ASLA LEADERS E-EXPRESS

December 17, 2014

 Governance and Administration

- Due to the holidays, the next Leaders E-Express will be published on January 7, 2015. Here’s to a safe holiday season for everyone!

- President K. Richard Zweifel, FASLA, and President-Elect Chad Danos, FASLA, participated in planning meetings with staff at Headquarters on December 11 and 12. Zweifel, Danos, EVP Nancy Somerville, Hon. ASLA, CFO Michael O’Brien, and PR Director Terry Poltrack also attended the National Building Museum’s Holiday Gala Thursday evening. Zweifel, Danos, and Somerville attended the AIA President's Inaugural on the evening of the 12th. Zweifel and Danos also acted as judges for the annual office holiday decorating competition and had their picture taken with Santa on the green roof.

- Staff finalized and sent ASLA’s 2014 application to the state-level Baldrige award program, the U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia and the District of Columbia, on Tuesday evening. This is the second year ASLA has filed regionally and will pursue submitting on the national level in 2016.

- President Zweifel was the keynote speaker for the Connecticut Chapter’s professional awards ceremony last week. The chapter recognized State Representative Terry Backer with its prestigious Olmsted Award, which recognizes significant contributions to the environment. Backer, who also holds the title of Long Island Sound Keeper, was recognized for his work in protecting the sound and his advocacy efforts for environmental issues in the state house in Hartford.

- Staff met with the Gensler project team to review an analysis of renovation issues and options related to LEED and Well Building certifications. LEED platinum was identified as doable, and the goal. Areas that will require additional discussion with the Well Building Institute staff, including air and water quality, were identified.

- Headquarters staff held its annual retreat today featuring teambuilding exercises and review and discussion of the staff “Are We Making Progress” and Gallup workforce engagement surveys. The morning retreat was followed by a luncheon and holiday party.

Finance, Meetings, Publishing

- Annual Meeting Registration ended at 5,478 with revenue from registration and ticket sales at 109 percent of the annual budget goal of $1.375 million.

- The importance of staying inside the official ASLA hotel room block continues to resonate with annual meeting attendees. ASLA met its contractual obligations to the city by picking up over 2,154 peak night room reservations, a significant increase over 2013. Booking inside the block helps ASLA keep meeting costs down and provides leverage for booking the annual meeting in the most popular cities.

Resource Development

- The ASLA headquarters fundraising campaign launched today with an email to all members linking to a new Center for Landscape Architecture web area. Payments and signed pledge forms already total $166,745, or 17 percent toward the $1 million goal. Verbal commitments bring the total up to $192,542 and signed forms have been requested in order to make those official. Chapters donating to date include: Boston Society of Landscape Architects ($30,000); California Sierra Chapter ($15,000); Washington State Chapter ($15,000); and...
the North Carolina Chapter ($10,000). Immediate Past President Focht’s challenge to the Board of Trustees now totals $34,595 or 35 percent of the $100,000 goal.

Government Affairs

- Just before the deadline for the federal government to run out of money, the House of Representatives voted 219-206, and the Senate voted 56-40 to pass a comprehensive spending bill to fund the government through fiscal year 2015. The measure includes significant increases in funding for the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. The TIGER program received $500 million, about $100 million less than 2014 levels. The Community Development Block Grant program received $3 billion, which is just slightly below the $3.3 billion received in 2014. The Land and Water Conservation Fund was funded at $306 million. President Obama signed the bill into law on December 16, 2014. For more details on the measure, please see the Advocacy News.

- This week, ASLA submitted public comments to the administration’s Pollinator Health Task Force regarding efforts to promote the health of honey bees and other pollinators. ASLA’s comments included landscape architecture principles focused on improved performance measures and rating systems on federal projects, ecosystems services to promote pollinator health, integrated vegetation management on highways, and research on urban pollinators and the harvesting, growing, and distribution of native seed. After reviewing ASLA’s comments, the Task Force chairs forwarded the Society’s recommendations directly to the U.S. General Services Administration and the White House Council on Environmental Quality—as many of the comments raise new ideas that are particularly pertinent to those two federal organizations.

- A statement from EVP Somerville on ASLA’s support of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership was included in a press release from the Outdoor’s Alliance for Kids (OAK), of which the Society is a member. The partnership is a collaborative of 28 nongovernmental organizations and 14 federal agencies working together to reconnect urban communities to their waterways. Read more about this effort on the ASLA Advocacy News.

- Legislative Analyst Leighton Yates represented ASLA at a Capitol Hill briefing on the results of recent poll by the Rails to Trails Conservancy that gave an inside look at what American voters expect regarding federal investment in walking and biking. The poll demonstrated that American voters expect more federal investment in biking and walking.

- Recently, ASLA hosted the annual steering committee meeting of the Sustainable Urban Forest Coalition (SUFC). The meeting served as an opportunity for strategic planning for the coalition’s activities for 2015.

Landscape Architecture Magazine

- The January issue of LAM goes to press on Friday. The issue features two spectacular playgrounds in Australia by Taylor Cullity Lethlean and James Mather Delaney Design. Also Associate Editor Jennifer Reut visits the new Nature Gardens at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County by Mia Lehrer + Associates. Jonathan Lerner critiques the show Uneven Growth: Tactical Urbanisms for Expanding Megacities at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. And the front section, Now, includes an appreciation of William Callaway, FASLA, who died in late November, written by John King of the San Francisco Chronicle; the article is also now on landscapearchitecturemagazine.org.

Public Relations and Communications

- A press release announcing the call for 2015 presentations was distributed via several wire services. The call was also featured in social media and is being pushed via the ASLA website.
• It’s official! The ASLA website is reporting 1,002,388 unique visitors, crossing the million mark for the first time and still growing. To put that in perspective, 2009 closed with 533,000 unique visitors. Thus far, some 54.3 percent of visitors to the site were new in 2014.

• And The Dirt has hit a new milestone: 3 million page views since 2009. An estimated 1 million people have also visited the blog in that time. There are now 2,050 comments. Some 6,000 subscribe to receive emails or updates each week.

• An analysis of social media presence as it relates to membership counts shows ASLA with Facebook followers numbering three times the total membership, and Twitter followers representing two-and-a-half times the total membership. With more 15,000 members, ASLA has more than 45,000 followers and is the only related organization with a presence across all major social media platforms.

• The web team created a new website for the ASLA Headquarters renovation and new Center for Landscape Architecture project.

• The move of the website to an updated version of Ektron, the website content management system, went live without incident.

• PR Manager Karen Grajales attended a meeting of arts service organizations today at the National Endowment of the Arts. The agenda included an opportunity for ASLA to share its most important issues as well as a discussion of a plan to celebrate the NEA’s 50th anniversary.

• A new interview with William Wenk, FASLA, Wenk Associates, on Denver’s efforts to become a more sustainable city is now live.

• The Dirt pick-ups: Planetizen featured a post on revitalizing suburbia at the ASLA annual meeting.

Member and Chapter Services

• Today’s membership total is 15,472 (see details below):

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<th>Member Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
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• Tuesday, the Leadership Development Committee hosted a conference call to set its 2015 work plan.

• Today, National Student Representative Cameron Rodman, Student ASLA hosted a student chapter president webinar featuring Kona Gray, ASLA, titled “The Design Studio...Are the Lights On?”; a total of 26 student
chapter presidents participated. The next student webinar will be January 27 and CLARB representatives will be the speakers.

- On December 11, 35 chapters participated in CFO O’Brien’s two chapter treasurer best practice webinars. The next webinar is scheduled for March 10.
- On December 10, an email was sent to the 305 student members with a 2014 graduation date reminding them of their Free Associate member benefit.
- Email reminders to “Renew Your Membership” were sent to the following open renewal periods with valid emails: 400 members with a September 30 expiration date (90-day grace period concludes on December 29), 346 members with a December 31 expiration date, and the “Staying Connected” email to 219 August 31 non-renewals.

Education Programs and LAAB

- The Call for Presentations for the 2015 ASLA Annual Meeting and EXPO opened December 9. An email was sent to all current, former, and prospective members as well as allied organizations and professionals. The call was promoted through a media release, in LAND, and on ASLA’s social networking sites. The deadline to submit a proposal for consideration is January 29, 2015.
- Early feedback about the Denver annual meeting education program continues to be positive. Administrator O’Connor completed the reporting of the annual meeting session attendance to the Florida State Board of Landscape Architecture.
- The Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System™ (LA CES™) has 187 active providers offering 1,070 courses. There are four new provider applications pending review.
- Over 60 volunteers attended the kick-off meeting in Chicago to learn about opportunities for the ASLA Annual Meeting and EXPO taking place there November 6-9, 2015. Planning with the Illinois Chapter members will continue throughout the coming year.
- On December 9, Education Programs Director Susan Apollonio and LAAB Manager Kristopher Pritchard attended Full STEM Ahead, a STEM-focused event hosted by The Atlantic at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Speakers included Anthony Fauci, Director NIAID, National Institutes of Health; U.S. Representative Aaron Schock (R-IL); and Aprille Ericsson, Aeronautical Engineer, NASA. Discussed were the current trends and topics that they find important in STEM and how they got interested in their respective fields. Additionally, there was an “Attracting and Supporting Diverse Students in STEM Fields” session that provided relevant information related to recruitment efforts and career discovery that can be directly incorporated in landscape architecture programs. The event was recorded and is available here.

Professional Practice

- On Thursday, December 4, Manager Shawn Balon, ASLA, attended the Smart Growth Network Partners Meeting that included presentations on Smart Growth and Mid-term Elections by Gov. Parris N. Glendening, and a presentation on the revamped www.smartgrowth.org website by the Maryland Department of Planning and HUD’s National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC). Manager Balon gave an update to the group about the annual meeting and its theme of Resilience along with the ongoing efforts for the Chinatown Green Street Project.
Recent Professional Practice Network activity included the Reclamation and Restoration PPN’s name change, to Ecology and Restoration, officially went into effect after the annual meeting. The ASLA website has been updated with the new name.

In November, 15 Online Learning tests were submitted, bringing the total to date for 2014 to 132. Six LATIS exams were submitted in November, bringing the total to date to 159.

The current number of PPN members is 12,492 — an increase of 293 since the beginning of 2014. Also, compared to 2013 numbers, membership has increased by 156. 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 largest PPN, with 2,153 members.

On Friday, December 5, Manager Deborah Steinberg, ASLA, and Corporate Secretary Curt Millay, ASLA, attended the Downtown DC BID’s 2014 Momentum Awards reception. The event honored Downtown leaders, doers, and the most talked about projects in 2014.

**Deadlines and Reminders**

- The Leadership Calendar can be accessed on the web.