

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER

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Chicago Architecture Center reconfigures Gala 2020 as a free virtual event for architecture and design lovers worldwide

Online event to include conversations between aspiring teen architects and industry leaders, a preview of Open House Chicago and more

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CHICAGO – The **Chicago Architecture Center** (CAC) looks forward to welcoming supporters and design lovers from across and beyond Chicago to **Gala 2020: Open Doors Open Minds**, an online event beginning at 6pm Central Time on **Thursday, July 23, 2020**. Access to Gala 2020: Open Doors Open Minds is **FREE** to anyone online anywhere, via both architecture.org/gala and the CAC's YouTube channel at youtube.com/chicagoarchitecture.

WTTW host and producer and CAC docent **Geoffrey Baer** emcees this hourlong virtual gala honoring **Edward J. Wehmer**, Founder and CEO of Wintrust Financial Corporation, for Wintrust's generous sponsorship of the CAC's free festival **Open House Chicago**; and **Nila R. Leiserowitz**, FASID, FIIDA, recently retired Regional Managing Principal at Gensler and a CAC Trustee, for her 40 years of extraordinary service to the design industry. Special guest speakers include former CAC **Teen Ambassador** and **Teen Fellow** **Destiny Brady**, now a student at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning; CAC President and CEO **Lynn J. Osmond**; and CAC Trustees **Andy Gloor**, CEO of **Sterling Bay**; **John W. Rutledge**, Founder and CEO of **Oxford Capital Group, LLC** and **Oxford Hotels & Resorts, LLC**; and **Ann Thompson**, AIA, Senior Vice President of Architecture and Design at **Related Midwest**.

Continuing the CAC's work to advance equity and representation in architecture, construction, engineering and design (ACED) careers, the centerpiece of Gala 2020: Open Doors Open Minds will be a roundtable discussion between leading architects including **Jeanne Gang**, **Juan Gabriel Moreno**, **Billie Tsien** and **Tod Williams**, and alumni of the CAC's Education initiatives for teens including its **Girls Build!**, **Teen Ambassadors** and **Teen Fellows** programs.

Gala 2020: Open Doors Open Minds attendees will be the first to hear about the CAC's revised plans for its free festival, **Open House Chicago** (OHC), returning for a tenth consecutive year October 17–25, 2020. The second-most widely attended event of its kind in the world,

OHC attracted 109,000 individuals in 2019, who made 370,000 total site visits to 352 sites in 39 Chicago neighborhoods, plus the near suburbs of Evanston and Oak Park. At least 20 neighborhoods, again plus Evanston and Oak Park, will be highlighted during OHC 2020 with an intentional focus on, and engagement with, neighborhoods prioritized by the [City of Chicago's INVEST South/West initiative](#). In addition to continued lead support from Presenting Sponsor Wintrust Financial Corporation, [OHC 2020 is made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities through its CARES Act grant program](#), the National Endowment for the Arts, the TAWANI Foundation and ComEd.

Visit architecture.org/gala to learn more about Gala 2020: Open Doors Open Minds and to register in advance, strongly encouraged although not required. Please note that [sponsorship commitments](#) are requested by 5pm Central Time on Monday, July 20, 2020 if recognition is to be provided.

Acknowledgments

The Chicago Architecture Center wishes to thank **Gala 2020 Co-Chairs** Andy Gloor, Chief Executive Officer of [Sterling Bay](#); Ursula Moncau, President of [Wintrust Financial Corporation](#); Theodore J. Novak, Partner at [DLA Piper](#); John W. Rutledge, Founder and CEO of [Oxford Capital Group, LLC](#) and [Oxford Hotels & Resorts, LLC](#); and Grant C. Uhlir, Regional Managing Principal at [Gensler](#). **Principal Sponsors** are [Allstate Insurance Company](#), [ArcelorMittal](#), [DLA Piper](#), [Gensler](#), [Michigan Avenue Real Estate Group](#), [Oxford Capital Group, LLC](#), [Oxford Hotels & Resorts, LLC](#), [Sterling Bay](#), and [Wintrust Financial Corporation](#), and the **Benefactor Sponsor** is [Related Midwest](#). **Partner Sponsors** are [Clayco, Inc.](#) and [Forward Space](#). **Gala 2020 Friends** are [Barnes & Thornburg LLP](#); Tom Brean; [Chuhak & Tecson, P.C.](#); [ComEd](#); [Eckenhoff Saunders](#); [Edelman](#); [ESD Global](#); [Focus](#); [Glenstar](#); [Golub and Company](#); [JDL Development](#); [Wanxiang America Real Estate Group](#); [Harlem Irving Companies, Inc.](#); [Lamar Johnson Collaborative](#); [Levenfeld Pearlstein, LLC](#); [Next Realty](#); [Loewenberg Charitable Foundation](#), James Loewenberg, Robin Loewenberg Tebbe and Mark Tebbe; [Optima, Inc.](#); James D. Parsons; [Pepper Construction](#); [Perkins and Will](#); [Patzik, Frank & Samotny, Ltd.](#); [Power Construction](#); [Quarles & Brady LLP](#); Megan and Steven Shebik; [Skidmore, Owings & Merrill](#); Jill S. Tanz; [TAWANI Property Management](#); [Terraco, Inc.](#); [Shiner Group](#); [Thornton Tomasetti](#); [Turner Construction](#); and [UL LLC](#). **Gala 2020 Supporters** are [Bucksbaum Properties, LLC](#); Sandra L. Helton and Norman Edelson; [Grand Basin Capital](#); [JGMA](#); Lynn J. Osmond, Hon. AIA; [Solomon Cordwell Buenz](#); [Syska Hennessy Group](#); [Venture One Real Estate](#); and [W.E. O'Neil Construction Co.](#)

About the Chicago Architecture Center

The Chicago Architecture Center (CAC) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1966, dedicated to inspiring people to discover why design matters. A national leader in architecture and design education, the CAC offers field-leading tours, programs, exhibitions and more that are part of a dynamic journey of lifelong learning.

Opened to the public in 2018, its riverfront location is in the heart of the city, where Michigan Avenue meets the Chicago River, featuring nearly 10,000 square feet of exhibition space filled with super-sized models—and views—of iconic skyscrapers built over the course of more than a century. Exhibitions focus on Chicago’s diverse neighborhoods, housing types, leading architects and future projects, and include the largest scale model of the city, with more than 4,250 miniature buildings, interactive touchscreens, and a cinematic backdrop animating key moments in its history. Highly knowledgeable, enthusiastic CAC docents guide visitors and residents through more than 75 walking tours with more than 7,000 annual departures, plus the Chicago Architecture Foundation Center River Cruise aboard Chicago’s First Lady.

Through partnerships with schools and youth-serving organizations, the CAC reaches approximately 30,000 K–12 students annually, while teacher workshops provide educators with tools and resources they need to advance STEM curricula in their classrooms. Committed to increasing access for populations historically under-represented in ACED (architecture, construction, engineering, and design) professions, the CAC offers many of its education programs—and all of its programs for teens—at no cost to participants. CAC programs for adults and members include talks with acclaimed authors and practicing architects, in-depth presentations on issues and trends in urbanism, and classes unlocking a wide range of subjects with connections to the built environment.

Proceeds from programs, tours and the CAC Design Store, as well as from grants, sponsorships and donations, support its educational mission. Visit architecture.org to learn more and follow @chiarchitecture and #chiarchitecture on social media.

