

Fall 2026 Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S PEN

Across the Southern Region, our chapters have remained active and engaged, hosting outstanding events, project tours, award celebrations, social gatherings, and opportunities for members to connect with one another. Each chapter brings its own personality and perspective, but together they demonstrate the incredible depth and strength of our region.

That is what makes A4LE special. We are a collection of professionals with different experiences, different challenges, and different perspectives, but we share a common commitment to creating better learning environments for students and educators. When we come together and openly share what we have learned, we all become better at what we do.

The Southern Region Board is also continuing to look for ways to build on this momentum. One of our priorities is **expanding Public School membership** and strengthening the connection between A4LE and the school districts we serve. Our public school professionals bring an invaluable perspective to the conversation. They understand firsthand the challenges of planning, funding, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining learning environments. Their voices are essential to the future of our organization.

We are also continuing to explore opportunities to develop **scholarships and other ways to invest in the next generation of professionals**. The future of our industry depends upon developing talented people who understand not only the technical aspects of our work, but also the importance of collaboration, service, and creating environments where students can thrive.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the upcoming **LearningSCAPES Conference in Seattle this November**. LearningSCAPES provides an incredible opportunity to step outside our individual chapters and region, connect with colleagues from across the country, and see what others are doing to shape the future of learning environments. I encourage everyone from the Southern Region to take advantage of this opportunity. Bring your questions, bring your experiences, and most importantly, bring your willingness to share.



Easy Foster
President, Southern
Region

Fall 2026 Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S PEN

We are also looking forward to supporting the **Arkansas Chapter** as they **prepare to host the [Southern Region Conference in Little Rock](#) next April**. After the tremendous success of Austin, the bar has certainly been raised, but I have no doubt that Arkansas will build an event that reflects the character and creativity of our region. I am already looking forward to seeing everyone there.

As I look across the Southern Region today, I see an organization that is engaged, growing, and full of possibilities. The tours, programs, awards, social events, and professional conversations happening throughout our chapters are more than individual activities. They are building relationships and creating a stronger professional community.

The work we do is important. The environments we create influence how students learn, how teachers teach, and how communities experience their schools. That responsibility is significant, but it is also incredibly rewarding.

Our future is bright, and the momentum is real.

SAVE THE DATE:
**[A4LE Southern Region
Conference](#)**

April 19-22, 2027

**Our Arkansas Chapter is
hosting next year!**
Little Rock Marriott
Little Rock, AR

*The call for speakers is
out now! Proposal
deadline is February 5,
2027.*

Fall 2026 Newsletter

CHAIRWOMAN'S PEN

Happy September!

I trust everyone has had a great start to the school year and that schedules are busy with kids and projects. Speaking of starts, the foundation was fortunate to award several scholarships to very deserving students who were continuing or starting their higher ed educational journeys, pursuing degrees in architecture, education, construction and related fields. The Otto Grove College Scholarship is a competitive merit-based scholarship designed for students who desire financial support for their pursuit of undergraduate and post-graduate educational opportunities.

This year's recipients represent the best from all of our region, and we are proud to have been able to support their college career.

Otto Grove College Scholarship Recipients

- Courtney Rogers, Conroe, Texas
- Fariha Rashid, B. Arch, MLA, LEED GA, Lubbock, Texas
- Jenna Crum, Tyler, Texas
- Timothy Buku, Searcy, Arkansas
- Kami Hulbert, Siloam Springs, Arkansas

In addition, we awarded scholarships to members interested in attending the [LearningSCAPES Conference](#), which will be held in Seattle, Washington this November. These very deserving individuals showed their commitment to leadership in their chapters as well as the region. They are: Breanna Baldwin, with MA+ Architecture in Oklahoma and Daniel Grosz, with the Cypress-Fairbanks ISD in Houston, TX.

Congratulations to all the very deserving recipients!

Have a great school year!

Irene Nigaglioni, FAIA, ALEP

Foundation Chair, A4LE Southern Region

Fall 2026 Newsletter

CHAIRWOMAN'S PEN



LEARNINGSAPES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Courtney Rogers: *Thank you again for this incredible opportunity and for all that the Foundation does to support students who are passionate about creating better learning environments.*



Timothy Buku: *Thank you so much for this wonderful opportunity. I cannot tell you how grateful I am to receive this scholarship so that I may finish my Architecture school and after, step out into the field to change the world and the lives therein.*



Fariha Rashid: *I receive this recognition with sincere humility and a renewed sense of responsibility. It strengthens my commitment to bridging academic research and design practice so that scholarly knowledge can be translated into meaningful and practical improvements in schools and learning communities.*

Fall 2026 Newsletter

CHAIRWOMAN'S PEN



LEARNINGSAPES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Kami Hulbert: *Receiving this scholarship means a great deal to me. It opens doors to further my education and expands my knowledge of design and how to create better learning environments for students to come.*



Jenna Crum: *Receiving this scholarship has been very encouraging in pursuing my architecture degree. Being selected shows an investment in my growth as a designer and student in college.*



Breanna Baldwin: *I am sincerely grateful to receive this scholarship to attend the LearningSCAPES Conference. This opportunity allows me to expand my knowledge, learn from industry leaders, and bring new ideas back to my work and community.*

Fall 2026 Newsletter

ARKANSAS CHAPTER

The chapter's Thaden Lower School tour event in July was highly successful with a number of (not yet) members joining.

The chapter's next event is tentatively being planned to take place in association with the state AIA convention. More updates to follow.

Southern Region convention 2027 planning is in full swing. The chapter is currently accepting speaking proposals.

Conference Theme:

RE:IMAGINE SCHOOLS

From Existing Spaces to New Possibilities

- RE:USE
- RE:PURPSE
- RE:INVENT
- RE:IMAGINE
- RE:THINK
- RE:CONNECT

[A4LE Southern Region
Conference](#)

April 19-22, 2027

Little Rock Marriott
Little Rock, AR

*The call for speakers is
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[A4LE Submissions](#)

Fall 2026 Newsletter

Check out the upcoming Central Texas events on their page at A4LE.org!

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

The next chapter tour is coming up on September 21.

Registration is open here: [2026 Central Texas Chapter Meeting -September](#)



ASSOCIATION FOR
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
Enhancing the Educational Experience
Central Texas Chapter

PEOPLE
PLACES
POSSIBILITIES

TODAY'S
LEARNERS.
TOMORROW'S
LEADERS.

FACILITY TOUR

**ROUND ROCK ISD
EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL**

 **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026**
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

 4400 College Park Dr.
Round Rock, TX 78665

INSPIRING
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
TOGETHER

COLLABORATION | OPPORTUNITY | SUCCESS

 **O'CONNELL
ROBERTSON**

 ASSOCIATION FOR
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
Enhancing the Educational Experience
Central Texas Chapter

 **AUSTIN
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**
FACULTY

 **EARLY COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL**

 **BARTLETT COCKE**
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

LEARN | COLLABORATE | BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Fall 2026 Newsletter

Coming Soon:

Sporting Clay Event
Thursday,
November 19,
2026.

Last day to register
is November 10,
2026. Sign up here:
[2026 Gulf Coast
Chapter Sporting
Clay Event](#)



GULF COAST CHAPTER

Next Chapter Tour is coming up on October 15 at Kingwood Middle School, which is the 2026 Southern Region Project of Distinction.

Kirksey Architecture will present how the school redefines the traditional middle school model through an innovative, student-centered design rooted in flexibility and visibility.

[2026 Gulf Coast Chapter Tour - October](#)



Fall 2026 Newsletter

For more information on upcoming events, reach out to local chapter leadership. Information available at the Louisiana Chapter page at A4LE.org

LOUISIANA CHAPTER

The chapter's most recent event was a virtual presentation on August 26.



Realizing Vision Through Design

HOW COMMUNITY VALUES INFORMED ARCHITECTURAL DECISIONS

A Case Study of the Southern University Laboratory School in designing educational environments where place, pedagogy, and community identity are inseparable.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES | After this session, participants will be able to:

EXPLAIN how community visioning can be translated into architectural design decisions, using guiding principles as a framework for planning, organization, and spatial relationships rather than simply informing the building program.

EVALUATE strategies for designing educational environments that support student development, including age-appropriate learning neighborhoods, flexible learning spaces, collaborative environments, and connections between indoor and outdoor learning.

DESCRIBE how site analysis and placemaking influence campus design, including the integration of natural features, arrival sequences, circulation, and outdoor spaces to reinforce community identity and educational goals.

IDENTIFY design approaches that promote student health, wellness, and long-term learning outcomes, including material selection, daylighting, environmental quality, and the use of architecture as a teaching tool that supports belonging, engagement, and academic success.



AUGUST 26, 2026

12:00 - 1:00 PM (CT)

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION
(A4LE Learning Environment Webinar)

1 HSW CEU



PRESENTER
Pierre Theriot, AIA
Principal / Design Director
Holly & Smith Architects



PRESENTER
Rohit Soad, AIA, LEED AP, ALEP
Principal / Director of Sustainability
Holly & Smith Architects



Fall 2026 Newsletter

Upcoming Events:

September 16 –
Well Told, Well Built:
The Craft of
Environmental
Branding

October 24 – North
Texas College and
Career Fair

October 30 –
Annual Golf
Tournament

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

North Texas has a new president! Maurice Thames of Stantec has stepped into the role. Thank you Maurice!



The very well attended Summer Social took place in July at the Rangers Game.



Fall 2026 Newsletter

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

The chapter meetings keep coming! Check out the chapter page for upcoming events: [Oklahoma Chapter](#)

Fall 2026 Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Available on their
Chapter LinkedIn
Page!

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The chapter hosts an upcoming bond presentation on September 24 at the Region 20 Education Service Center.

This session will provide an overview of current school district bond programs and the projects they are making possible. Presenters will share information about facility needs, planned improvements, capital priorities, and upcoming projects. Attendees will gain insight into the investments being made in educational facilities and what is ahead for school communities across the region.

Register here: [2026 South Texas Chapter Event - September](#)

SCHOOLS NEXT

2026-2027 Competition registration is now open: [SchoolsNEXT](#)



The International Award of Excellence Team will present at LearningSCAPES!

Join us in
Seattle
November 4 - 7

Regular rate
registration
ends

September 30!

Access
options here:

[Register |](#)
[LearningSCAPES](#)
[2026](#)
[Conference](#)

Learning Without Limits: Alternative Environments for Tomorrow's Students

Opening Keynote – George Couros

As a passionate advocate for progressive education, George travels the globe sharing insights and strategies on cultivating innovation within our schools. His sessions delve into transformative educational practices that inspire educators and leaders alike to create vibrant, empowering learning environments.

Closing Keynote – Eric Scheninger

Eric works with schools worldwide, helping educators meet and exceed their potential to improve learners' outcomes. He is the founder and CEO of Aspire Change EDU, a collaborative consultancy that provides personalized support to all educational systems.

More information is available here: [LearningSCAPES 2026 Conference](#)