active providers, slightly down from the same week of 2013. Currently 715 courses are active. There are four applications pending review.
- An LA CES provider webinar was held on March 4 explaining the recent LA CES database upgrades in detail. Following the webinar, all providers received a step-by-step PowerPoint guide to the changes.
- The Committee on Education met earlier this week. The group divided into three subcommittee in order to commence work on multiple projects; including a STEM white paper, landscape architecture program LA recruitment strategies, and examining the crossroads between practitioners and educators.

Professional Practice

- The new ASLA Online Learning landing page on the ASLA website introduces the professional development opportunities and provides links to the online catalogue of recordings. The list of upcoming live webinars will be updated as new presentations are planned, the next presentation being “The Color of the Native Plant Palette: Herbaceous Considerations and Other Related Thoughts,” hosted by the Residential Design PPN on March 27 at 12 pm EDT and presented by Robert E. Lyons, Professor of Landscape Horticulture at University of Delaware and Longwood Gardens. It will offer 1.0 PDH (LA CES/ HSW) and cost $40 for ASLA members and $175 for non-members. All recordings and presentations offer LA CES-approved PDHs. There were 60 participants
in the inaugural March 4 webinar. The recording was added to the current catalogue of 15 presentations from 2013.

- Recent Professional Practice Network activity: the Women in Landscape Architecture PPN is working with the Women in Landscape Architecture Walk organizers to plan the 2014 annual meeting visit to sites that highlight women’s contributions to landscape architecture in Denver, and the Urban Design PPN is reviewing plans for an Online Learning webinar, Field posts, and e-blasts to their PPN members for 2014.

- A new section has been added to the ASLA website’s information on the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS): Documented Historic Landscapes: Full List of HALS Sites and HALS Highlights. This section demonstrates HALS’ collaborative nature, with input from ASLA, the National Park Service (NPS), and the Library of Congress. It features the full list of documented HALS sites and will be updated quarterly with links to the documentation on the Library of Congress’ website. There are currently 466 HALS sites on the list.

- The Field blog broke its record last month for the most views in one day with over 1,500 views on February 17.

- The Green Highways Partnership featured two recent Field posts—on integrating green stormwater infrastructure into the streetscape and on the cost of green infrastructure—in their G3 (Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns) Digest on February 27.

- In February, five PPN Online Learning tests were submitted bringing the number of exams taken to 101. Eight LATIS exams were submitted in February.

- The current number of PPN members is 12,197. Four PPNs continue to have over 1,000 members: Parks and Recreation, Residential Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, and Sustainable Design and Development (SDD). The SDD PPN remains the PPN with the most members, with 2,173.

**Deadlines and Reminders**

- The Leadership Calendar can be accessed on the web.