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AIA New York and Center for Architecture's Newly Named Gala to Honor Justice and Equity Advocates

On October 22, the Center for Architecture's largest fundraiser will go virtual to celebrate architecture visionaries.

NEW YORK, NY, October 13, 2020 —On **Thursday, October 22**, professionals from the architecture, engineering, construction, and real estate industries will gather virtually for [Common Bond: The Center for Architecture Gala](#).

Since the 1980s, AIA New York and the Center for Architecture have gathered architects, designers, and industry professionals for the Heritage Ball, a fundraising gala attracting over 1,100 guests to celebrate design excellence in New York City. 2020 has made it increasingly clear that we're living in a new and different world, one that calls upon the practice of architecture to confront the future in unexpected, and vital, ways. As such, earlier this year AIANY and the Center for Architecture called upon its community to help find a new name for our gala. The new name, Common Bond: The Center for Architecture Gala, is meant to align with the architecture visionaries that the event brings together and signifies the organizations' commitment to a more just and equitable future.

Like the Heritage Ball, Common Bond will serve as the single largest fundraiser for the Center for Architecture, providing critical funding to help the organization support its ambitious mission to educate the public about the importance of architecture and design.

COMMON BOND'S SPOTLIGHT SERIES

In lieu of traditional honorees, for this year's gala the Center for Architecture sought nominations for our Spotlight Series: projects, people, and groups who have exemplified outstanding leadership in creating a more just and equitable future.

Design Advocates

[Design Advocates](#) is a network of architecture, design, and advising firms, as well as individuals, who volunteer their time and expertise to projects, research, and advocacy that serve the public good. Initiated in April 2020 as a non-profit platform for collecting data and empowering design businesses in the era of COVID-19, Design Advocates has since expanded into a collective effort to match pro-bono design services with small businesses and community organizations in need while engaging in ongoing

advocacy for the broader independent design industry. Design Advocates pushes for equitable design and firm diversity to contribute to a just built environment.

The organization's Test Fits initiative leverages the creative energy and collaborative spirit of its members to help local businesses, non-profits, and institutions respond to the crisis by adapting their spaces and operations to ensure safe and comfortable continuing operation. Test Fits is currently serving clients on a pro-bono basis, assisting restaurants such as Kopitiam in Chinatown and Le Paris Dakar and La Napa in Crown Heights, and organizations such as the Bowery Residents Committee, Housing Works, and the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce.

Inherent in the Test Fits program and the broader mission of Design Advocates is a commitment to providing long-term design solutions to the most vulnerable, during the pandemic and beyond. Creating a seat at the table for the design community to provide input and receive work is central to their mission to empower designers to help guide New York City into the future. Thinking creatively on behalf of all types of small businesses, non-profits, and community organizations impacted by the pandemic, Design Advocates also investigates how specific needs can be addressed through design and advocacy at the agency or governmental level. Through the process of collaboration between the design firms involved, as well as between Design Advocates and their clients, the group hopes to build a new framework through which equitable design outcomes, driven by mutual advocacy, can be established.

NOMA's Project Pipeline

[NOMA's Project Pipeline](#) empowers young people to effect change in their communities through design. Using the city as the classroom and connecting young people to real-world architects and planners, the project fosters the next generation of design professionals, civic leaders, and changemakers.

Project Pipeline was born at the 2002 NOMA Conference in Fort Lauderdale, when then-president Paul Taylor asked Drake Dillard and David Kirk to establish a camp to introduce minority students to architecture, with the ultimate goal of creating more licensed minority architects. Since the first camp, hosted in Cincinnati in 2006, dozens of other camps have been held in more than 20 cities.

NOMA's Project Pipeline summer camps provide 6-12 grade students of color with the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of architecture and design. Students work closely with architects and designers to create the designs they would like to see in their communities. For many students, Project Pipeline is their first introduction to the design world; students investigate through drawing and model building, analyze through diagramming and research, and engage through interviews and site visits. By the program's conclusion, students present a fully realized project that addresses an issue in their city.

Project Pipeline serves a diverse population of students, all of whom are underrepresented in the design field. Through the initiative, young people grasp the significance of architecture in their daily lives, as well as its broader cultural, social, and historical implications. Over the last decade, Project Pipeline has served more than 10,000 students.

SCHOLARSHIPS

AIANY and the Center for Architecture will also present scholarships to two deserving students nominated by Dean Gerarda Shields from New York City College of Technology, our area's most recently accredited architecture school:

- **Rafia Amin**, Senior Architecture Student, New York City College of Technology
- **Farai Matangira**, Junior Architecture Student, New York City College of Technology

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List as of October 13, 2020.

About the AIA New York

AIA New York is the oldest and largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects with nearly 5,700 architect, allied professional, student, and public members. AIANY is dedicated to three goals: design excellence, public outreach and professional development. www.aiany.org

About the Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture is the premier cultural venue for architecture and the built environment in New York City, informed by the complexity of the City’s urban fabric and in dialogue with the global community. The Center shares a home with the AIA New York Chapter and has the unique advantage of drawing

upon the ideas and experiences of practicing architects to produce thought-provoking exhibitions, informative public programs, and quality design education experiences for K-12 students. It also leads New York City's annual month-long architecture and design festival, Archtober. The Center for Architecture's aim is to further public knowledge about New York City architecture and architects, foster exchange and collaboration among members of the design, development, building, scholarly, and policy sectors, and inspire new ideas about the role of design in communities by presenting contemporary and practical issues in architecture and urbanism to a general audience. www.centerforarchitecture.org