



AIA Southwest Washington & AIAS Washington State University Mentorship Program

The American Institute of Architects Southwest Washington (AIA SWW) is excited to announce a collaborative mentorship program with the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) at Washington State University (WSU). This initiative pairs seasoned architecture professionals from AIA SWW with aspiring architecture students from WSU to provide invaluable guidance, support, and professional development opportunities as they prepare to enter the architecture field.

Program Overview:

Starting in January 2025, the mentorship program is designed to foster meaningful connections between professionals and students, bridging the gap between academic studies and the demands of a professional career in architecture. Each mentor/mentee pair will meet virtually between one and four times per month throughout the academic year, offering flexibility to accommodate different schedules and commitments.

Areas of Focus:

The mentorship program will cover a wide range of topics tailored to the interests and career goals of the participants. Some possible areas of focus include:

- **Design:** Mentors can guide students through their approach to architectural design, offering insights into creative problem-solving, design thinking, and project development.
- **Sustainability:** Students can learn from their mentors how they practically integrate sustainable practices into their design.
- **Professional Practice:** Mentors can provide advice on navigating the professional world, from understanding contracts and client relationships to managing a successful architecture practice.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** The program will address the importance of creating inclusive spaces and practices within the field, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented in architectural design.
- **Building Science:** Students can come with questions on how their mentor incorporates good building science into their design.
- **Social Impact Design:** The program will emphasize the role of architecture in addressing social issues, encouraging students to design with a focus on community impact and social responsibility.
- **Historical Architecture:** Mentors with experience in historical

architecture can offer insights into the preservation and restoration of historical buildings.

- **Alternative Architecture Career Paths:** For those interested in exploring non-traditional roles within the architecture field, mentors will provide guidance on alternative career paths, such as urban planning, sustainable development, or academic research.

In addition to these focus areas, mentor/mentee pairs are encouraged to explore any other topics of interest that align with their personal and professional goals.

Program Benefits:

- **Personalized Guidance:** Mentees receive tailored advice and support from experienced professionals, helping them navigate their academic and career journeys with confidence.
- **Networking Opportunities:** The program facilitates the creation of lasting professional relationships, opening doors to future career opportunities and collaborations.
- **Skill Development:** Students will develop essential skills that are not always covered in academic settings, giving them a competitive edge in the job market.

How to Get Involved:

The next session of the mentorship program will begin in January 2025. Students and professionals interested in participating are encouraged to learn more and register by visiting <https://aiasww.org/education#architecture-career-mentorship-program> or contacting AIA Southwest Washington at info@aiasww.org or AIAS WSU at matthew.jordan@wsu.edu.