

FINAL

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MINORITY ARCHITECTS ANNOUNCES
2020 NOMA FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP INAUGURAL COHORT**

More Than 30 Architecture Graduates and Students Were Awarded a Virtual Research Fellowship to Support Profession's Diversity Efforts

WASHINGTON, D.C., JULY 16, 2020 -- The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) announced the placement of 30 architecture students as the inaugural cohort of the NOMA Foundation Fellowship (NFF) this week. The NFF is a two-month virtual research fellowship hosted over the Summer at leading architecture firms across the country. Fellows will engage in design research and benefit from firm mentorship. Amidst COVID-19 and record unemployment, NFF provides professional experience to underrepresented students with the goal of keeping them engaged in the profession and providing a pipeline to eventual employment. In all recessions, [including the current one](#), minorities are often the most adversely impacted by job loss.

“During this time of economic uncertainty, we have an imperative to support the next generation of minority architects looking to find their way in the profession and the NOMA Foundation Fellowship program, funded by the American Institute of Architects Large Firm Roundtable (AIA LFRT), is helping us to achieve that,” said NOMA President and HOK Principal, Kimberly Dowdell, NOMA, AIA, LEED AP. “Mentorship, experience, and exposure are all key to the success of any architect. NFF formalizes that support structure for minorities and connects NOMAS members to firms expressing an interest in supporting the next generation of architects, recognizing the growing importance of diversity to the field.”

NOMA originally launched the NFF as a three-month summer design fellowship; however, COVID-19 forced the redesign of the program to ensure that fellows and firms are availed of meaningful experiences while protecting their health and wellness.

“The new NOMA Foundation Fellowship program is the first initiative to launch since we announced the AIA Large Firm Round Table 2030 Diversity Challenge, which calls for us to increase the number of licensed Black architects from 2,300 to 5,000 by 2030, expanding representation from 2 percent to roughly 4 percent Black licensed architects in the U.S.,” said Carole Wedge, FAIA LEED AP, President of Shepley Bulfinch and AIA LFRT Chair. “It’s more important now, than ever, that we find meaningful mentorship, growth and job opportunities for students and recent graduates so that we may continue to diversify the field of architecture and reflect the race and gender of the communities that we serve. We are inspired to learn about the experiences of the fellows and the professionals who will mentor them will have. We have much to learn from our younger generations for they are the future of our profession and built environment.”

The fellowship application process was open to any National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS) members in good standing. The virtual program will run for

eight weeks from July 6 - August 28, 2020. The fellowship funding is being paid for in large-part by the AIA-LFRT donations to NOMA. Fellows' work is capped at 100 hours for a \$2,000 stipend, however, host firms are offering additional funding to supplement the fellows' work and hours.

The inaugural fellowship cohort includes the following 2020 architecture students and graduates placed at design firms across the U.S.:

- Gabriel Andrade, University of Virginia, at Ennead Architects
- Storm Campo, Woodbury University, at Cuningham Group
- Carl'Drail Cannon, Kent State University, at ZGF
- In-San Chiang, Illinois Institute of Technology, at Gresham Smith
- Ngoc Linh Danh, Morgan State University, at Gould Evans
- Takumi Davis, Carnegie Mellon University, at Desmond Architects. Davis will also participate in the ZGF Institute
- Jameica Demercado, California Baptist University, at Hord Coplan Macht
- Aaron deRoux, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, at HED
- Monique Dorroh, Penn State University, at FXCollaborative
- Keristen Edwards, Tulane University, at Ennead Architects
- Desiree Green, Ball State University, at Gensler
- Nancy Guerrero, Prairie View A&M, at CannonDesign
- Damion Hardy, Mississippi State University, at Wight & Co.
- Diana Hernandez, Serrano California Baptist University, at HED
- Walter Hunt, Kent State University, at CannonDesign
- Sami Jaber, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, at NBBJ
- Roberto Medina, Ball State University, at Colloqate
- Christina Meyer, North Dakota State University, at LS3P
- Nimah Mohiuddin, Illinois Institute of Technology, at Mass Design Group
- Barbara Nasila, University of California, Berkeley, at Cuningham Group
- Kenny Nguyen, University of Houston, at Moody Nolan. He will also participate in the remote Shepley Bulfinch Summer Experience Program.
- Olaoluwapo Odukoya, Illinois Institute of Technology, at CallisonRTKL
- Himesh Patel, New York Institute of Technology, at Ayers Saint Gross
- Malachi Pursley, Louisiana State University, at Ennead Architects
- Rosario Rojas, California Baptist University, at Rothschild Doyno Collaborative
- Sydnee Sampson, Tuskegee University, at EYP. She will also participate in the remote ZGF Institute.
- Tyler Sauter, Illinois Institute of Technology, at CannonDesign
- DeJanae Wright, Morgan State University, at KTG Y Architecture + Planning

In addition to the fellows and firms matched above through the NFF, KTG Y Architecture + Planning extended internships to two additional finalists, Zai Cook of Virginia Tech and Ferdinem Bartolon of University of Detroit Mercy. Aaron deRoux, a 2020 M.Arch graduate of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, placed at HED, was also named the 2020 Kenneth

E. Casey Fellow. Kenneth E Casey, AIA, NOMA passed August 3, 2019. NOMA honored Casey with the creation of a new fellowship named in memory of his legacy.

Most NOMAS students who accepted the fellowships are seeking full time employment, post-graduation, from their architecture programs.

“The uncertainty of COVID-19 has caused so much stress in the lives of degree-seeking students. I'm extremely grateful for the NOMA Foundation Fellowship paired with the support of AIA firm members and others. It is an opportunity and privilege that truly keeps me engaged in the profession,” said Monique Dorroh, a third-year M.Arch student placed at FXCollaborative, and part of the NOMAS Penn State chapter. “I've spoken to firms who offer professional development to students by providing advice and hosting summer workshops. This is an amazing first step! However, I pray that students are able to find additional ways to become engaged in the profession. As young designers we can change the future, designing more each day with safety, sustainability, and justice in mind. We only need the opportunity to show what we are made of. This is mine.”

About the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA):

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) was formed nearly 50 years ago to represent the needs of African American architects. Founded in 1971 at the AIA conference in Detroit, the purpose of NOMA was to bolster and provide support for the handful of Black licensed architects around the country. Today, NOMA is a haven for architects of all origins who seek inclusion in the design industry. We continue to advocate for the licensure of African American architects (who account for only two percent of all licensed architects today), as well as those from other from underrepresented backgrounds. NOMA is extremely hopeful about the profession's future due to the strong presence of student leaders from over 80 schools across the U.S. and Canada. As we continue to support our NOMA students (NOMAS), we anticipate they will be major contributors to our field, and we are proud of the work they are doing right now to prepare for the future.

NOMA has 30 professional chapters across the U.S. and 75 student chapters, National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS) — mentored by regional NOMA chapters. NOMA and NOMAS membership is predominantly African-American, with other minority members including Native American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, East Indian, and Asian, as well as an increasing segment of non-minority members who support NOMA's mission. NOMA supports it's student members by providing mentorship, scholarships, and job opportunities to ensure their successful transition into the profession.