



2025 YOUNG ARCHITECT NOMINEE

ESTHER GARCIA, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

education. aia involvement. design excellence

CONTENTS

1.0 NOMINATION LETTER

JON SPARER FAIA, NCARB

2.0 BIOGRAPHY

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS + RECOGNITIONS

4.0 MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS

5.0 ARCHITECTURAL WORK

NAKANIWA

MODULE ONE

HUMMINGBIRD

CASHMAN BATTERY

HARRY RIED T3 INTERNATIONAL GATE EXPANSION

6.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT

DANIEL JOSEPH CHENIN, FAIA

BRETT ROBILLARD, AIA

SCOTT ACTON, ALLIED AIA

1.0 NOMINATION LETTER

JON SPARER, FAIA



Jonathan S. Sparer, FAIA

AIA A'19 National Convention Co-Chair 2019

AIA College of Fellows Inductee 2018

AIA Nevada Silver Medal Recipient 2018

AIA Nevada President 2018

AIA WMR Pettigrew Legacy Fellow 2018

AIA Las Vegas Board of Directors President 2017



September 5, 2025

Jury Chair
2025 AIA Nevada Young Architects Jury

RE: Esther Garcia, AIA, Nomination for the 2025 AIA Nevada Young Architects Award

Dear Jury Chair and Members of the 2025 AIANV Service Awards Jury,

It is nearly impossible to be in architectural and community service organizations in Las Vegas without having encountered Esther Garcia. Her passion as a professional and as a civic-minded person is boundless. I originally met Esther when, only recently arrived in the United States from Cuba, she became a recipient of my former firm's YWS Scholarship at UNLV in both 2011 and 2012. Even then, it was obvious this particular student—who even then was clearly destined to quickly become a licensed architect—was an overachievers' overachiever. She put that honor of the scholarship to work, earning her license in 3 years.

Esther has become much more than that. She strives for excellence in all things, while putting the larger community and the environment as top priorities for her work in practice, in service to the Institute and as a volunteer for so many organizations.

Esther's personal story is part of what drives her forward with such incredible gusto. She is Cuban-born, waiting for years for the opportunity to cross into the United States and pursue her passion for architecture. When it came, she arrived in Las Vegas, winning the YWS Scholarship for her graduate studies. Despite the cultural and language barriers she faced, Esther jumped fully into advancing sustainability in design, first as a member of the team that created UNLV's 2013 Solar Decathlon entry, which garnered second place in the worldwide competition. The next year, she became a finalist in the Sands ECO 360° Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, addressing waste within the food supply chain practices of the hospitality industry, sponsored by the Sands Resort. Today, on the AIA Las Vegas COTE committee, she is bringing great ideas and great speakers to educate our chapter on advanced practices and policies that push sustainable, resilient design strategies for our desert environment and beyond. Topping off that effort in practice, she joined the studio of Daniel Joseph Chenin, FAIA, where she focuses on bringing sustainable design solutions to residential projects. On her own time, she also coordinated one of the Multifamily Mixed-Use teams for the Blueprint for Better – Housing Project, an AIA initiative dedicated to developing solutions for affordable housing and homelessness.

For her community service, Esther received two senatorial recognitions from U.S. Senators Dean Heller and Harry Reid in 2010 and 2012 respectively, and a congressional recognition from Representative Shelley Berkley in 2012. Esther is an architect whose talents are as boundless as is her passion for doing more via service and community volunteerism. With her ultimate goal of implementing enduring of green solutions that create a new green standard for answering human needs, Esther is using practice, AIA service and community engagement to answer that call. She is an inspirational model for young practitioners across the country to follow and highly deserving of the AIA Nevada's Young Architect Award.

Sincerely,



Jon Sparer, FAIA
2018 President AIA Nevada
2017 President AIA Las Vegas
2018 AIA Nevada Silver Medal
2018 WMR Pettigrew Legacy Fellow

2.0 BIOGRAPHY



ESTHER GARCIA AIA, LEED AP BD+C

Dedicated to resilience and impact, Esther Garcia has built a career that bridges architecture, interiors, and sustainability while advancing the profession through service, mentorship, and community-driven design.

Esther Garcia, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, is an architect whose story begins in Cuba, where she pursued her dream of architecture in a nation where creativity was often stifled by political control and economic scarcity. In a society where access to information, opportunity, and even the freedom to leave the country was tightly restricted, architecture became for her not only an academic pursuit but an act of resilience and imagination. By her third year in the five-year program at the University of Camagüey, she had already earned the rare distinction of being selected as a research assistant in Theory and History of Architecture and collaborated on cultural preservation projects, demonstrating a determination to create beauty in an environment that offered little space for it.

Her journey was further defined by her family's struggle: though her father won a U.S. visa lottery in 2000, the Cuban government barred her parents from emigrating for more than seven years, depriving them of their most basic rights. When Esther was finally able to leave the island in 2008, she carried with her not only the foundation of a rigorous architectural education but also a profound understanding of what it means to design for freedom, dignity, and human possibility.

At twenty, Esther arrived in the United States and began anew in Las Vegas. Navigating the challenges of language and culture, she forged a strong academic path at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, earning both her Bachelor and Master of Architecture degrees and graduating with the Jane and Robert Fielden Medal for Academic Excellence in Architecture. Even as a student, she began to distinguish herself on the global stage, contributing to her team's second-place finish, the highest U.S. entry, in the 2013 U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon, and later as a finalist in the Sands ECO360° Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, developing innovative proposals for food supply and energy systems.

From international competitions to climate-resilient design strategies, her career has always bridged professional practice and community impact. At KME Architects and the UNLV Downtown Design Center, she contributed to high-profile international competitions and the revitalization of downtown Las Vegas, projects that rooted her in both global dialogue and local transformation.

Her trajectory accelerated at Gensler, where she rose quickly to become Design Resilience Leader for the Las Vegas office. In that role, she championed sustainable and climate-resilient design strategies, weaving them into both studio culture and project work. Her leadership extended beyond the office as well. As Chair of the AIA Las Vegas Committee on the Environment (COTE) in 2017 and 2018, she launched public programs, convened lectures on biophilic design, regenerative cities, and the Las Vegas 2050 Master Plan, and even introduced a community book club exploring climate and urban design.

2.0 BIOGRAPHY

Positions:

Chair, AIA Las Vegas Committee on the Environment,

Team Coordinator, Blueprint for Better - Housing Project - Multifamily Mixed-Use Division

Member, 2017 Western Mountain Region Conference Planning Committee

Tour Coordinator and Guide, AIA 2019 National Conference

Panelist, National Communication Association Annual Conference

Mentor and Judge, AIA Las Vegas High School Design Awards

Teaching Experience:

Adjunct Professor, Interior Design and Drafting programs, Art Institute of Las Vegas

Community Service:

Gensler's gServe group

Team Leader directed nonprofit support (donations, fundraising, volunteering)

National Rebuilding Together

Safety captain and event organizer (2 years), assisted low-income, elderly, and disabled homeowners

Opportunity Village

Supported individuals with intellectual disabilities

Helping Kids Clinic

Provided healthcare to uninsured children

Angel Faces Project

Taught horticulture, sustainable gardening, healthy eating

Fashion for a Cause

Coordinated charity fashion shows Nevada Blind Children's Foundation + Animal Foundation

Three Square

Organized food-packing teams

Her influence soon expanded to the regional and national stage. On the AIA WMR Committee in 2016 and 2017, she coordinated the "Art, Transportation, and Bright Lights" tour, immersing members in the distinctive projects that define Las Vegas, while also spearheading efforts to green the WMR Conference itself. In 2019, she joined the planning committee for the AIA National Conference, where she guided two signature tours: one to the Ivanpah Solar Power Facility, showcasing desert energy production, and another highlighting modern desert living. Both tours spotlighted the unique intersection of innovation and environment in the Southwest.

Among her most meaningful initiatives was the Garden Classroom Partnership, a program that engaged students directly in shaping outdoor learning environments, inspiring children to imagine futures in design. At Blue Heron, she advanced sustainability in luxury residential architecture while coordinating the multifamily mixed-use division for the Blueprint for Better – Housing Project, addressing affordable housing and homelessness. Today, as a design leader at Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd., Esther brings a multidisciplinary approach that integrates architecture, interiors, and sustainability into every project. She has been instrumental in shaping award-winning work such as Nakaiwa, recognized by Architizer's A+Awards, the BLT Built Design Awards, the Paris Design Awards, and OPAL Outstanding Property Awards, and Horizon, which earned Silver Winner at the 2024 Global Architecture Awards for Interior Architecture. Her initiatives in sustainability and community engagement have been driving forces behind the firm's recognition as AIA Nevada Emerging Professional Friendly Firm multiple years in a row, where her leadership and mentorship helped establish a culture of service and collaboration.

Her dedication to service is as significant as her design achievements. She has mentored high school students through the AIA Las Vegas High School Design Awards, taught at the Art Institute of Las Vegas, and served as team leader for Gensler's gServe program, coordinating nonprofit initiatives and volunteerism. Her community involvement extends to National Rebuilding Together, Opportunity Village, The Helping Kids Clinic, The Angel Faces Project, Fashion for a Cause, and Three Square, work for which she has received commendations from U.S. Senators Harry Reid and Dean Heller and Congresswoman Shelley Berkley.

Esther's professional contributions have been recognized nationally and regionally. She is a recipient of the AIA National Jason Pettigrew Memorial Scholarship (2015), the AIA Nevada Distinguished Service Award for Associate AIA (2015), and was named to ENR Southwest's Top 20 Under 40 (2016). Her work has also been honored with multiple AIA Nevada and AIA Las Vegas design awards, NAIOP Spotlight Awards, and ENR Southwest Best Projects awards. These recognitions underscore her ability to lead with both vision and rigor across a range of project types.

Through every chapter of her journey, from her early years in Cuba to her leadership today, Esther has demonstrated that resilience can be transformed into leadership, that sustainability can bridge professional practice and community service, and that architecture can be a platform for social change. She is both a role model for the next generation and a vital voice in shaping the profession's future.

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS + RECOGNITIONS | PERSONAL NARRATIVE

ESTHER GARCIA AIA, LEED AP BD+C

My work as an architect has always been guided by the belief that design excellence and service must advance together. Over the years, this dual commitment has shaped a career that is now recognized not only through awards, but also through the way projects and ideas are influencing professional dialogue around the world.

As a design leader at Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd., I have contributed to projects that have become part of international architectural conversation. Residences such as Nakaniwa, Horizon, Module One, Palladio, Tombolo, Palm and Buckrail have been published widely in outlets including Architectural Digest (U.S., Italy, Mexico, Middle East, Poland), Wallpaper, Dezeen, Interior Design Magazine, Elle Décor, Tatler Homes Asia, ArchDaily, Architizer Journal, Global Design News, Objekt International, and Muuuz Magazine. These features underscore that the work I help lead resonates across cultures and continents, shaping narratives on how architecture responds to climate, place, and lifestyle. In addition, our firm's recognition on Architizer's A+List of the world's top design firms in 2023, 2024, and 2025, as well as Forbes' Best-In-State Residential Architects in 2025, reflects the consistency of our approach and its relevance beyond Nevada.

Project design awards have further affirmed this trajectory. I have been part of teams honored with AIA Nevada and AIA Las Vegas design awards, NAIOP Spotlight Awards, ENR Best Project Awards, and global distinctions including Architizer A+Awards, the BLT Built Design Awards, the OPAL Outstanding Property Awards, and the Global Architecture Awards. These recognitions highlight not only the quality of individual projects, but also the ability of design to create immersive, sustainable environments that enrich daily life.

Beyond project work, I have dedicated myself to advancing the profession through service. As Chair of the AIA Las Vegas Committee on the Environment (COTE), I established programming that brought national and

international voices on regenerative cities, biophilia, and climate adaptation into our community. At the AIA Western Mountain Region, I led sustainability initiatives for the annual conference, and at the AIA National Conference I curated tours showcasing desert resilience and renewable energy, positioning our region as a model of adaptation in extreme climates. These roles reflect my commitment to ensuring architects remain leaders in addressing the environmental challenges that define our time.

Service has also meant direct mentorship and volunteerism. I have mentored high school students in the AIA Las Vegas High School Design Awards, taught at the Art Institute of Las Vegas, and guided emerging professionals in practice, efforts that helped our studio earn the AIA Nevada Emerging Professional Friendly Firm designation. My volunteer work includes National Rebuilding Together, Opportunity Village, The Helping Kids Clinic, The Angel Faces Project, Fashion for a Cause, and Three Square. These engagements have been recognized with commendations from Senators Harry Reid and Dean Heller and Congresswoman Shelley Berkley, affirming the impact of architecture beyond the profession.

Recognition such as the AIA National Jason Pettigrew Memorial Scholarship, the AIA Nevada Distinguished Service Award, and ENR Southwest's Top 20 Under 40 has been deeply meaningful. Yet the true measure of my journey lies in impact: creating design work that shapes discourse on international platforms, cultivating mentorship and service locally, and demonstrating that architecture can be both a cultural export and a community anchor.

Through every chapter, I have worked to show that the reach of architecture extends well beyond buildings. It is a way to elevate human dignity, foster resilience, and strengthen communities. My commitment remains to expand that reach, advancing sustainability in practice, mentoring the next generation, and continuing to bring Nevada's architectural voice to the global stage.

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS + RECOGNITIONS | AWARDS



FIRM + INDIVIDUAL

Architizer Journal, 2025
A+List: The 220 Best Architecture And Design Firms Worldwide In 2025

Architizer A+ Awards, 2025
Best Small Firm (6 - 15 Employees) – Special Mention

Architizer Journal, 2024
The A+List: Architizer's Top Architecture And Design Firms To Watch In 2024

Architecture Master Prize, 2024
Residential Architecture Firm Award – Honorable Mention

American Institute of Architects (AIA) Nevada, 2024
Emerging Professional (EP) Friendly Firm Award

Architizer Journal, 2023
The A+List: 196 Architecture And Design Firms To Watch In 2023

American Institute of Architects (AIA) Nevada, 2023
Emerging Professional (EP) Friendly Firm Award

BUCKRAIL

International Design Awards (IDA), 2024
Gold In Residential Interior Design / Rural Living

Society of British Interior Designers (SBID) International Design Awards, 2024
Finalist

Society of British Interior Designers (SBID) International Design Awards, 2024
Regional Winner "Americas Region"

ECHO

Society of American Registered Architects California (SARA CA) Awards, 2025
Merit Award

HORIZON

Global Awards Community, Global Architecture Awards (GAA), 2024
Silver Winner - Interior Architecture

TALUS ONE

BLT Built Design Awards, 2024
Honorable Mention Architectural Design

Paris Design Awards, 2023

Honorable Mention + Official Selection

TOMBOLO

The Grands Prix Du Design Awards 18th Edition, 2025
Gold Winner

INT Interior Design Awards, 2025

Winner

Paris Design Awards, 2025
Winner Interior Design

Kitchen & Bath Design News Magazine, 2025
Gold Award, Kitchen Over \$250,000

Society of British Interior Designers (SBID), 2025
International Design Awards – Finalist

The Plan Magazine Design Awards, 2025
Short Listed

American Society Of Interior Designers (ASID), 2025
Andyz Award – Residence Over 3,000 Sf.

American Society Of Interior Designers (ASID), 2025
Andyz Award – Best Kitchen

International Architecture & Design Awards (IIDA), 2025
Bronze Winner Single-Family House Design

M20
2024 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Nevada, 2024
Citation Award Winner

Global Awards Community, Global Architecture Awards (GAA), 2024
Gold Winner - Architecture

Gray Magazine Design Awards, 2024
Finalist + Winner

Architizer A+ Awards, 2023
Finalist + People's Choice Award Winner

Outstanding Property Award London Opal, 2023
Winner Architectural Design + Interior Design

INT Interior Design Awards, 2023
Winner

BLT Built Design Awards, 2023
Winner In Architectural Design - Residential

Paris Design Awards, 2023
Winner Interior Design

Houzee Award, 2023
Gold Winner

Paris Design Awards, 2023
Official Selection

INT Interior Design Awards, 2023
Official Selection

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS + RECOGNITIONS | AWARDS

NAKANIWA

Architizer A+ Awards, 2025
Finalist + Jury Winner

Architecture Hunter Awards, 2025
Shortlist

Grey Magazine Design Awards, 2025
Finalist

Society of American Registered Architects, 2025
New York (SARA NY) Finalist

International Design Awards (IDA), 2024
Bronze in Residential/Sustainable Home

OPAL Outstanding Property Award
London, 2024
Winner Architectural Design (Residential)

BLT Built Design Awards, 2024
Winner Architectural Design (Residential)

Paris Design Awards, 2024
DNA Award, Residential Interior Design

MODULE ONE
Architizer A+ Awards 2025
People's Choice Award

Society of American Registered Architects
CA, 2025
California (SARA CA) Merit Award

CASHMAN BATTERY
Honor Award, Unbuilt 2015
AIA Nevada

U.S. Department of Housing, HUD,
SC2 Strong Cities Strong Communities
Challenge Competition, 2015
3rd Place

HARRY RIED T3 INTERNATIONAL GATE EXPANSION (FORMERLY MCCARRAN T3)
ENR Southwest, 2017
Best Projects- Airport/Transit Category

CREDIT ONE

ENR Southwest's Best Project, 2018
Office/Retail/Mixed Use Category

NAIOP Southern Nevada, 2018
Spotlight Award Winner - Office Building Category

LAS VEGAS MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

AIA Las Vegas, 2014
Citation Award, Unbuilt

CITY SQUARE/POWER STRIP PROJECTS

AIA Las Vegas, 2014
Citation Award, Unbuilt

SERVICE AWARDS

AIA Nevada, 2015
Distinguished Service Award for Associate AIA

RECOGNITIONS

AIA Las Vegas
"I AM AIA LV" Member Spotlight, 2017

ENR Southwest, 2016
Top 20 Under 40 Class

AIA National

Jason Pettigrew Memorial Scholarship

AIA Nevada

Distinguished Service Award for Associate AIA

Sands ECO 360° Sustainable Hospitality Challenge, 2014

Finalist

LEED AP BD+C, 2014
Earned Accreditation

The Galaviz & Company/UNLV, 2013
Student Essay Contest - First Runner up

Jane and Robert Fielden Medal, 2012
Academic Excellence in Architecture
Undergraduate Studies

Michael Alcorn Architecture Scholarship,

2012 + 2011
Scholarship Recipient

AIA YWS Architecture Scholarship for Excellence and Achievement in Scholastic and Personal Life, 2012
Scholarship Recipient

Southern Nevada Hispanic Employment Program Scholarship, 2012
Scholarship Recipient

U.S. Senator Harry Reid Recognition, 2012
Service in worthwhile projects in Las Vegas

Congresswoman Shelley Berkley Recognition, 2012
Service in worthwhile projects in Las Vegas

AIA Felicia Friedlander Academic Excellence Scholarship, 2010
Scholarship Recipient

U.S. Senator Dean Heller Recognition, 2010
Service in worthwhile projects in Las Vegas

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS + RECOGNITIONS | PUBLICATIONS

NAKANIWA

ArchDaily - Harnessing Thermal Mass for Sustainable Living: 4 Residential Projects in the U.S. Deserts, June 15, 2024

Architectural Digest - What Desert Home Builders Can Teach Us About Living in Extreme Heat, July 1, 2025

Architectural Digest - Indoor-Outdoor Living: 8 Covetable Ideas From AD PRO Directory Architects, January 10, 2024

Architizer Journal - The 220 Best Architecture and Design Firms Worldwide in 2025

Architizer Journal - The A+List: Architizer's Top Architecture and Design Firms to Watch in 2024

Architizer Journal - The A+List: 196 Architecture and Design Firms to Watch in 2023

Designers Today - 9 interior design projects win ANDYZ awards, July 27, 2022

Green Homebuilder - Sustainability Starts with the Site: A Case Study in Site-Specific Green Home Design, March/April 2023

Forbes - Best-In-State Residential Architects - Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd., September 17, 2025

Martha Stewart - 8 Bedroom Décor Mistakes That Make it Hard to Relax, August 11, 2025

Martha Stewart - How to Decorate a Bedroom From Start to Finish, According to Interior Designers, April 9, 2025

Martha Stewart - A Keeping Room Will Transform Your Kitchen (and Your Home) Here's What to Know, March 21, 2025

Martha Stewart - 7 Gorgeous Dining Room Trends That Designers Are Excited About for 2025, January 23, 2025

Martha Stewart - 6 Paint Colors That Make Your Living Room Look Smaller, According to Interior Designers, January, 20, 2025

Martha Stewart - 7 Ceiling Paint Colors You'll Regret, According to Interior Designers, January 14, 2025

Maison & Jardin Magazine - Daniel Joseph Chenin Ltd., Luxury Architecture in Las Vegas, March 22, 2024

Modern Luxury Vegas - Beyond the Blueprint, April 2025, pp 44-45

Nevada Business - Furniture Designer Eric Brand Launches the 3rd Edition of The MASTERS & MENTORS Program, May 1, 2023

Statyba Ir Architektūra - Context And Architecture: 7 Examples Of Harmony Between Environment And Buildings, May 8, 2023

BUCKRAIL

Architectural Digest - Middle East - This Chic Holiday Home in the Hills Is a Modern Take on the Traditional Log Cabin, March 10, 2024

Architectural Digest - Mexico - House on the Mountains: A Romantic Refuge in the Middle of Nature, Sonia S. Braga, May 20, 2024

Architectural Digest - Poland - House Close to Nature, Barbara Ruppel, October 4, 2024

Architectural Digest - Italy - A Romantic Cottage in the Mountains A Stone's Throw from the Lake, April 19, 2024

Architecture BOIS - France - Éloge de la simplicité, Maxime Kouyoumdjian, June/Jully 2025, pp 38-44

Archilovers - Buckrail | Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd., February 18, 2025

D5 Magazine - Inside Daniel Joseph Chenin's Lake Coeur d'Alene Retreat, October 9, 2024

Elite Lifestyle Magazine - A Lakefront Retreat, Summer Edition 2025

e-architect (Scotland) - Buckrail House in Idaho, Isabelle Lomholt, September 10, 2024

Marie Claire Maison (Turkey) - Rustic Luxury: A Modern Lake House in the Heart of Nature, Spring Lion, September 17, 2024

Muuuz Magazine (France) - Daniel Joseph Chenin X Hart Howerton collaborate, September 13, 2024

Novinky Living - Reclaimed Wood Cottage Offers Luxurious Interior and Lake Views, January 1, 2025

Living etc. - 8 Brown Color Palettes Designers Are Using Now to Create Luxe Decor Schemes, Pip Rich, May 19, 2024

The Design Chaser - Lakefront Retreat: A Blend of Wilderness and Understated Luxury, September 24, 2024

Yinji Space (Japan) - Buckrail Residence, September 26, 2024

88 Design Box - Rustic Luxury Lakefront Home by Daniel Joseph Chenin, October 17, 2024

M20

Architizer - The World's Best Architecture Twenty Twenty-Four, New York, 2023, pp 125

Gray Magazine - Best on the Boards: M20, March 2024, pp 71

Global Design News - Daniel Joseph Chenin Designs a Sculptural Residence in the Middle of Nevada's Desert, May 2024

PALM

Architectural Digest USA - Inside the Sprawling Beverly Hills Home of Hollywood Producer Trevor Engelson, July, 21, 2025

Architectural Digest Italia - La casa a Beverly Hills, enorme (1.200 m2) e lussuosa, di un produttore hollywoodiano, August, 17 2025

TOMBOLO

Architectural Digest Italia - Questa casa nel deserto è il capolavoro architettonico di Daniel Chenin, April 9, 2025

Architectural Digest Middle East - In This Contemporary Desert Home, Design Inspiration Abounds, May 9, 2025

Architectural Digest Poland - Luksusowa rezydencja na pustyni. Wnętrza to mieszanka ponadczasowej klasyczki i stylu art deco, April, 15, 2025

Attitude Interior Design Magazine - The Journey, 124 July/August, 2025

Elle Décor Middle East - Desert Legacy, Maria Aziz Nahas, June 2025, pp 21-25

e-architect (scotland) Tombolo Residence, Las Vegas, Nevada, April 25, 2025

Kitchen & Bath Design News, Design Awards 2025, August 1, 2025, Cover/pp 38-41

Objekt International Magazine (Netherlands) - Straight Outta Vegas - Sculptural Symphony in Nevada Desert, June 2025

Robb Report - Inside a Las Vegas Home That Embodies Classic Desert Modernism, March 23, 2025

Villas Magazine - Inner Harmony, September 2025, pp 60-72

4.0 MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS



FORUM

A Publication of the Las Vegas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

January 2017

Member Spotlight
Page 2

President's Message
Page 3

Member Meetings
Page 5 & 6

AIA Nevada Design
and Service Awards
Page 8 & 9

Member News
Page 11

Committee News
Page 12

Volunteer
Information
Page 14

C.E. Opportunities
Page 16

Classifieds
Page 17



Member Spotlight
Esther Garcia, Assoc. AIA

COMMITTEE NEWS

20



COTE CLOSET
ESTHER GARCIA, ASSOC. AIA
CHAIR, ARCHITECTURE

There is an innate affiliation of human beings for the organic, often called "Biophilia." This one can be understood as the love for, or a taste designated by the aesthetic appreciation of, the natural world, an hypothesis on the importance of contact with nature for the human psyche. Wilson (1981) spoke of the need to establish relationships with other people, and the need for the resultant that is experienced with interacting with nature.

Biophilia also contains elements that are learned, for example, those who are taught to appreciate nature and the environment as adults who maintain a respect for different life forms. The human connection with nature has been researched in areas such as intelligence, emotions, and health.

Our first meeting should be the first opportunity to maintain activities that promote healthy and balanced environment, seeking the conservation of animal and plant species that enrich our planet.

The AIA Las Vegas Committee on the Environment invites you to our first Club meet up. We will continue to learn, and discuss this topic, and how it can be applied to our profession.

COTE Club
You are invited
Gabi Coffee & Bistro
5805 Spring Mountain Rd #104, Las

Our first book discussion, Biophilic Design: The Theory, Science and Practice of Bringing Buildings to Life by Stephen R. Kellert, Judith Heerwagen, and Michael M. Meldrum.

If you are interested in participating in COTE or have a subject you would like to see discussed for next month please contact Esther Garcia, **Esther.Garcia@unlv.edu**

Meeting location and date of the discussion group will be announced in the next newsletter as they have.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?
The AIA FORUM is your newsletter. It is a place to share your talents and to help you stay informed on what's happening, meetings, ideas and activities. Please share your comments in the form of articles and editorials.

If you have information you'd like to share or if you'd like to comment on a point of view, please let us know via email at esther.garcia@unlv.edu

C. Give us new information or a point of view, please let us know via email at esther.garcia@unlv.edu



The Urban Sketchers meeting will be Saturday, October 27, 2018 from 10:00 am to 1:00pm

They will be meeting at Red Rock Waller's studio
(1000 S. Scott St., Suite 100, Las Vegas, NV 89101)
702-489-0000 or 702-489-0000

Please RSVP to attend to eroberts@ish-architects.com. Come bring your sketchbook and your water colors (if you'd like). Don't forget some water to drink, something to sit on (you're glad you did). It's a fun and sunshiny is a must!

See you on Saturday, October 27th



Sketch by Urban Sketchers Las Vegas Member Monica Nease

JOIN THE COUNCIL OF EXCELLENCE

We hope you will join us for our first meeting. We will be discussing a resolution to support the School's programs, students and faculty through your membership. Your active participation are vital to the growth of the UNLV School of Architecture.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?
The UNLV School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

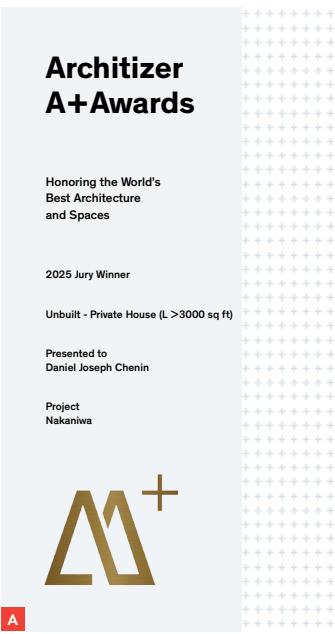
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

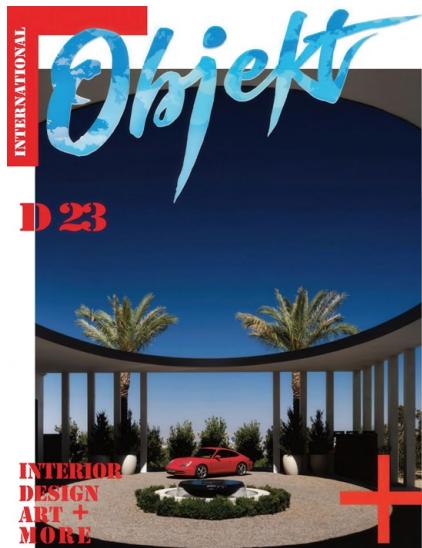
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture
Thomas J. and Shelly S. Smith School of Architecture

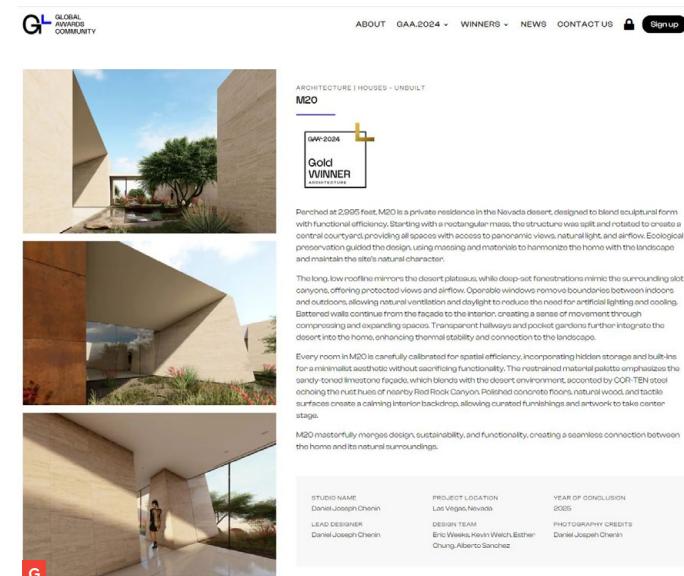
4.0 MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS



Architizer



F



A. Nakaniwa Architizer A+ Awards, 2025 Jury Winner Award Certificate **B.** M20 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Nevada, 2024 Citation Award Winner Certificate **C.** Nakaniwa BLT Built Design Awards, 2024 Winner Architectural Design (Residential) Certificate **D.** Horizon - Global Awards Community, Global Architecture Awards (GAA), 2024 Silver Winner - Interior Architecture Award Certificate **E.** AIA Objekt International Magazine (Netherlands) - Straight Outta Vegas - Sculptural Symphony in Nevada Desert, June 2025 **F.** Robb Report - Inside a Las Vegas Home That Embodies Classic Desert Modernism, March 23, 2025 **G.** M20 Global Awards Community, Global Architecture Awards (GAA), 2024 Gold Winner - Architecture Award Certificate

5.0 SELECT WORK

LOCATION
Las Vegas, NV

NOMINEE ROLE
Architect

COMPLETION
Fall 2026 (est)

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

AWARDS
Architizer A+Awards
Finalist + Jury Winner, 2025

Architecture Hunter Awards
Shortlist, 2025

Grey Magazine Design
Awards Finalist, 2025

Society of American
Registered Architects
New York (SARA NY) Finalist,
2025

International Design Awards
(IDA)
Bronze in Residential/
Sustainable Home, 2024

OPAL Outstanding Property
Award London
Winner Architectural Design
(Residential), 2024

BLT Built Design Awards
Winner Architectural Design
(Residential), 2024

DNA Award, 2024
Paris Design Awards



NAKANIWA

Challenge. Situated in the Mojave Desert, the challenge was to design a home that incorporated the principles of a traditional Japanese garden—balance, enclosure, and asymmetry—while embracing the harsh desert climate and maintaining an immersive connection to nature.

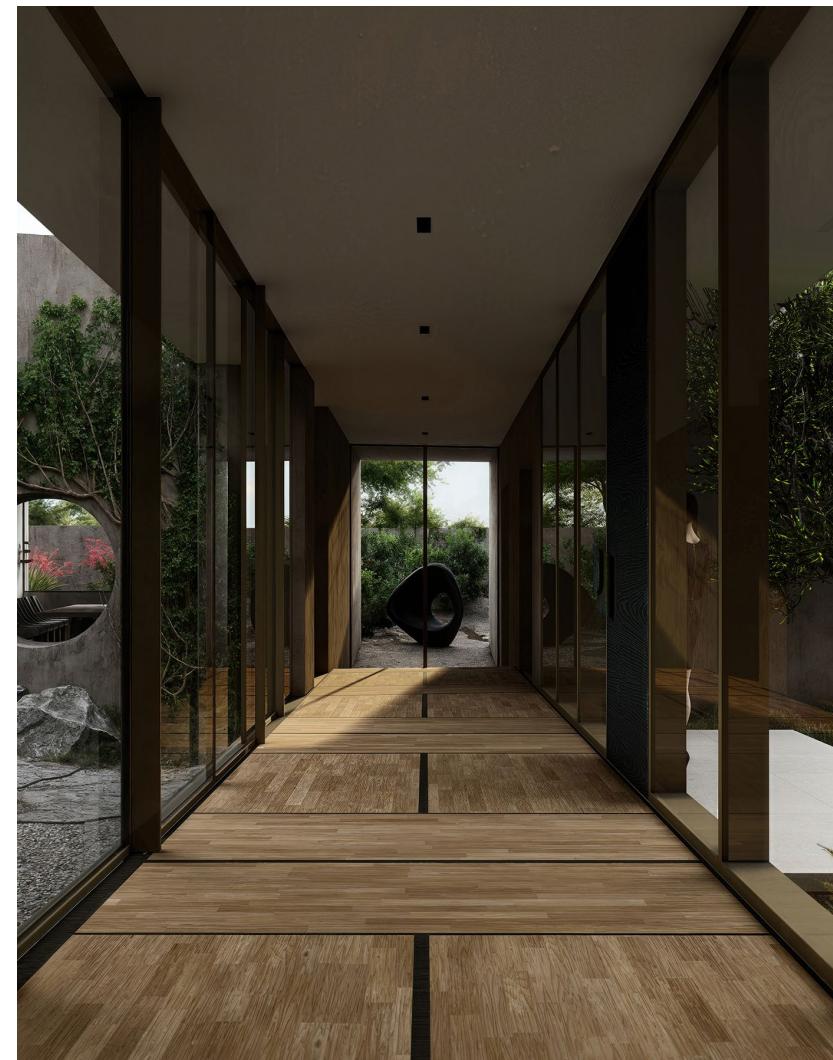
Action. Nakaniwa was designed to blend modern materials with traditional garden principles. The home's bifurcated plan, anchored by a central courtyard, creates a microclimate that naturally cools the interior. Folding walls seamlessly connect the indoor and outdoor spaces, while operable glazing promotes natural ventilation. The restrained material palette contrasts with the vibrant, eclectic interiors, achieving a balance between form and function.

Outcome. Nakaniwa celebrates the harmony between modern architecture and nature. The central courtyard functions as both a lightwell and a natural cooling system, reducing the need for mechanical intervention. The use of local materials and passive cooling strategies

ensures the home's environmental performance, while the design offers an immersive living experience that reflects the client's cultural and aesthetic values.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Nakaniwa incorporates *Design for Integration* and *Design for Well-being* by blending traditional Japanese garden principles with modern architecture to create a home that enhances occupant comfort while responding to the desert environment. The central courtyard and passive cooling strategies exemplify *Design for Energy* and *Design for Ecosystems*, minimizing reliance on mechanical systems and fostering a connection to nature. The use of natural materials and sustainable strategies aligns with *Design for Resources*, while the vibrant interior reflects *Design for Well-being*, creating a unique, personalized space that supports both functionality and aesthetic expression.



ESTHER GARCIA AIA, LEED AP BD+C | 14



5.0 SELECT WORK

LOCATION
Henderson, NV

NOMINEE ROLE
Architect

COMPLETION
Fall 2026 (est)

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

SELECT AWARDS
Architizer A+ Awards 2025
People's Choice Award

Merit Award, 2025
SARA California



MODULE ONE

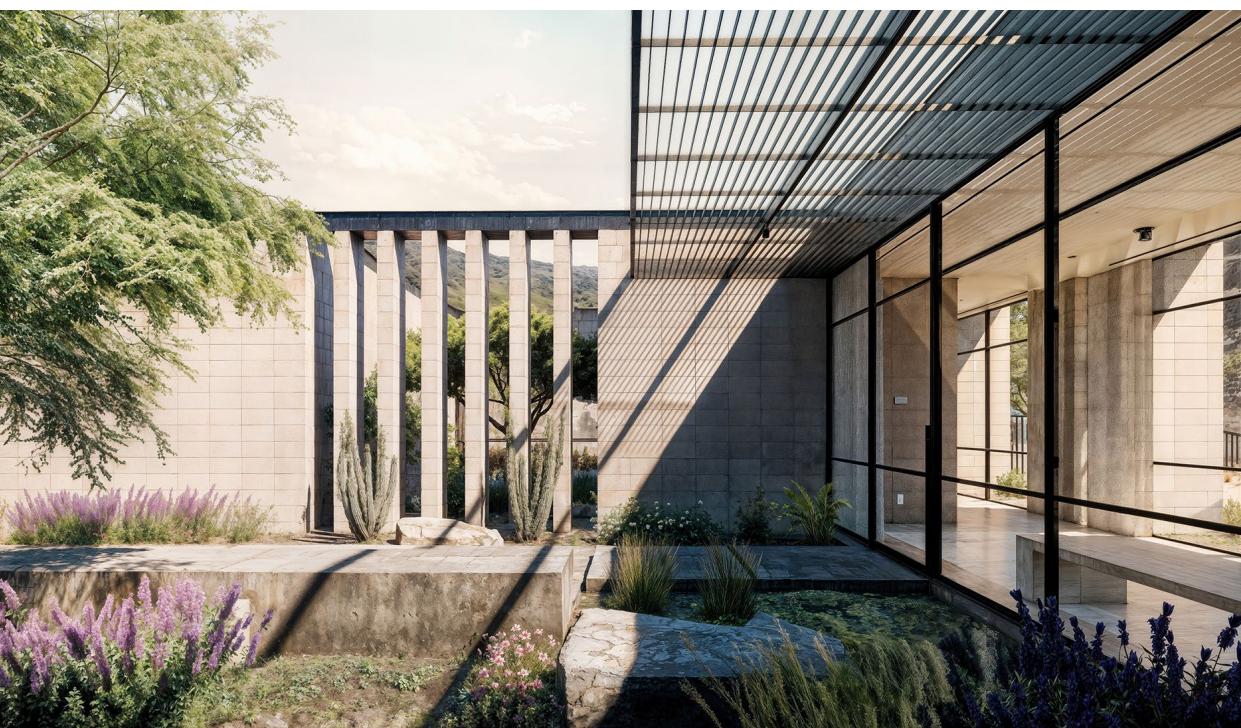
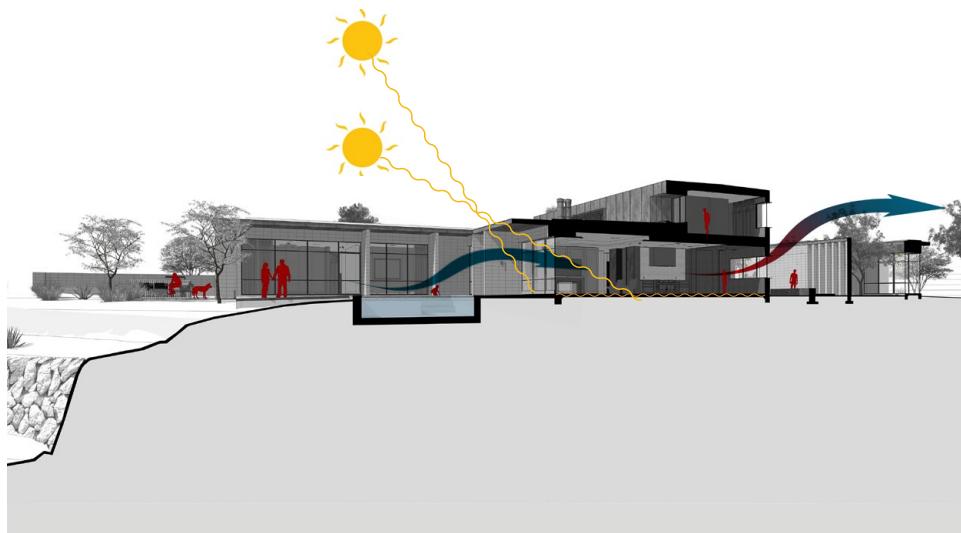
Challenge. The challenge for Module One was to create a home that could stand resolutely within the harsh Nevada desert environment while maintaining a sensitive dialogue with its surrounding rockside terrain. The design had to balance permanence with adaptability, providing shelter and durability against extreme conditions without sacrificing openness, connection, and responsiveness to the landscape.

Action. The design response was rooted in material honesty and resilient form. Constructed of stacked concrete block and blackened steel, the architecture echoes the geological strata of the rugged rockside, visually and structurally anchoring the home into the earth. The massing is carved by voids and apertures that admit light, channel breezes, and open the interior to expansive desert views. Deep overhangs mitigate solar gain while creating shaded transitions between indoor and outdoor environments. Each architectural move was calibrated to harness natural forces, light, shade, and wind, as functional allies.

Outcome. The result is a home that feels both enduring and alive, its dark steel and concrete forms reflecting strength and permanence, while its permeability to light and air invites changing desert atmospheres to define the living experience. The material palette integrates seamlessly with the surrounding terrain, its surfaces shifting in tone with the sun, allowing the home to blend and evolve with its context. Module One achieves a delicate balance: a fortified structure that nonetheless dissolves boundaries, creating a constant interplay between the shelter of built space and the expansiveness of the desert beyond.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Module One exemplifies Design for Integration, where architectural form, structural resilience, and environmental performance converge to mirror and respond to the desert geology. Its reliance on passive cooling strategies, such as deep overhangs, thermal massing, and natural ventilation, demonstrates Design for Energy by minimizing dependence on mechanical systems. The project also reflects Design for Resources, employing durable,





5.0 SELECT WORK



HUMMINGBIRD

LOCATION
Las Vegas, NV

NOMINEE ROLE
Architect

COMPLETION
October 2025 (est)

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM
Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

Challenge. The challenge for Hummingbird was to create a residence that balanced openness with refuge in a rugged desert setting. The design needed to provide protection from harsh solar exposure and shifting desert winds while maintaining an immersive connection to the landscape. At the same time, the architecture was asked to embody elegance and restraint, evoking movement without losing a sense of permanence.

Action. The solution emerged through a composition of interwoven volumes anchored by board-formed concrete walls, contrasted with expansive rooflines that hover lightly above the terrain. These hovering planes, inspired by the wings of a hummingbird in flight, extend to form deep overhangs that shade the interiors, reduce heat gain, and animate the facade with shifting shadows. Glazing dissolves the threshold between interior and exterior, opening the home to sweeping views of the desert while maintaining a sense of protection.

Outcome. The resulting home is both grounded and ethereal, its mass balanced by the apparent lightness of the rooflines. The restrained material

palette, concrete, glass, and surfaces that echo the desert's natural tones, establishes harmony with the rugged terrain. Passive cooling strategies inherent in the massing and roof design reduce reliance on mechanical systems, while the sequence of outdoor spaces creates a living environment attuned to cycles of climate and light.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Hummingbird embodies Design for Integration, with architectural form and environmental performance inseparably linked through shading devices, glazing strategies, and spatial sequencing. The project also demonstrates Design for Energy, employing passive cooling, deep overhangs, and natural ventilation to reduce heat gain and mechanical demand. Finally, its courtyards and terraces align with Design for Well-Being, fostering human comfort, connection to nature, and a sense of calm within the desert landscape.



5.0 SELECT WORK

LOCATION
Las Vegas, NV

NOMINEE ROLE
Lead Designer

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Gensler

SELECT AWARDS
Honor Award, Unbuilt 2015
AIA Nevada

3rd Place - Strong Cities
Strong Communities Challenge
Competition, 2015



CASHMAN BATTERY

Challenge. Through the Department of Commerce's SC2 initiative, the City of Las Vegas sought proposals to transform the Cashman Center into a catalyst for economic and community development. The challenge was to address the paradox of resource scarcity and cultural abundance while positioning the city as a leader in sustainability.

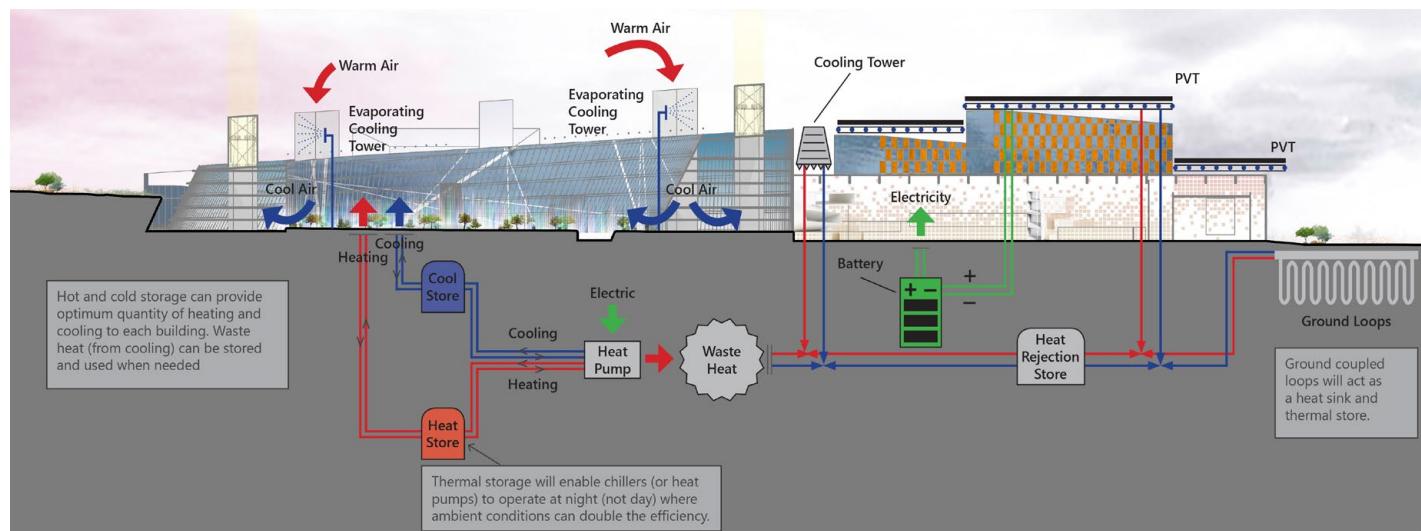
Action. The Cashman Battery reimagined the 50-acre site as a renewable-powered mixed-use campus. Housing, offices, entertainment, and education were integrated into a transit-oriented district. Adaptive systems continuously optimized energy use, while a responsive exterior skin glowed in real time to show when buildings were consuming or generating power. Sustainability became both practical and educational.

Outcome. The proposal positioned the Cashman Battery as the geographic heart of Las Vegas' emerging green economy. By creating a development model where energy systems, land use, and community

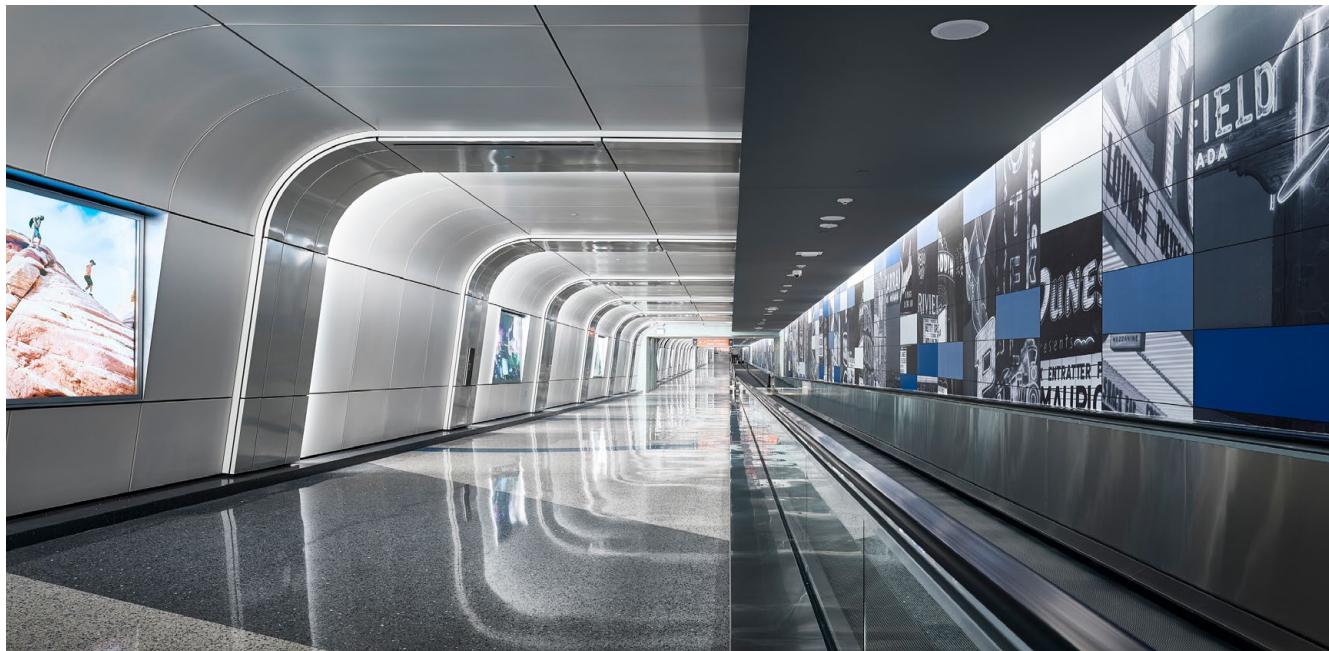
functions operated in concert, the project demonstrated how urban cores can be redefined as engines of sustainability and economic growth. Though conceptual, the proposal provided a replicable framework for cities nationwide to link renewable energy infrastructure with community development.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE.

The Cashman Battery exemplifies Design for Energy, with renewable generation and adaptive building systems at the core of its operation. It reflects Design for Integration, combining land use, infrastructure, and sustainability into a unified urban strategy. It also advances Design for Discovery, using real-time energy monitoring as a public interface that educates residents, promotes transparency, and fosters broader community engagement with sustainability.



5.0 SELECT WORK



HARRY RIED T3 INTERNATIONAL GATE EXPANSION

LOCATION
Las Vegas, NV

NOMINEE ROLE
Designer

COMPLETION
February 202

ARCHITECT OF RECORD
Gensler

SELECT AWARDS
2017 ENR Southwest's Best
Projects - Airport/Transit
Category

Challenge. Harry Ried (Formerly McCarran) International Airport needed to expand its international gate capacity to meet increasing demand while maintaining uninterrupted operations for domestic travelers. The project required doubling the number of international gates without reducing the total number of available gates during construction. Additionally, the design had to address passenger processing efficiency and enhance the traveler experience within a highly secure environment.

Action. Seven underutilized gates in the Satellite D concourse were reconfigured to serve international arrivals, supported by the addition of a new passenger corridor. This corridor directed deplaning passengers into a 995-foot underground tunnel, linking the gates directly to the Terminal 3 sterile corridor and U.S. Customs and Border Protection processing facility. The tunnel's design departed from a utilitarian model by drawing inspiration from the fuselage of an aircraft, using segmented lighting, artwork, and floor graphics to guide travelers and reduce perceived walking distance. This approach simultaneously improved operational efficiency and created a more engaging, less stressful environment for passengers.

Outcome. The project successfully doubled Harry Ried's international gate capacity while ensuring that no domestic gates were lost in the process. The expanded facilities streamlined passenger processing and enhanced Las Vegas' ability to accommodate global tourism, reinforcing the city's role as an international gateway. By integrating design strategies that addressed both function and passenger comfort, the expansion improved operational performance and elevated the overall travel experience.

FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

The project embodies Design for Integration, aligning complex operational requirements with architectural solutions that improve both efficiency and experience. It also advances Design for Well-Being, creating a passenger-focused environment that reduces stress and improves orientation through visual cues and spatial design. Finally, the adaptive reuse of existing concourse gates demonstrates Design for Economy, maximizing resources and minimizing new construction while delivering significant regional economic impact.

6.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Daniel Joseph Chenin FAIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C

AIA College of Fellows Inductee 2025

AIA Nevada Silver Medal Recipient 2022

AIA Las Vegas Chapter, Board of Directors, Director, 2023-Present

AIA Las Vegas Chapter, UNLV School of Architecture Committee, 2018- Present

NCARB AXP Licensing Advisor, Nevada State Coordinator 2011-2017

AIA Nevada Chapter, Executive Committee, 2011-2017

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Adjunct Professor, 2002-2017

AIA Western Mountain Region, Young Architects Regional Director, 2014-2015

AIA Western Mountain Region, Young Architect Forum, Regional Liaison, 2014-2015

AIA Western Mountain Region, Young Architect Award Recipient, 2014

AIA Las Vegas Chapter, Board of Directors, Director 2012-2013

AIA Nevada, Young Architect Award Recipient, 2012

AIA Nevada, Associates Award Recipient, 2010

AIA Las Vegas Chapter, Emerging Professionals Young Architects Forum, Director, 2010

AIA 150 Blueprint for Nevada 24-Hour Town Hall Meeting Charette, Chair, 2007



September 19, 2025
AIA Nevada Service Awards Jury
c/o AIA Nevada

Dear Members of the Jury,

It is my great honor to recommend Esther Garcia, AIA, for the AIA Nevada Young Architect Award. I have had the privilege of witnessing her remarkable journey from the very beginning of her architectural career to her current role as a studio leader, and I can think of no one more deserving of this recognition.

When Esther first arrived in the United States and began her studies at UNLV, I was fortunate to serve as her Foundations instructor. At that time, she was still learning English, but we quickly discovered that the language of design transcends words. Her ideas, sketches, and curiosity spoke volumes, and her ability to communicate complex concepts through her work was extraordinary. From the outset, she distinguished herself as someone whose resilience and vision would carry her far.

I remained connected to Esther as she progressed in the profession, offering guidance during my tenure as Nevada's NCARB Licensing Advisor. Throughout her career, she has consistently demonstrated a rare blend of drive, leadership, and service. Multiple times over the years, I sought to bring her into my practice, but the timing did not align, as she was deeply committed to advancing critical initiatives in sustainability, community engagement, and professional service. That commitment speaks volumes about her character and her priorities as an architect.

In 2022, Esther finally joined our studio, and her impact was immediate. She has quickly accelerated into a leadership role, guiding projects with a multidisciplinary approach that integrates architecture, interiors, and sustainability. Just as importantly, she has become a role model for our emerging professionals, embodying resilience, dedication to craft, and unwavering service to the profession.

As a former recipient of the AIA Nevada Associate Award, Young Architect Award, and Silver Medal, I know firsthand the level of commitment, perseverance, and vision that this honor demands. Esther exemplifies all of these qualities and more. She is not only a superstar in our profession, the very definition of a Young Architect of Nevada, but also a voice and a force that our profession and our communities urgently need.

I offer my strongest endorsement for Esther Garcia's nomination, with absolute confidence that she will continue to leave an indelible mark on our profession, on Nevada and beyond.

Respectfully,

Daniel Joseph Chenin, FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, NCARB

6785 South Eastern Ave.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119
702-660-1000
www.djc-ltd.com

6.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Brett Robillard, AIA, NCARB | Design Director, Principal, Gensler

1990 - 1995 Bachelor of Architecture, B.ARCH, Roger Williams University

2009, 2024 University of Nevada, Graduate Adjunct Faculty

2010-2011 University of Nevada, Undergraduate Adjunct Faculty

1999, 2004-2005 Suffolk University, Thesis Advisor Adjunct Faculty

1996-1998 Boston Architectural Center, Graduate Adjunct Faculty

1999-2000 Undergraduate Adjunct Faculty

2013 AIA Young Architect Award

Licensed Architect in Florida, Nevada, New Mexico + Utah

3883 Howard Hughes Parkway Tel 702.893.2800
Suite 650
Las Vegas NV 89169
USA

Gensler

September 29, 2024

Dear Jury,

I am writing to express my support for Esther Garcia. I had the pleasure of working with Esther earlier in her career at Gensler, where we collaborated on several demanding projects. From the beginning, it was evident that Esther possesses a passion for our profession and has taken significant initiative to enhance her skill set while actively engaging with our community. I have continued to follow her career as she has made notable contributions with various local firms in Las Vegas.

Esther's experience is influenced by a diverse background. Having immigrated to the U.S. from Cuba in 2008, her commitment to the built environment and sustainable practices is deeply ingrained in her professional ethos. She has demonstrated a longstanding dedication to sustainability through her work and community involvement, including her role as chair of the AIA Las Vegas Committee on the Environment, where she established a lecture series and the innovative Garden Classroom Partnership to raise awareness among K-12 students.

As Esther's experience has grown, she has consistently pursued rigorous design solutions, showcasing critical thinking and technical expertise. Her recent work with Daniel Chenin, a recipient of the AIA Young Architect Award and the AIA NV Silver Medal, exemplifies high quality, poetic response, sustainability, and technical acumen.

As a former recipient of the Young Architect Award, I believe it is crucial to recognize our emerging professionals, as their success ensures the future leadership of our field. Our profession continues to evolve in response to socio-political influences, economic drivers, and local needs. Esther is a champion for our profession, consistently contributing to our communities through her design work and dedicated involvement.

I wholeheartedly endorse Esther Garcia for the 2025 award. I believe this recognition will further enhance her impact and contributions to our field.

Sincerely,

Brett Robillard AIA, NCARB
Principal
Design Director

702.343.6096 Mobile
702.893.2800 Main

6.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT



Scott Acton, Allied AIA | Founder CEO Forté

2005 US Small Business of the Year Award Recipient

NAIOP Member

Steel Framing Industry Association Member

2024 - Present - LVGEA Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance
Executive Board Member



3451 W. Martin Ave. Suite C | Las Vegas, NV 89118
702.697.2000 | forte design build.com

September 25, 2025

To the AIA Nevada Service Awards Jury,

It is my pleasure to recommend Esther Garcia, AIA, for the AIA Nevada Young Architect Award.

As Founder and CEO of Forte Specialty Contractors, I have worked with Esther during her tenure at Daniel Joseph Chenin Ltd. across several high-profile, technically complex projects. From a contractor's perspective, Esther consistently demonstrates a rare ability to bridge the worlds of design and construction. She brings clarity, foresight, and collaboration to every interaction, ensuring that design intent and buildability align seamlessly.

What consistently distinguishes Esther is her professionalism and leadership under pressure. She communicates with precision and respect; she listens, decides, and follows through. She is proactive in surfacing constraints early, framing options with trade partners, and guiding teams to solutions that preserve design excellence while enabling efficient execution. In every meeting, whether with architects, consultants, or the trades, Esther models a spirit of partnership that elevates performance across the board.

Esther's technical rigor matches her appreciation for craft and detail. She understands how materials come together, how tolerances behave, and how decisions on paper translate to the field. That fluency builds trust - trust that the work will be beautiful, buildable, and delivered with integrity.

Esther embodies what this award seeks to recognize: a young architect who is already advancing the profession and lifting the people around her. I endorse her candidacy without reservation and am confident she will continue to make a lasting impact on architecture in Nevada and beyond.

Sincerely,

Scott Acton

CEO/Founder

NV License: 74657 B | 76143 C-3 | 76287 C-4 | 77168 C-5 | 77169 A-13
CA License: 983984