

*nonprofit member in the spotlight*



Participants in Denver Architecture Foundation's Modernism Series gather around Atom Stevens, Harvey Park Community Organization's neighborhood historian. Stevens led participants on a walking tour through the Harvey Park neighborhood in May 2018, exploring the history and significance of Cliff May's "Magazine Cover Homes" constructed in the 1950s.

## Attention to a Built Environment Furtheres a Nonprofit Mission through Eyes on a Movement

Touring Denver with Alan Golin Gass, Fellow of The American Institute of Architects (FAIA), is both a journey through Denver's architectural history and an inspiring lesson on quality design. Gass, a renowned architect who began his career in 1958, serves on the board of Denver Architecture Foundation (DAF) and volunteers as one of the organization's venerable guides for the annual Doors Open Denver event.

In each of his tours, Gass weaves together stories of buildings, community members and their symbiotic relationship. His forte – imparting to his audience "why their built environment matters" – is central to DAF's mission: inspiring people to explore our dynamic city, experience the importance of design to our quality of life and envision an exceptional future for Denver. And it is why he believes DAF "matters even more now than ever before."

## DENVER ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION



Nonprofit Member since 2016

**LOCATION**  
Denver, CO

**REACH**  
Denver Metro Region:  
Denver, Jefferson, Douglas,  
Arapahoe, Adams,  
Broomfield and Boulder  
counties

**YEAR FOUNDED**  
1990

**MISSION**  
To inspire people to  
explore our dynamic  
city, experience the  
importance of design  
to our quality of life and  
envision an exceptional  
future for Denver.

**WEBSITE**  
[denverarchitecture.org](http://denverarchitecture.org)



**DENVER  
ARCHITECTURE  
FOUNDATION**





Young urban planners collaborate with volunteers at Denver Architecture Foundation's Box City event in May 2018. Box City is a free event for 250 elementary-age children to learn and experience the process of urban development, community planning and architectural design. The next Box City event takes place in April 2019. For more information and to register, visit [denverarchitecture.org](http://denverarchitecture.org).

“The common thread from Denver Architecture Foundation’s (DAF) founding in 1990 to today’s DAF? Quality design and why it matters. This theme is alive in each DAF program.

Gass has served on the board and volunteered for DAF since the early 2000s. At that time, a number of development projects were reshaping the downtown area; Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver Justice Center, Pepsi Center and Denver Art Museum, to name a few. Gass recalls attending public forums organized by DAF featuring the shortlisted architects for Museum of Contemporary Art. The landmark Temple Events Center was packed with community members, indicating what Gass defined as a new movement in Denver – people were paying attention to their built environment and they wanted to be a part of the design conversation. He knew his expertise, historical perspective and passion would be an asset to DAF.

Fifteen years later, development projects blanket the city in an era of tremendous change and growth, further fueling the relevance of DAF and its mission. That relevance is what caused DAF – a group of what Gass refers to as “architects wanting to do good” – to take on its first full-time executive director in 2015.

In four years, DAF has more than doubled its operating budget, grown to a staff of 2.5 FTE, reinvigorated former programs, expanded into new programs, rebranded, launched a new website and has big plans on the horizon. But this rapid change was not devoid of growing pains. Executive director Pauline Herrera Serianni credits DAF’s distinct mission, complementary but not duplicative of partners, as well as the solid foundation created by board leaders like Gass. The common thread from DAF’s founding in 1990 to today’s DAF? Quality design and why it matters. This theme is alive in each DAF program.

With Serianni at the helm, DAF has given new life to signature programs and resurrected past programs. These include ...

- **Doors Open Denver (DOD)**, a 15-year DAF mainstay, engaging thousands of community members and visitors in tours of historic, modern and iconic architectural sites and coordinating arts and culture activities.
- The **Cleworth Architectural Legacy (CAL)** Project has helped K–12 educators introduce hands-on design education to students for nearly two decades.





Kevin Mohatt, *Glass Ceiling*, Y/OUR Denver: Doors Open Denver 2018 Photo Competition Best In Show

*Glass Ceiling* is one of 30 photographs selected for the Y/OUR Denver online exhibition, a collaboration between Denver Architecture Foundation and Colorado Photographic Arts Center. Y/OUR Denver asked local photographers of all skill levels to find and photograph their favorite places in Denver, resulting in 205 submissions through the Doors Open Denver 2018 Photo Competition.

- The annual **Box City** event, resurrected from earlier years of DOD, hosts elementary-age children at a one-of-a-kind event to learn and experience the process of urban development, community planning and architectural design using a kid-scale, indoor city grid.
- Monthly **Hard Hat Tours** allow up-close access to under-construction projects and architects/designers behind the construction.
- Seasonal **guided walking tours** and **free online audio tours** help connect participants with neighborhoods and their changing landscapes.
- The **Catalytic Denver Lecture Series** harkens back to public forums held in the early 2000s, igniting meaningful dialogue on design topics.

Together, Denver Architectural Foundation's programs are rooted in the profound connections between architecture, education and community, and illuminating the impact design brings in to our everyday lives.

## Why Membership is Essential

“As a small but rapidly growing nonprofit, Colorado Nonprofit Association’s informational resources and networking are critical in strengthening Denver Architecture Foundation’s organizational infrastructure.