1. OUR AIA must demonstrate the **power and value of membership.** The proposed Governance will allow for a stronger Board of Directors. As more focused decision-makers the Board will be positioned to move the Institute forward with the help of a Strategic Council acting as advisors. After much hard work during most of 2013 by the Board, staff and expert consultants, I believe that the time is right for such a positive change. “REPOSITIONING” will allow the smaller Board and the Council to be more interactive with the membership. The single most important change and problem to solve is to improve our ability to communicate to the public at large. We must be convincing about what an AIA architect can bring to their project. We must emphasize the value an AIA architect brings to every community. Our story must be told! Therefore, a significant Public Relations Campaign must be launched as a main concern of OUR new leadership team. There is no doubt that a dynamic public relations effort will be costly and this should be a priority expenditure utilizing existing surplus. The end results will benefit the entire membership: large firms, small firms, professors, students and emerging professionals. The success of such a program will be the catalyst for more new members to join US!

2. OUR on-going support for **advocacy,** representing the interests of the entire membership, provides us with an effective voice at federal, state and local levels of government. In fact, AIA senior leadership annually meets with other policy-making organizations, allowing early involvement in the political process. This provides OUR members with an effective voice on a host of issues that affect our practices as well as the built environment. There is no doubt that more of our members need to get involved in this effort. The hard work of not only getting behind legislation, but writing legislation provides us with an opportunity to make a difference. In 2008 I had the opportunity to make a presentation before a Congressional Committee, which led to expanded influence in my home congressional district and with local, county and state agencies. While there are several issues of concern, our warming planet demands special attention and our increased involvement in sustainability. Making the effort to advocate for the extension of **179D** can be used as a positive way to help our clients. This legislation, when passed, will be a vehicle to provide tax incentives that offset the costs for energy efficiencies in the buildings we are designing. Who better to be the **voice of sustainability** than the AIA and this ties back, as mentioned above, to telling OUR story to the public. OUR members must be 100% on board in supporting its passage regardless of personal political party loyalty. OUR members must be further educated on how to use sustainability to leverage and serve them in their practices. Sustainability is not only good for our planet, but can be a marketing tool to help expand our practices.
3. The Institute must increase educational opportunities for member firms to include applications which expand the scope of the architect’s role not only in project creation, but also in project delivery. Client owners or their representatives are already familiar with “on time and within budget” delivery. However, all four project delivery methods in various combinations can become a model that will best satisfy the client’s vision. Each method has its positives and negatives and all of the parties involved continue to seek out the ideal method which satisfies a host of variables, hoping to achieve the “perfect” project. Above all, I most certainly believe in positive collaboration with others to complete a project. We have a responsibility to elevate our profession by mentoring our emerging professionals as well as receiving their mentorship. Just as I have benefitted from being mentored, I in turn have continued the mentoring process and encourage my mentees to do the same. Being a mentor and being mentored should never stop. The goal of these new project delivery methods must be to add value to the projects we design, but the role of all of us as architects should never be diminished by the new technologies.

4. As mentioned in my speech at Grassroots, the Institute’s staff and CACE are and remain extremely important assets. These professionals have the extensive knowledge and the ability to guide dedicated AIA volunteers to expand OUR original mission to “promote the scientific and practical perfection elevating the standing of the profession.” Our nearly 300 components should take advantage of these two groups of professionals that will help AIA volunteers make a significant difference for their members. As a volunteer leader who has attended Grassroots Leadership Conference for over twenty years, I believe that this single Institute program has proven to be the best overall event for leadership development and serves as template for the advocacy work that local leaders bring home with them. The Grassroots experience introduces “first timers” to the Institute and re-energizes repeaters annually. It is time to take Grassroots on the road to the Regions with the goal of extending the leadership experience to many more of our members.

5. The Institute must work with our schools of architecture to introduce the importance of licensure as early as possible. In 2013 I coordinated a visit to New Jersey Institute of Technology School of Architecture & Design for Robert Ivy, FAIA, Mickey Jacob, FAIA Michael Armstrong, CEO of NCARB and Michael Soriano, AIA, at the time President of the New Jersey State Board of Architects. Each explained the importance of taking any one of numerous paths the profession has to offer, but to do so as a licensed architect. The Institute must encourage firm principals to support Emerging Professionals in the processes towards licensure with the financial support of ARE study materials, paid leave for taking the exams and a substantial raise in salary at successful completion. This next generation should be welcomed into the AIA for they are the future of the organization and proud to be called “I AM AIA.”