

5 February 2021

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees  
% Honors and Awards  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street NW  
Washington, DC 20008

**RE: Nomination for Honorary ASLA Membership: Rhéa Williams**

Dear Esteemed Colleagues:

It is my singular honor to present Ms. Rhéa Williams for your consideration for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Rhéa has long been an outgoing and enthusiastic advocate for Alabama's design communities. She has served for nearly two decades as the Executive Director of the Birmingham Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). In more recent years, she has added AIA's North Alabama Chapter and the Structural Engineering Association of Alabama to her association management portfolio.

Though I had met and spoken with her briefly a few years before, my relationship with Rhéa really began with the inception of the Twin States Conference, presented jointly each year by the Alabama and Mississippi Chapters of ASLA. In 2009 – its second year, the first in which it was hosted in Alabama – our chapter engaged Rhéa's services to manage the planning and execution of the conference. I had agreed to serve as the treasurer for the conference that year. After months of preparation for the event, Rhéa became suddenly ill on the first day of the conference – but because of her expertise, a few volunteers and I were able to carry off all of the on-site logistics without a single hitch. Attendees, exhibitors, and sponsors were virtually unaware that anything was amiss. Thankfully, she recovered and was with us for the second day of the event. This conference was an important point for Rhéa to expand her own understanding of the scope and types of work landscape architects do, and she instantly stepped up her efforts as one of our most vocal and important champions in Alabama's design community and in her other networks. Moreover, her expertise during the formative years of the Twin States Conference gave us the ability to create high-quality, well-attended, and financially viable events each year.

A few years later, Rhéa led Alabama's AIA chapters and other partners to form the Alabama Center for Architecture (ACFA). (Had our chapter been positioned to make more than a small financial contribution, ASLA Alabama would have been one of those partners—perhaps it would have been called the Alabama Center for Design.)

When their new headquarters opened in October 2013, Rhéa scored a major coup by landing AFCA as the first stop for the traveling exhibition, *FitNation*, created by AIA New York and the Center for Architecture Foundation, as its opening presentation. The exhibition contained several “permanent collection” pieces and came with a framework for printing photos and narratives describing designed local environments, to be included in each of the locations where the exhibition was installed. Though originally curated primarily by architects, the scope of the exhibit’s intent was unbelievably well-suited to showcasing the work of landscape architects. In fact, all of the local projects we inserted into the exhibition were works of landscape architecture, the ACFA promoted ASLA Alabama as a major partner in the exhibition.

Perhaps more important than these events, though, is her constant and ongoing effort to make sure landscape architects are included and engaged whenever design professionals are brought into public conversations. This has happened numerous times across our region as teams of designers were brought in to assist in recovery efforts following tornado disasters – particularly in places affected by natural disasters, including several blocks of the Pratt City section of southwestern Birmingham, and the historic downtown of one-time textile manufacturing town of Cordova, in nearby Walker County, both of which sustained heavy damage in the widespread tornadoes of April 27, 2011. Landscape architects were essential parts of the teams that helped the residents of these physically devastated communities imagine new life arising in the places they called home – and we were at the table specifically because Rhéa contacted several of us and connected us with the teams where our expertise was needed.

These are just a few of the ways in which Rhéa Williams has raised the prominence of landscape architecture in our region, among the general public as well as among professionals across the design and construction communities. All of us at ASLA Alabama are grateful for her continuous, tireless, and enthusiastic promotion of our profession.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Schrader". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen W. Schrader, Jr., PLA, ASLA  
Trustee, ASLA Alabama

Principal, Renta Urban Land Design, Birmingham, Alabama





**ASLA**  
ALABAMA

January 11, 2021

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees  
C/O Honors and Awards  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20008

RE: Nomination for Honorary ASLA Membership: Rhea Williams

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of the Alabama chapter of ASLA, I would like to wholeheartedly recommend Rhea Williams for your consideration of Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Rhea has long been a strong proponent of the design profession in Alabama. She has various roles with the Alabama Center for Architecture and it's dreamArchitecture program, AIA Birmingham, The Structural Engineers Association of Alabama, North Alabama AIA, and in the past has worked directly with the Alabama ASLA chapter.

Rhea's work for the Alabama Chapter of ASLA was in the planning and management of our annual Twin States Conference held with the Mississippi Chapter each year growing that conference and providing opportunities for continuing education, outreach and collaboration. She continues to promote Landscape Architecture across the state actively engaging Landscape Architects to be a part of other events such as the *FitNation* exhibit which showcase the work of Landscape Architects in the state as the exhibits in the event. She continues to engage the Alabama ASLA including us whenever design professionals are brought into public conversations around the state. During the recent North Alabama AIA awards, Rhea helped to ensure that projects which were wholly Landscape Architecture were included in the People's Choice portion of the event, and I'm happy to say that a Landscape Architecture project was the winner of this award. We would not have been included in the conversation had it not been for Rhea.

Thank you for taking the time to consider her and my comments in your decision-making process.

Respectfully,

Chad Bostick, PLA, ASLA  
2019-2020 President, Alabama Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

January 25, 2021

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees  
c/o Honors and Awards  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street NW  
Washington, DC 20008

RE: Rhea Williams Nomination for Honorary ASLA Membership

To whom it may concern,

I would like to extend an enthusiastic recommendation for Rhea Williams to be considered for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Rhea is a driving force in the design community in Alabama. In her roles as the Executive Director of the American Institute of Architects Chapters in Birmingham and North Alabama, as well as directing the state-wide Alabama Center for Architecture, Rhea has supported and facilitated design professionals in the State of Alabama for many years. She has worked tirelessly to promote the power of design of our landscape and built environment, not only to the public and to our elected officials, but as a member of the design community I can say, even to ourselves!

Perhaps what is most remarkable about Rhea is that she has crafted a network of positive momentum amongst design professionals of all stripes. Whether it be through arranging larger conferences, monthly programming for our professional organizations, or even simple coffee dates, Rhea fosters connections between design and the everyday life of our community. Her collaborative spirit and energetic nature bring together artists, urban planners, architects, designers, landscape architects, and other creatives to bridge the gap between disciplines, to join together, and to support better design and planning in our communities.

As an Architect and designer, I can confidently say that Birmingham is a better city, and Alabama is a better State, in which to work and live because of Rhea Williams.

I thank the committee for its consideration to elevate Rhea Williams to Honorary ASLA membership.

Sincerely,



Laura Bartlett, AIA

AIA Birmingham President-Elect, 2021



# AIA North Alabama

December 28, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my understanding that Rhea Williams has been nominated for an Honorary American Society of Landscape Architects membership. On behalf of the North Alabama Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, I would like to wholeheartedly recommend Rhea Williams for this honor.

I do not know anyone who holds more regard, or is more encouraging of the design profession than Rhea. From her various roles with the Alabama Center for Architecture and it's dreamArchitecture program, AIA Birmingham, the Structural Engineers Association of Alabama, and consulting with our own Chapter, she tirelessly promotes design and any professionals involved with it with a passion that is unparalleled. Her excitement about design is quite infectious!

In our own Chapter's Design Lectures over the past couple of years, Rhea has made sure that the local ASLA chapter was included as well. Our Chapter partners with the ACFA to host a local dreamArchitecture program that reached over 700 elementary school children in 8 schools in our area this year. More recently, she helped our Chapter hold its first public exhibition of our Design Awards and its first true public voting for a People's Choice Awards. This not only brought awareness to what our local design professionals are doing, it also helped support our local businesses, creating stronger ties in our own community.

I could not be more delighted to recommend Rhea for an honorary ASLA membership! Thank you for considering my comments in your decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Sami Rambo, AIA

2020 President, North Alabama Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

**Nominee Contact Information**

Rh a Williams

% Alabama Center for Architecture

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