



## **2025 YOUNG ARCHITECT NOMINEE**

**ESTHER GARCIA, AIA, LEED AP BD+C**

education. aia involvement. design excellence



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## 1.0 NOMINATION LETTER



**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



**JON SPARER, FAIA**

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

2601 Ashby Avenue | Las Vegas, NV 89102 | [jonsparer@gmail.com](mailto:jonsparer@gmail.com) | 702-595-5415



## 2.0 BIOGRAPHY



### **Education:**

#### **Master of Architecture**

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2014

#### **Bachelor of Science in Architecture**

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2012

### **Registrations:**

Registered Architect, Nevada, 2017

LEED AP BD+C, 2014

### **Work History:**

#### **Architect** | Daniel Joseph Chenin, Ltd

Las Vegas, Nevada

August 2022-Present

#### **Design Architect & Project Design**

**Coordinator** | Blue Heron

Las Vegas, Nevada

July 2018 - August 2022

#### **Adjunct Instructor** | The Art Institute

Henderson, Nevada

August 2017 - April 2018

#### **Architectural Designer** | Gensler

Las Vegas, NV

June 2014 - July 2018

#### **Graduate Assistant** | Downtown Design

Center

Las Vegas, NV

September 2012 - May 2014

#### **Architectural Intern** | KME Architects

Las Vegas, NV

September 2012 - May 2014

## **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, NAIOF 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 Muuz 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, NAIOF 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 Édition, 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 PROJ- ECTS

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

**Masion & 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/July 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-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. Wnętrze to mieszanka ponadczasowej klasyki 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

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**Member Spotlight**  
**Esther Garcia, Assoc. AIA**

### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**ESTHER GARCIA, ASSOC. AIA**

**I am a member of AIA because...** I am passionate for the profession.

Practicing Architecture fulfills a childhood dream, and allows me to pursue my passion of finding green solutions that are cohesive environmentally and workable professionally. My commitment to sustainable design, community wellness, and leadership has been the driving force of my career.

**What is the most important thing you've learned?**  
As a fresh 20-year-old arrival to the United States pursuing higher education in Las Vegas I have faced considerable challenges adapting to a different culture and language. These challenges helped to establish a solid base in architectural concepts, theories, practices, and ultimately earn a Bachelor and Master Degrees in Architecture. With hard work and dedication I graduated from UNLV with the highest honors, and have managed to become a LEED accredited professional, and complete the Architecture Licensing Exam, and the Architecture Experience Program within two years of my graduation. I have learned not to fear change, but to embrace it.

**What person, living or dead, would you most like to talk with?**  
I have always been fascinated by Antoni Gaudí's design ingenuity and early forms of sustainability even when climate change was not a well-known concern.

**How do you think the profession will evolve in the next 5-10 years?**  
The profession in my opinion is moving towards a more technologically savvy future. We are constantly learning new software, and trends in design and construction. There will be a huge change in terms of how we design and document projects, and how we communicate them to clients with the use of virtual and augmented reality. I believe that we should not limit our membership to fields allied to architecture, but to open our doors to professionals that love architecture and are willing to help make a greater impact on our communities, and the world.

**How can AIA lead reform and innovation?**  
Architects are natural innovators and problem solvers, and everything we do in our profession has a great impact on the world around us. Our ability to change the world in a positive way goes far beyond architecture. Our designs determine the way in which we inhabit cities, but also define who we are, and how we interact with other people.

To lead change we must focus on the human being, and creating environments appropriate for each person to develop. We must educate and cultivate creativity especially in new generations. We must be the driving force of change, but cannot do it alone. We must collaborate with other professionals to achieve a more sustainable future. I believe that we should not limit our membership to fields allied to architecture, but to open our doors to professionals that love architecture and are willing to help make a greater impact on our communities, and the world.

### 2017 AIA NEVADA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Brett K. Ewing, AIA	<b>AIA NV PRESIDENT</b> Jeff Frame, AIA
<b>SECRETARY / TREASURER</b> Mick Andersen, AIA	<b>PAST PRESIDENT</b> Mark Ryan, AIA
<b>AIA LV PRESIDENT</b> Jon Sparr, AIA	<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b> Randy Luingue, Hon. AIA
<b>EMERGING PROFESSIONALS NN</b> Nate Hudson, Assoc. AIA	<b>NCARB ADVISOR</b> Daniel Chanks, AIA
<b>EMERGING PROFESSIONALS LV</b> Domen Paster, Assoc. AIA	<b>STATE GOVERNMENT NETWORK</b> Chris Logan, AIA

**WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?**

The AIA FORUM is your newsletter.

It is provided as a member benefit and to help you stay informed on Chapter happenings, meetings, ideas and activities. We invite your participation in the form of articles and editorials.

If you have information you'd like to share or if you'd like to comment on an article or provide new information or a point of view, please let us know via email to Randy Luingue, Hon. AIA Executive Director, AIA Nevada: [rluingue@aianevada.org](mailto:rluingue@aianevada.org)

### COMMITTEE NEWS

**COTE CLOSET**  
ESTHER GARCIA, ASSOC. AIA  
CHAIR, COTE COMMITTEE

There is an innate affiliation of human beings to other living organisms called "Biophilia." This one can be understood as the love for life, a term designated by the biologist Edward O. Wilson, who formulated a hypothesis on the importance of contact with nature for the human psyche. Wilson affirmed that "Biophilia" is part of the need to establish relationships with other people, and the need for the relaxation that is experienced when interacting with nature.

Biophilia also contains elements that are learned, for example, those infants who are educated to exploit their curiosity for the environment, grow to adults who maintain a respect for different life forms. This human connection with nature has repercussions in areas such as intelligence, emotions, creativity and verbal expression.

Our first future should be the first incentive to maintain activities that promote a healthy and balanced environment, seeking the conservation of animal and plant species that enrich life on our planet.

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

**COTE Book Club**  
Nov 17 at 6:00 pm  
Cafe Coffee & Bakery  
5800 Spring Mountain Rd #104, Las Vegas, NV 89146

Our first book discussion, Biophilic Design: The Theory, Science and Practice of Bringing Buildings to Life by Stephen R. Kellert, Judith Herzogen, and Martin Mador.

If you are interested in participating in COTE or have a subject you would like to see discussed for next year please contact **Esther Garcia** [EstherGarcia@aianevada.org](mailto:EstherGarcia@aianevada.org) or [EstherGarcia@aianevada.org](mailto:EstherGarcia@aianevada.org)

Meeting location and date of the discussion group will be announced in the next newsletter so stay tuned!

**They will be meeting at Red Rock Visitor's Center**  
10000 Scenic Loop Dr. • Blue Diamond Rd. 89661  
702-488-3668 (Toll Call)

(There is a fee of \$15 per car)

Please RSVP to attend to avoid traffic-jams. You should bring your own picnic supplies, some water and your water colors (if you'd like). Don't forget some water (to drink), something to eat (you'll be glad you did). A bag and sunscreen is a must!

**See you on Saturday, October 27th!**

**JOIN THE COUNCIL OF EXCELLENCE**

We hope you will join the Council of Excellence by making a donation to support the School, its programs, students and faculty through your membership. Your advocacy, advice and participation are vital to the growth of the UNLV School of Architecture program.

To join the Council of Excellence please make checks payable to: The UNLV Foundation and mail to: AIA Las Vegas, 401 S. 4th St., Ste. 175, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Also: Randy Luingue, Hon. AIA or contact Randy at [rluingue@aianevada.org](mailto:rluingue@aianevada.org)

**2018 CONTRIBUTORS TO THE UNLV SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE**

Thomas J. and Susan Scherman	\$25,000.00	Doctorate Level
David Howerly, AIA	\$25,000.00	Doctorate Level
Karl Juba Wald Architects	\$25,000.00	Doctorate Level
Jon Sparr, F.AIA	\$10,000.00	Bachelors Level
Carpenter Sellers Del Gatto Architects	\$2,000.00	Associate Level
John R. Capobianco, AIA	\$1,000.00	Associate Level

Our thanks to and recognition of these individuals and firms for their commitment to the UNLV School of Architecture and the future of the profession.

**A. "I AM AIA LV" spotlight member B. Certificate honoring mentors and judges of the West Career + Technical Academy, AIA Las Vegas High School Design Awards C. COTE Closet at the AIA Las Vegas FORUM Issues D. Certificate honoring mentors and judges of the AIA Las Vegas High School Design Awards E. AIA National 2015 Jason Pettigrew Memorial Scholarship Press Release**

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**West Career & Technical Academy**  
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A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

## CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

In recognition and thanks for jurying the  
**AIA LAS VEGAS HIGH SCHOOL DESIGN AWARDS COMPETITION**  
this certificate is presented in grateful appreciation to

**Esther Garcia, Assoc. AIA**  
*Gensler*

**2015 AIA LAS VEGAS HIGH SCHOOL DESIGN AWARDS**

Signed on April 22, 2016

*Mark Ryan, AIA*  
Mark Ryan, AIA  
President, AIA Las Vegas

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*Gens*



## 4.0 MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS

### COMMITTEE NEWS

**COTE CLOSET**  
ESTHER GARCIA, ASSOC. AIA  
"COTE CLOSET" is a monthly event where we get from farm to plate!

**EARTH MONTH IS EVERY MONTH!**  
but let's make this month the greenest yet. Did you know that the average American meat travels an estimated 1600 miles to get from farm to plate?

**Fossil Fuels Depletion**  
Food transportation consumes large quantities of fossil fuels. It is estimated that we currently put almost 10 kcal of fossil fuel energy into our food system for every 1 kcal of energy we get as food.

**CO2 Emissions**  
Food transportation also generates great quantities of carbon dioxide emissions. Our increasing demand for fresh food is forcing the market to increasingly use more air freight than sea shipping, which generates 50 times more CO2. In 2005, the impact of fossil fuels and vegetables into California alone by air plane released more than 70,000 tons of CO2, which is equivalent to more than 12,000 cars on the road.

**COMO and Chemicals**  
In order for produce to survive the long travel times and distance much of it is picked while still unripe and then gassed to "open" up for transport, or by using preservatives or irradiation to slow decay, not to mention genetically modifying produce to make it longer lasting.

There are many reasons to shop from local farmer's markets and support our local food system. When we do so we help build food security for future generations, and food varieties and our families food that is delicious, fresh, and more nutritious.

Last month the COTE Committee had the opportunity to tour the Urban Seed's offices and learn about their company and process. We are very excited to have access to fresh produce that is locally grown without harmful chemicals or pesticides in our city. Las Vegas is a strategic location to demonstrate that if food can grow in our harsh climate, it can grow anywhere. Their facilities are scheduled to open this year.

**GREEN OUR PLANET**  
We have some upcoming events on the following dates:

**April 7th:** noon-2pm in Main Kahle ES, 7887 W. Cowan Rd, Las Vegas  
Measuring exercise, 4th grade class

**April 21st:** noon-2pm in Main Kahle ES, 7887 W. Cowan Rd, Las Vegas  
Measuring exercise, 4th grade class

### ENR Southwest's Top 20 Under 40

This year's honorees possess the technological savvy that defines the young talent working in the region. They also display the skills and work habits that are a hallmark of the construction industry.



**Esther Garcia**  
Architectural designer advocates for a sustainable future  
28, Architectural Designer  
Gensler of Nevada  
Las Vegas

Esther Garcia says her ultimate goal is to further "tenable, green solutions to ensure a sustainable standard for answering human needs." She earned a bachelor's degree in architecture and a master's degree in architecture with an emphasis in hospitality design from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She was a member of UNLV's solar decathlon team for 2013. Prior to joining Gensler, Garcia served as an architectural designer with KME Architects and as a research assistant with the Downtown Design Center, where she led multiple international design competitions and projects to revitalize Las Vegas' aging downtown core. An active member of the American Institute of Architects, Garcia is also LEED BD+C accredited. Though still early in her career, Garcia received two AIA Unbuilt Citation Awards in 2014 and was a finalist in the Sands Eco 360 Sustainable Hospitality Design in 2014.



**UNITED STATES SENATE**

**SENATORIAL RECOGNITION**

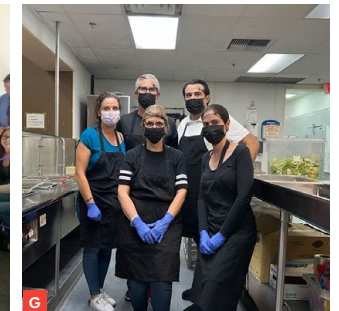
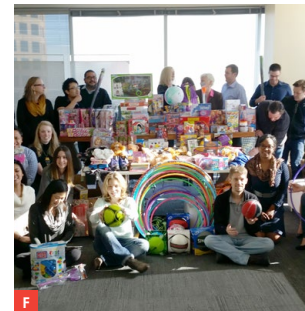
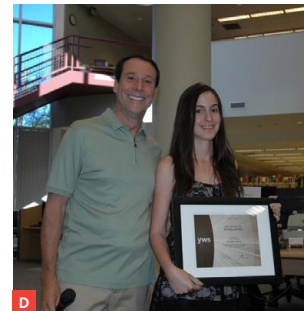
AWARDED TO

*Esther Garcia*

FOR SO GENEROUSLY SHARING YOUR TIME IN SUPPORT OF WORTHWHILE PROJECTS IN THE LAS VEGAS COMMUNITY; WITH APPRECIATION FOR THE DIFFERENCE THAT YOU MAKE WITH YOUR COMMITMENT, DEDICATION, AND SERVICE

DEAN HELLER  
UNITED STATES SENATOR

DECEMBER 2, 2011  
DATE



**THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS**

For Members For Leaders Knowledge Communities AIA Chapters Sign In Renew Membership Join AIA

Home Practicing Architecture Contract Documents Conferences & Events Issues & Advocacy Education Career Stages Find Help

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**The American Institute of Architects Selects the 2015 Recipients of the Jason Pettigrew Memorial ARE Scholarship**

Contact: Matt Tindler  
202.626-7462  
mtindler@aia.org  
http://twitter.com/AIA\_News

**For immediate release:**  
Washington, D.C., July 21, 2015 - The American Institute of Architects selected ten recipients to receive the 2015 Jason Pettigrew Memorial ARE Scholarship. These ten recipients displayed a passion for the pursuit of licensure, inspiring contributions to the profession and community, and outstanding achievement in the creation, development, and delivery of programs and initiatives for young architect members. All of the recipients were supported by strong letters of recommendation detailing their personal and professional contributions. Each recipient will receive compensation for the entire cost of the Architect Registration Examination (ARE) and a full set of study guides provided by Kaplan Architecture Education.

**2015 Jason Pettigrew Memorial ARE Scholarship recipients:**

**Beatrice Spillatoni, Assoc. AIA,** is a 2011 graduate from the University of California at Berkeley with a Master's Degree in Architecture. She regularly volunteers at the AIA Pittsburgh chapter and for the Young Architect Forum (YAF) of Pittsburgh. Spillatoni is the recipient of the Young Architect Studio Competition, 2012 edition. She has been working as an intern for the Pittsburgh-based architectural firm Barthelme Design Collaborative since 2012. She has been involved in projects that aim to rebuild communities and align the goals of many Pittsburgh neighborhoods. In addition to helping the design development, she has been focusing on the marketing of such projects and in facilitating the delivery of complex concepts.

**Elizabeth Grabowski, Assoc. AIA,** is a Challenge Detroit Fellow 2014-2015 with Mosher Dorian, Inc., a high-end boutique construction management firm that specializes in residential building. Challenge Detroit is a yearlong professional development and other revitalization fellowship that invites approximately 50 of tomorrow's leaders to live, work, play, give, and lead in and around Detroit. Throughout her year as a fellow, Grabowski has contributed to projects ranging from design-build installations to developing social media and marketing strategies with over seven local nonprofits. As a graduate of the University of Detroit Mercy (UDM) School of Architecture Master's Program, Grabowski's passion for public interest design and community development was cultivated by the UDM mission to serve others.

**Megan Paris, Assoc. AIA,** is a 2013 graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Architecture and Design with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. She is currently the Associate Representative for the AIA East Tennessee chapter, where she coordinates AIA seminars and a mentoring program with the local AIA chapter. She has worked with local AIA members and public school teachers to create AIA Think, a program that brings the design process to the classroom through video. Paris collaborated with local USOC members to organize a community design event called "Design Slam", a live competition centered on a neighborhood design issue. Paris is an intern architect at McCarty Hollingsworth in Knoxville, Tennessee.

**Esther Garcia, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP BD+C,** received her Master's in Architecture from the University of Nevada Las Vegas. With UNLV's 2013 Solar Decathlon team, Garcia received recognition for renewable residential designs and educated the public toward the virtues of energy-saving construction. Garcia is very active in her community, having been a team leader in the National Building Together Day where homes are volunteered for low-income homeowners while volunteering for other worthy causes such as Opportunity Village, Helping Kids Clinic, and Angel Faces Project. Garcia also mentors and judges in the High School Design Awards, a program sponsored by the AIA, Las Vegas chapter to discover and develop new talent from Clark County High Schools.

**Anthony Rojas, Assoc. AIA,** is currently the lead designer at Dal Pini Architects, LLC in Syracuse, New York. With over 8 years of professional experience, he is responsible for the implementation of design strategies and solutions for various project types which include Retail/Commercial, Healthcare, and Multi-Unit Residential. He currently serves as Board Member and Director of Education for AIA Central New York. As a leader in the Emerging Professionals Committee since 2013, he strives to engage and provide a multitude of opportunities, both professionally and socially,

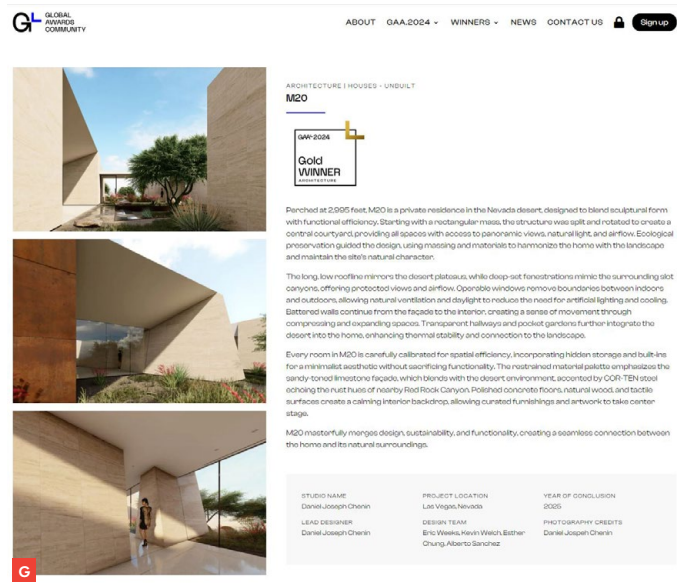
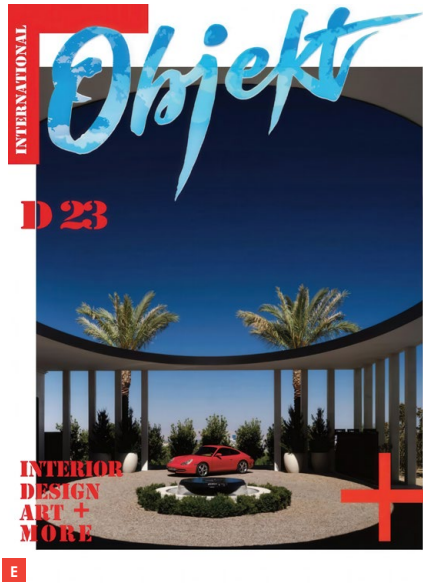
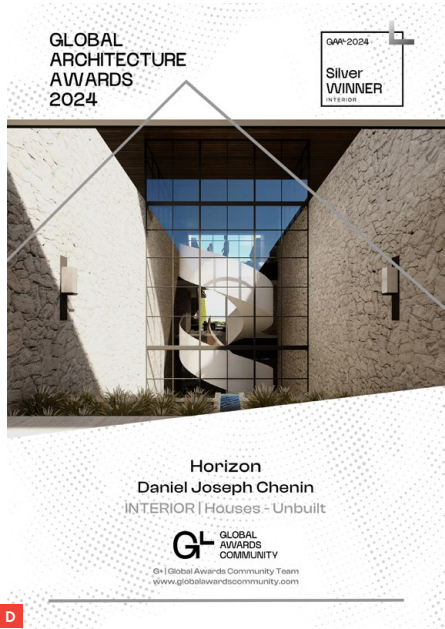
**A.** COTE Closet at the AIA Las Vegas FORUM Issues **B.** ENR Southwest 2016 Top 20 Under 40 **C.** COTE Committee at AIA Las Vegas Membership Meeting **D.** Received the AIA YWS Architecture Scholarship of Excellence & Achievement in Scholastic & Personal Life in 2011 **E.** Gensler Team leader in the National Rebuilding Together Day **F.** G-serve Toy drive for Shade Tree **G.** Dinner Service at Las Vegas Rescue Mission **H.** Strong Cities Strong Communities Challenge Competition **I.** AIA Las Vegas Blueprint For Better Housing Charrette **J.** Senatorial Recognition from US Senator Dean Heller for service to the Las Vegas Community **K.** Garden Classroom Partnership Charrette with 4th graders **L.** AIA National 2015 Jason Pettigrew Memorial Scholarship Press Release



4.0 MISCELLANEOUS EXHIBITS



Architizer



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 Outa 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.











## 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.

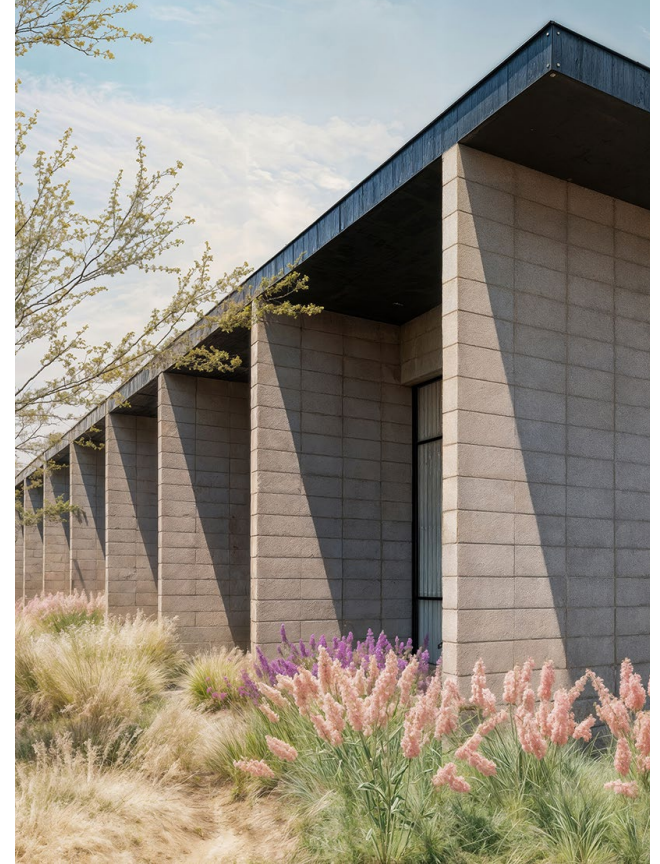
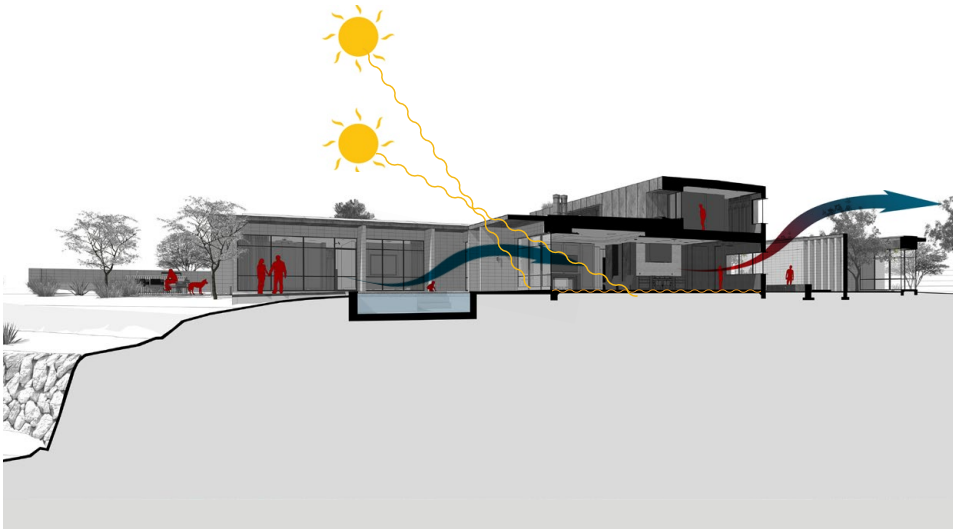
**Action.** The design response was rooted in material honesty and resilient form. Constructed of stacked concrete block and blackened steel, the architecture echoes the geological strata of the rugged rockside, visually and structurally anchoring the home into the earth. The massing is carved by voids 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 façade 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.

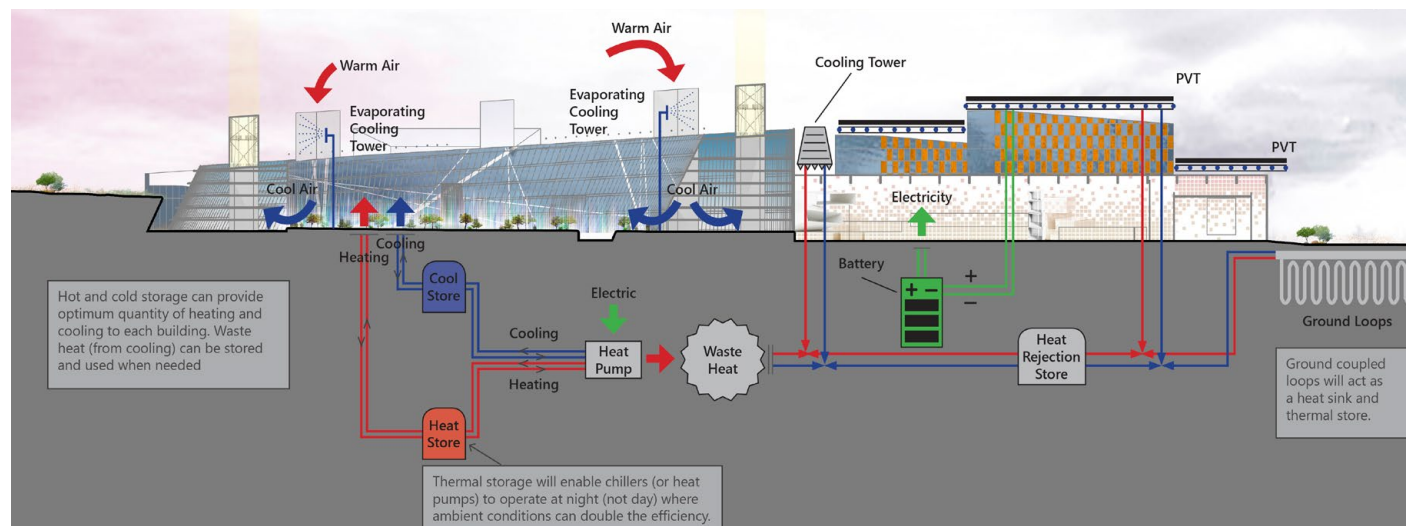
**Outcome.** The proposal positioned the Cashman Battery as the geographic heart of Las Vegas' emerging green economy. By creating a development model where energy systems, land use, and community

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 Charrette, 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](http://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

**Gensler**

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

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

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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

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