

# SOUTHERN REGION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2016



## The President's Pen

Joe Irizarry

The Association for Learning Environments (A4LE)-Southern Region operates much like a parade. We need spectators. But unless some of our members choose to leave the viewing stands to do our version of organizing, marching, dancing, and float-building, we have no parade/association. Thankfully, year after year, our members volunteer to make the A4LE experience meaningful for members. This year's volunteers—members from every chapter in our Region—continue to find ways to increase the impact and value of membership. I'd like to share information about some of our 2016 activities and some opportunities for you to engage in A4LE.

**Southern Region Conference** Over 300 people attended this year's conference in Houston to network, learn, and share best practices. Thank you to Lisa Lamkin, Southern Region President Elect, and her conference planning committee for providing relevant programs and entertaining events.

**Southern Region Foundation** Our Southern Region Foundation serves as our Region's charitable giving arm. This year, we have added each chapter's past president to the Foundation to provide connectivity to chapter boards and chapter members. The Southern Region recently allocated \$86,000 to the Foundation to expand its range and scope of services. Our Foundation Council Chair, Irene Nigaglioni, will work with the Foundation board members to establish and communicate the processes for chapters and members to access Foundation services.

**SchoolsNext** SchoolsNext focuses on middle school students interested in exploring careers in planning, designing and building learning environments. This program requires teams to plan, design, and build a model of a learning space. It also requires a commitment of 1 ½-semester from the students, sponsoring teacher, and industry mentors. It culminates in a competition at the Regional conference. Winners represent the Region at the final competition hosted by the International conference. We're recruiting teams and mentors now to prepare to compete at the 2017 Regional conference.

**Region and Chapter Elections** The Southern Region and Chapters will fill their respective 2017 board positions by July. People interested in serving on the Region board should watch for the e-mail nomination announcement. Those wanting to serve on a chapter board or chapter committees should speak with your chapter president.

We've got lot of things in the planning stages to make A4LE membership even more valuable to our members. Nothing adds more value, though, than members contributing their time and talents. That's how this parade keeps going!



## — COMING UP —

**2016 Otto D. Grove  
Scholarship, Submissions  
Due: June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**A4LE International  
Conference, Southern  
Region Scholarship,  
Application due: June 27<sup>th</sup>,  
2016**

**A4LE International  
Conference September 28-  
October 1, 2016 |  
Philadelphia**

## Southern Region Scholarship

This Scholarship provides financial assistance for one or more individuals residing in the southern region states to attend the **A4LE Annual Conference** in Philadelphia, PA. Preference is given to members who have not attended the international conference before. Application forms are available online and the deadline for submission is June 27<sup>th</sup>. Winners will be notified by July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

If you have any questions, please contact Irene Nigaglioni at [Irene.Nigaglioni@pbk.com](mailto:Irene.Nigaglioni@pbk.com).

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## The Chairwoman's Pen

Irene Nigaglioni, AIA, ALEP, LEED AP BD+C



Hello A4LE Southern Region,

I am excited to serve as the Chair for the Southern Region Foundation this year, as this year we are bringing new energy to the Foundation. The Southern Region Foundation has been supporting our region since its creation in the late 1990's by providing scholarships and funds for chapter development. As the Foundation nears its 20<sup>th</sup> year, we will be expanding the way the Foundation serves our membership, in order to truly provide support to all of our members.

The Foundation currently has two main funds: the Otto Grove Scholarship Fund and the Milt and Beverly Miller Chapter Development Fund. The Otto Grove Scholarships have paid for college tuition for dozens of students attending college in fields related to architecture and education. In addition, scholarships have afforded Southern Region members the opportunity to enroll in A4LE's Advanced Academy program, which in turn earns them the ALEP designation. Lastly, scholarships have been given to members for attendance to the Southern Region yearly conference, or the A4LE International Conference. At this most recent Southern Region conference, six members were able to attend the conference and learn and network with other members, an opportunity that would not have been possible without the foundations funding. You can read some of their stories in this newsletter.

The Milt and Beverly Miller fund was created to truly support chapter development, as well as regional initiatives that support A4LE's mission. Many of you will remember the Katrina/Rita Task Force, which received funding from this fund to help the St. Bernard Parish schools as they recovered from the wrath of the storms. We encourage all chapter leaders to look to the foundation for funds to support initiatives that enhance the value of membership.

As we move forward, I want to recognize the wonderful members of the advisory board that are ready to expand the foundations outreach to all our chapters. I can tell you they are ready to think creatively about opportunities to maximize everyone's involvement in the wonderful organization that is A4LE.

I look forward to serving in this newly re-energized effort!



## Southern Region Scholarships, Continued

*Following are some of the comments from the winners of the Southern Region Scholarship who attended the Southern Region Conference in April.*

"Our team had planned to attend but had to cancel our plans due to state budget cuts. The scholarship allowed us to attend when we would not have been able to otherwise."

"We made several contacts with vendors who we are in negotiations with for possible services. The time to spend talking to the vendors was also very educational."

"The sessions were fantastic and very informative."

"It is always helpful to hear from schools and firms who have so much experience and expertise in the planning, design, and construction of new or renovated educational spaces."

We think it is a good investment that will pay dividends for us."



Charlie Bushyhead

Assistant Superintendent for Support Services  
Union Public Schools, OK

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## NORTH TEXAS NEWS

### IMPACT AWARD

The IMPACT award is one of multiple North Texas A4LE chapter initiatives that benefit our community each year through the revitalization of campus learning environments. Recognizing our responsibility to dedicate some of our resources to the economic development, physical health, educational opportunity and social wellness of the communities served by our chapter, the purpose of the award is both to enhance the usability of a qualified educational environment with a permanent improvement or modification and to enhance local involvement in the education process. IMPACT grant recipients are determined by a panel of external judges based on quality of submissions. Upon award, implementation of grant projects is a collaboration between the North Texas A4LE Chapter membership and educators across North Texas.

*Written by Ray Stringer, Armko  
North Texas Chapter Impact Award Director*

### EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

In an effort to promote participation among emerging professionals in the K-12 sector, the North Texas Chapter added two Directors of Emerging Professionals to the Board this year. These individuals oversaw the development of multiple after-work events from November through May, including a networking happy hour, a furniture showroom tour, and a bowling night – the latter of which offered sponsorship opportunities for vendors and firms and raised funds for future Emerging Professionals events. Each program was centrally located, free to attend, and granted young professionals the opportunity to network with both peer up-and-comers and established K-12 leaders.

Additionally, Emerging Professionals launched a partnership with University of Texas at Arlington CAPP to expose students to career opportunities in the K-12 profession. The partnership includes both a mentor program with local contractors and architects and the development of a K-12 Studio for the upcoming Spring 2017 semester. The program is in its infancy and has great potential to develop into a lasting relationship will inspire other chapters to invest in our future in creative ways.

*Written by Anne Hildenbrand, BRW Architects and Beverly Fornof with Corgan  
North Texas Chapter Emerging Professionals Directors*



### Southern Region Scholarships, Continued

"Probably the best part of the conference was being reminded that there are a lot of talented and committed folks all striving for the same goal – Improving Education through Architecture!"



Meredith Contello. RA, LEED AP  
BD+C  
Project Architect  
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"We would not have been able to attend if it wasn't for the SR Foundation scholarships. We were not disappointed with the conference it was as good as we hoped"

"Please thank the foundation members for providing us with the needed funds that allowed us to attend because we would not have been able to otherwise."

Lee Snodgrass  
Executive Director of Special Projects  
Union Public Schools, OK

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## GULF COAST CHAPTER NEWS

### SUB CHAPTERS IN MID-MARKETS

The A4LE Gulf Coast Chapter, with assistance from Southern Region Texas Governor, is exploring options to increase membership by helping to create sub-chapters in mid-market areas. Current target areas include Beaumont, Victoria, Corpus Christi, and College Station.

Partners have been identified in each of these markets, including architects and engineers at this time, with plan to support the new chapters initially through grants from Southern Region Foundation, as well as direct support from Gulf Coast Chapter.

New chapters are planned to be sub-chapters under Gulf Coast until viable on their own, with social events to encourage membership as well as inform potential members of benefits, along with on-line and/or repeated educational sessions.

A Gulf Coast Committee has been set up to champion this effort, and interested members are encouraged to contact local board for additional information on volunteering.

Committee's next steps will be set up initial information socials, in conjunction with e-mail blasts to potential school members, informing them of benefits to joining A4LE. Benefits specifically to be noted include networking opportunities, sharing of best practices, and overall training of staff on trends in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environments.

Efforts will be coordinated with other Gulf Coast Committees including Education Outreach (with goal to partner with Colleges of Architecture and Education on projects), Community College Outreach (with goal of increasing membership within that group), Schools Next, and Emerging Professionals.

In other areas of the state, similar efforts are underway in other under-served areas like Midland-Odessa.

*Written by Erin Joseph Machac, Stantec  
Gulf Coast Chapter President*



### Southern Region Scholarships, Continued

"As always, the conference was very well organized and orchestrated. I particularly appreciated the variety of topics included in the presentations. The opening keynote speaker, Karen McCullough, did a great job of setting the stage for considering differing generational perspectives and expectations. Even though we focus on PK-12 age groups, we also have to consider the needs and perceptions of the myriad age groups that comprise the stakeholder groups of a school district. It was very difficult to select which educational sessions to attend because there were so many appealing topics. I focused on the sessions related to safety and security because this is an ongoing challenge, and I am always looking effective approaches."

"Last but certainly not least, I was completely astonished at receiving the Planner of the Year Award. It is a tremendous honor, and I can't thank you all enough for the acknowledgement."

Sue Robertson, ALEP  
Executive Director of Facilities Planning  
and Operations  
Orleans Parish School Board, LA