



AIA
Michigan

PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

AIA MICHIGAN ANNOUNCES YOUNG ARCHITECT AWARDS

May 26, 2016 – Detroit, Michigan – The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Michigan will present its Young Architect of the Year Award to Thom Danckaert, Jr., AIA and Megan Feenstra Wall, AIA, at the annual Celebration of Architecture on June 10 at The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI. The Young Architect Award is given to architects under 40 years of age in recognition of proficiency and exceptional accomplishment, and who have made significant contributions to the profession in the early stages of their careers.

Thom Danckaert, Jr., AIA is currently a lead design architect with Progressive AE, and serves as a member of the Board of Directors. Thom has over 15 years of experience employing his knowledge and thought leadership in helping clients enhance performance through design. He works collaboratively with clients to frame the overall business needs and align goals in order to create inspiring spaces. Thom works with project teams to create fully integrated and sustainable design solutions. His primary responsibilities include leading clients through pre-design, development of conceptual approach, schematic design, design development and design review.

Thom serves as the 2016 AIA Grand Rapids President, having previously served as the 2015 Vice President and the 2014 Secretary. He was the recipient of the 2015 AIA Grand Rapids Young Architect of the Year Award, and has received various AIA Michigan and AIA Grand Rapids Building and Interior Awards.

Thom is currently an Adjunct Faculty of Architecture at Kendall College of Art and Design, and was an Adjunct Faculty of Interior Design from 2006-2015. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Holy Cross Lutheran Church; Chair of the Board 2015-2016, and served on various strategic committees over the past several years. Thom received his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University and a Master in Architecture with high distinction from the University of Michigan.

After graduation with honors with a liberal arts degree in engineering and fine art from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI, Megan earned her Master of Architecture from Columbia University in New York City. She worked in New York at Stephen Tilly, Architect on a variety of projects from the first homeless shelter in Westchester County (her only project to get its own protest!) to a boarding school residence with an indoor slide in Lake Placid. The pressures of the big city lead to take a year to be responsibly irresponsible, working at a ski resort in Colorado and traveling through Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent without a mobile phone or GPS, but with a 14kg backpack and a spouse. Megan then spent a few years living and working in lovely Durham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, before returning to Grand Rapids in 2009. She worked for five years as a project designer at AMDG Architects. Megan is currently an architect at Mathison|Mathison Architects and is excited at the opportunity to be part of MMA as one of its very first employees.

Megan served two terms as Associate Director on the AIA Grand Rapids Board, where she continued to develop the ARE library and resources for members and helped with ARE study seminars for AIA Michigan.

She also instituted the new Emerging Professionals Committee. Megan served on the 2013 Strategic Planning Committee for AIA Michigan and is the founder of the West Michigan Women in Architecture.

Megan is a champion for the next generation of architects and Michigan as a place for excellent architectural education. She was a member of the Board of Formation to develop a new master of Architecture program at Kendall College of Art and Design in 2013-2014. She is currently a member of the Ferris Architecture Advisory Committee. Megan continues to mentor students at Kendall, Calvin College and local high schools interested in architecture as a profession.

The American Institute of Architects Michigan, headquartered in Midtown Detroit, established its awards program to raise public awareness to the value and importance of architectural excellence and to recognize those whose notable achievements encourage all to make excellence in architecture the standard. Visit www.aiami.com or call 313.965.4100 to learn more.

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