

Architectural Foundation of Oregon History

By Jody Proppe, Hon. AIA
AFO Executive Director, 1982-2002
Updated Spring 2005

The creation of the Portland Chapter/AIA Foundation was initiated in 1981 by John Matteson, AIA, then Portland chapter President. It was for the purpose of fund-raising for architectural programs such as a lecture series, guidebooks, and the Architectural Gallery.

The members of the first Board of Directors included William Fletcher, FAIA; Brooks Gunsul, FAIA; William Merritt, AIA; Gary Michael, FAIA; Richard E. Ritz, AIA; Jon Schleuning, AIA; and Roger Yost, FAIA.

The five firms, which initially funded the fledgling foundation, included: Skidmore Owings & Merrill, SRG Partnership; BOOR/A; Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership; and Yost Grube Hall. Each firm contributed \$5,000 to help fund an endowment. Other contributions were received from AIA, architectural firms and individuals to provide operating funds.

Presidents:	Jon R. Schleuning, FAIA	- 1982
	Brooks Gunsul, FAIA	- 1984
	Roger Yost, FAIA	- 1985
	Joan Swinney	- 1986
	Jon Schleuning, FAIA	- 1987
	Robert Belcher, AIA	- 1988
	Wayne Drinkward	- 1994
	George Crandall, FAIA	- 1995
	Gene Brockmeyer, AIA	- 1996
	Joachim Grube, FAIA	- 1998
	Alan Costic, AIA	- 2000
	Gary Reddick, AIA	- 2002
	Dennis Cusack, AIA	- 2004

In 1985 the name of the organization was changed to “The Architecture Foundation,” and in 1989 to “The Architectural Foundation of Oregon.” This represented growth of the Board and the inclusion of Board members throughout the state of Oregon who represented not only the architectural profession, but also other colleagues in related professions and in the construction industry.

AFO has funded a wide variety of grants each year including lecture series’, Architects-in-Schools programs and an annual *Architecture Week*. In addition, AFO has supported affordable housing efforts, children’s museum activities in Salem, Architects-in-Schools programs in the Portland metro area and Eugene, publications, exhibits, and planning

projects including the Regional Alternatives Planning Process (RAPP), a comprehensive urban growth study headed by George Crandall, FAIA.

A major effort was AFO's sponsorship of the film, "No Perfect Answers," about the life and architecture of Pietro Belluschi, renowned Portland architect and AIA Gold Medallist. Produced by broadcaster, Jeff Gianola, the film was in production 4-1/2 years and premiered in September 1996 at the Portland Center for the Performing. The film has been shown on Oregon Public Broadcasting several times and on other public stations throughout the country. Copies of the film have been given to Education Service Districts in Oregon and Washington, making it available to high school and middle school students and their teachers.

AFO grants have helped Women in Architecture's "MatriArchs" exhibit tour the country, and Dick Ritz's book, "Oregon Architects, A Biographical Dictionary of Architects, Deceased in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" receive publication after his death. Other contributions include gifts to Frank Lloyd Wright's Gordon House Conservancy at The Oregon Garden; Alvar Aalto's Mt. Angel Abbey Library, the Portland Classical Chinese Garden, and Arts Conspiracy, an arts education program in rural Yamhill County.

Beginning in 1993, as a way of celebrating the built environment and those who make significant contributions to it, AFO established its annual Honored Citizen Event.

Awardees include:

Leroy Setziol, Wood Sculptor, 1993
Barbara Fealy, Landscape Architect, 1994
Dr. Francis Newton, former Director of Portland Art Museum, 1995
Pietro Belluschi, FAIA, AIA Gold Medalist, 1996
Senator Mark O. Hatfield, Former Oregon Governor and U.S. Senator, 1997
Tom Hardy, Sculptor and Painter, 1998
Neil Goldschmidt, former Mayor of Portland, Governor of Oregon and U.S. Secretary of Transportation, 1999
1000 Friends of Oregon, 2000
Ed Carpenter, Artist, 2001
Dr. Peter O. Kohler, President, OHSU, 2002
Jean Vollum, Activist, 2003
Robert J. Frasca, FAIA, 2004

Since 1998, AFO has been the proud sponsor of the annual Senator Mark O. Hatfield Architectural Award – a scholarship to a final-year student in architecture who is a resident of Oregon. The scholarship is awarded both for academic and design accomplishment, and for commitment to community through volunteer efforts.

The Oregon Community Foundation asked AFO to join with it, beginning in 2001, in awarding the annual Van Evera Bailey Fellowship to a mid-career architect. Recipients, to date, have been:

- 2001 – John Cava to study and publish the work of Oregon architect John Yeon
- 2002 – Suzanne Zuniga to develop a databank of sustainable resources for residential architecture
- 2003 – Bonnie Bayard to research alternatives for creation of ecologically sound, aesthetically pleasing landscapes independent of domestic water supplies
- 2004 – Richard Browning to publish and disseminate a report on design of right of ways, particularly with regard to the coexistence of pedestrians, bicycles, autos and other modes of transportation, as studied in three specific modern Japanese cities

In 2002, AFO established an office in donated space at KPFF Consulting Engineers. A new strategic plan for the organization was completed, targeting several projects aimed at expanding the organization's impact on Oregon's built environment. That same year, with successful fundraising programs such as the Honored Citizen Event and the Dinner With An Architect series, the organization raised more than twice previous years' efforts, resulting in 2003 grants being increased from \$20,000 to \$40,000. An Endowment Partner Fund was established by AFO at the Oregon Community Foundation, thereby ensuring fiscal responsibility for past and future gifts to the organization's endowment.

In 2003, AFO assumed responsibility for administration of the Architects in Schools program, which it had funded from the beginning. Plans were laid for an architecture education program in high schools. Two Hatfield Scholarships were awarded. The Dinner With An Architect series and Honored Citizen dinner again reached larger audiences.

In 2004, a task force of AFO Board members studied the organization's long-term financial needs and made recommendations regarding opportunities to increase revenues for support of expanded programs. A pilot for Thought>Process, a program for high school students and teachers, was launched at Sabin Schellenberg Center in the North Clackamas School District. The Rosalind Reed Dwight Scholarship, which had been dormant for several years, was reinstated. Plans were laid for a membership structure and the organization's first comprehensive public awareness campaign, LOOK AROUND, to be launched in 2005.