

## A Matter of Perspective

By Lauren Berger, ASID IDLCPA Exec. Board Member

I was sitting at my desk one morning, sifting through the latest round of anti-interior design licensing articles and emails, when I came across an extraordinary thing. As an IDLCPA<sup>1</sup> board member, one of my responsibilities is monitoring the opposition groups. It's a necessary evil, as pro-licensing interior designers fight a two-front war – architects on one side and kitchen and bath designers and decorator-types on the other. As General Sun Tzu advised, "Know thyself; know thy enemy"<sup>2</sup> and know them we do, but reading the constant barrage of misinformation and spun facts can sometimes be discouraging.

That morning, a weblink to Architecture Week's Design Community blog<sup>3</sup> arrived in my inbox and what I read changed my perspective completely! A practicing architect posted a manifesto *against licensure for architects!!!* Not only that but he used many of same arguments as our opposition groups. "The current educational system stifles innovation and competition....the current system unnecessarily raises the cost of architectural services...." Sound familiar? These are arguments used by architects and interior designers not attacking each other, but trying to undercut their own professions!

If the seemingly immutable profession of architecture can be in the same position – attacked by anti-licensing radicals – how much more vulnerable is the comparatively young profession of interior design? The practice of architecture is centuries old but its first licensure law was passed in Illinois in 1897<sup>4</sup>. Interior design as a profession was quite uncommon until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, yet the first licensure act in the US was passed by Puerto Rico in 1973. 31 other states have now adopted interior design licensure statutes. Why? Practitioners of interior design have evolved from self-taught decorators like Dorothy Draper<sup>5</sup> to the newest graduates of 21<sup>st</sup> century interior design college and university programs. Many of these graduates have been trained to select furniture and finishes *and* to design according to the International Building Code, covering areas such as fire ratings for interior walls and doors, flame spread, means of egress, coefficient of friction, and accessibility.

It would be ludicrous to state that that the codes do not regulate the design of interior spaces and to say that the scope of interior design does not include these areas is blatantly false. While it would be possible to limit an interior designer's scope of practice to spaces not regulated by code, say selection of minor finishes and furniture for a single-family dwelling, it would also limit an interior designer's ability to be competitive and to practice to the full extent of their training. Who would willingly relegate themselves to pick paint colors and throw pillows for the rest of their career if they could do so much more?

We see anti-licensing architects as the fringe group they are; it is time for us to recognize interior designers against licensing as the same....short-sighted enough to minimize their own profession because they are unwilling to take an exam or be grandfathered. Look at it from the student's perspective - what student will pay thousands and thousands of dollars for an education that can only be partly used? Look at it from the young professional's perspective, who has already paid that money only to discover that their practice is restricted and their career is threatened. Our profession is young and growing; if we nurture it, it will thrive. We don't want to be architects and we don't want to only pick paint colors and throw pillows. We already are who we want to be and it falls somewhere in between Dorothy Draper and Frank Gehry. We want legal recognition, protection and accountability and we're not going anywhere. It's the new face of interior design.

1. Interior Design Legislative Coalition of PA. [www.idlcpa.org](http://www.idlcpa.org)
2. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
3. <http://www.designcommunity.com/forums/post-3306954.html>
4. [http://www.aiaa.org/downloads/AIA\\_IllinoisArchitectureLicensing.pdf](http://www.aiaa.org/downloads/AIA_IllinoisArchitectureLicensing.pdf)
5. *Current Biography, 1941*. Id., pg. 238.
6. <http://www.asid.org/NR/rdonlyres/982056F9-CBD4-4A42-9921-AE6F3B4E84D8/0/IDlegislation101.pdf>



## EXECUTIVE 2011 BOARD

**President:** Noelle Weaver, IIDA  
**Vice President:** Jennifer Winters, IIDA  
**Treasurer:** Katie Nowak  
**Secretary:** Sheri Spoharski, ASID  
**M.A.L. East:** Nancy Davis  
**M.A.L. West:** Lauren Berger, ASID  
**M.A.L. Central:** Ada Tremonte, IDEC

## IDLCPA 2011 BOARD

**Past President:** Carl Ballinger, IIDA, ASID  
**ASID W.Rep:** Joann Fullen, ASID  
**ASID W.Rep:** Natalie Buches, Allied ASID, LEED AP  
**ASID W.Rep:** Fran Colby, ASID  
**ASID E.Rep:** Angie Pfeifer, Allied ASID  
**ASID E.Rep:** OPEN  
**IIDA Rep:** Sarah Henly, IIDA  
**Unaffiliated Rep:** Nancy Davis, LEED  
**Unaffiliated Rep:** Richard King  
**Educator W:** Kathy Weidenboemer, ASID, IDEC  
**Educator E:** OPEN  
**Student Member W:** Tamara Perry  
**Student Member E:** Kimberly Becker  
**Industry Member C:** Jennifer Lindemuth

## IDLCPA Makes it to Facebook! *Become a fan today!*



## POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

If you would like to make a donation to the PAC fund, please send a personal check made out to "Interior Designers' PAC" and mail to

IDLCPA  
 PO Box 44144  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15205



INTERIOR DESIGN LEGISLATIVE  
 COALITION OF PENNSYLVANIA  
 P.O. Box 44144 Pittsburgh, PA 15205  
[www.idlcpa.org](http://www.idlcpa.org)

**We NEED your support.**  
**Please become a member TODAY**  
**and consider contributing to the**  
**Interior Designer's PAC!**

# IDLCPA NEWSFLASH

## NEWSFLASH continued

### 2011 Membership Renewal

Please commit to renewing your annual membership and become more active in the fight for licensing. We can't stress enough how important memberships (strength in numbers) are to our cause! If you haven't renewed your 2011 Membership, please do so NOW!

If you are not a member, please become one.

The recent failed attempt to deregulate commercial interior design in Florida helps our cause, let's make Pennsylvania the next licensed state!

We need now more than ever to reach out to our Legislators so they will listen to us and take us seriously. The board can talk to legislators, but it means so much more when it comes from someone who lives in their district.

Renew now, please!

Joann Fullen, ASID  
Membership Renewal Committee

### A Message to Members from the ASID Staff

Over the past several months, ASID and its members have been leading the effort against the attempted deregulation of commercial interior design in Florida. It is with great pleasure that we announce to you today that House Bill 5005, the "Deregulation of Professions and Occupations" bill, was defeated in the Senate on Friday, May 6 by a resounding 32-6 vote.

Friday night's victory clearly benefits the thousands of registered interior designers across Florida. Their right to maintain hard-earned voluntary registration, that provides the opportunity to work in commercial settings, benefits all designers across the country. Our success in Florida would not have been possible without the commitment from ASID's members. To support our efforts in Florida, ASID's team worked tirelessly to distill misinformation about our profession and to ensure legislators understood the value of commercial interior design registration.

While the defeat of H.B. 5005 stands as a clear victory for all interior designers, our fight in Florida and across the country is not done yet. Our profession will continue to be confronted by similar opposition, so we must remain vigilant against misinformation campaigns such as the ones we faced in Florida and stand behind one unified message. The future of professional interior design depends on it.

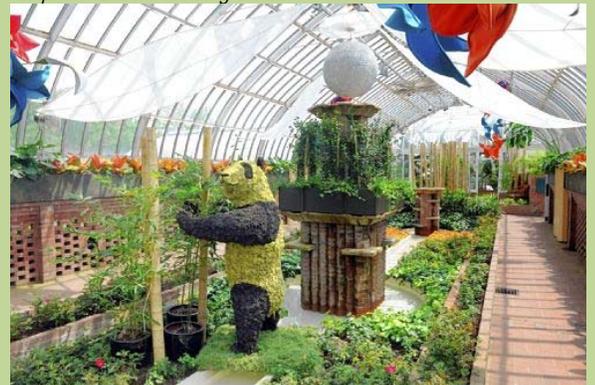
Thank you for your continued support of ASID and the interior design profession.

Sincerely,  
Don Davis, ASID Director of Government and Public Affairs  
Caitlin Lewis, Manager of Government and Public Affairs  
Tom Kaczmarek, Manager of Government and Public Affairs



*Noelle Weaver's Native American Inspired "Earth's Healing Wheel"*

The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens recently opened a new summer show called "Living Harmoniously with Nature." IDCLPA's president Noelle Weaver and ASID West Rep. Fran Colby represented at this fabulous display of design and nature!



*This is the Sunken Garden, designed by Fran Colby of Colby Design and Anne Ditmanson to show the life cycle of bamboo.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**NeoCon World's Trade Fair 2011**  
June 13-15, Merchandise Mart, Chicago IL

**IIDA Interior Design Award Reception, Philadelphia**  
June 23 6-8pm, Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

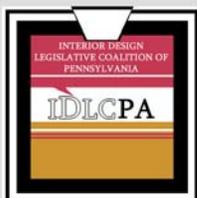
**ASID Trade Show**  
3-8 September 8, Heinz History Center, PA

**NCIDQ Fall Exam 2011**  
September 30- Oct 1, Location Varies

**Interior Design Day at the Capitol**  
October 17, Harrisburg PA

Please email event information to [nbuches@mbakercorp.com](mailto:nbuches@mbakercorp.com)

JUNE 2011 , p. 2



INTERIOR DESIGN LEGISLATIVE  
COALITION OF PENNSYLVANIA  
P.O. Box 44144 Pittsburgh, PA 15205  
[www.idlcpa.org](http://www.idlcpa.org)