Ron Blitch receives AIA Louisiana Medal of Honor

Ronald "Ron" B. Blitch, FAIA and president of Blitch Knevel Architects LLC, has been awarded the Medal of Honor by the American Institute of Architects Louisiana Chapter. Blitch is presently serving on the Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners and was a recent president of NCARB.

The highest honor awarded by AIA LA, it is given to an architect who has significantly advanced the profession of architecture and whose leadership inspires fellow practitioners. It was given at the Awards Luncheon of the AIA Louisiana Design Conference in Baton Rouge on September 11, 2015.

Blitch is a Fellow of the AIA, past national president of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, recipient of the NCARB President’s Medal, past president of AIA Louisiana, Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Architects, and recipient of an honorary medal from the Federación de Colegios de Arquitectos de la República.

Ron’s father, James Buchanan Blitch, Sr., received the Medal of Honor in 2007, and this marks the first time a father and son have been so honored.

Shown are Ron Blitch (LA) and Blake Dunn (AR), both past presidents of NCARB, taken at an NCARB meeting. Both have been recently awarded the Medal of Honor by their respective state AIA organizations.
A Message from the Executive Director: Teeny Simmons

Hoping everyone enjoyed a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving. Looking forward to the Christmas holidays, we wish His best to you and yours.

What a time of change it is! And speaking of time, please remember to renew your individual architect license on line by December 31 to avoid a delinquent fee. If you plan on renewing on line, please note that we are in the middle of changing out computers and server, so you may want to renew early in case of any issues.

The Board has been busy preparing two legislative bills relating to new firm rule fees and a possible education fund. We are also about to enter a contract to have all our files and records imaged, which is a big and expensive task, but is necessary.

Your board members continue to be very active in the southern conference and on national committees. And we, at the office, hope you have found our staff to be very helpful and responsive to your needs and questions.

Thank you for your help and friendship this year, and look forward to another year of service to you and the public.
Congratulations to our new licensees by examination

The Board is pleased to announce that the following individuals have been licensed from June 1, 2015 through November 30, 2015

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<tr>
<th>FIRST NAME</th>
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<td>David Paul</td>
<td>Allain</td>
<td>New Iberia, LA</td>
<td>Sabeen Fatima</td>
<td>Hasan</td>
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<td>Brian M.</td>
<td>Asa</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
<td>Caleb Deas</td>
<td>Hicks</td>
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<td>Steven</td>
<td>Bellanger, Jr.</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
<td>Cory S.</td>
<td>Hoppmann</td>
<td>Shreveport, LA</td>
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<td>Marc</td>
<td>Berard, Jr.</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Abe M.</td>
<td>Kinney</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
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<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
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<td>Jin Hoon</td>
<td>Lee</td>
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<td>Justin P.</td>
<td>Cortez</td>
<td>Thibodaux, LA</td>
<td>Vanessa Angené</td>
<td>Levine</td>
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<td>Stacey Norris</td>
<td>Danner</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>S. Patton</td>
<td>MacMorran</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
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<td>Gary C.</td>
<td>Dauphin</td>
<td>Mandeville, LA</td>
<td>Jana M.</td>
<td>Masset</td>
<td>Bismarck, ND</td>
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<td>Alexander M.</td>
<td>Deshotels</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
<td>Joshua P</td>
<td>Matthews</td>
<td>Metairie, LA</td>
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<td>Ernesto A.</td>
<td>Egoavil</td>
<td>Lafayette, LA</td>
<td>Galen Frank</td>
<td>Meyers, III</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
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<td>Fritz</td>
<td>Embaugh</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
<td>Chandler Michelle</td>
<td>Morvant</td>
<td>New Iberia, LA</td>
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<td>Sean U.</td>
<td>Fisher</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>LaQuinton Antwain</td>
<td>Nimox</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA</td>
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<td>Kevin W.</td>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Stephanie G.</td>
<td>Ory</td>
<td>Spring, TX</td>
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<td>Graham W.</td>
<td>Goodyear</td>
<td>Youngsville, LA</td>
<td>Joel Franklin</td>
<td>Ross</td>
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<td>Marianne</td>
<td>Graffam</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Clinton David</td>
<td>Whittington</td>
<td>West Monroe, LA</td>
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<td>Michael James</td>
<td>Guiliory</td>
<td>Ethel, LA</td>
<td>Victoria G.</td>
<td>Yee</td>
<td>Slidell, LA</td>
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AC Hotel Boubon
John T. Campo & Associates

LOUISIANA ARCHITECT WINTER 2015 | PAGE 3
As 2015 draws to a close, so does my term as LSBAE President end, along with my current term as an NCARB Board Member. My association with the Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners extends back to 1983, when then Board President Bill Brockway, FAIA, recruited me to be the IDP State Coordinator for Louisiana.

Considerable evolution of the program has resulted in changes that produced the program we have today. Serving the Board as IDP Coordinator provided an opportunity to participate in activities related to our profession on a national level. One of the most rewarding (and stressful) activities was grading the old “paper and pencil” Architectural Registration Examinations, which I did with then board members Wallace Elberson and Dale Branch, along with other Board members and educators form across the country.

It also provides an opportunity to serve on the IDP National Coordinating Committee.

The Louisiana State Board adopted the IDP following NCARB guidelines early on and established the first funded coordinator position in the country in 1983. Our Board now has its third state coordinator for developing architects. Individual Board members continue to be very active in national and NCARB Southern Conference affairs, with Board members serving as committee chairs and serving on committees on the state, regional and national level.

2015 BOARD FOCUS

2015 has seen the board focusing on several critical issues concerning licensing and practice. LSBAE has intervened in a lawsuit as a co-defendant with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal concerning the validity of an Agricultural Engineer’s seal on building plans that were originally rejected for review by the Fire Marshal. The suit is, as of this writing, still pending. A side issue of this matter is with the Engineering Licensing Board and consideration of the practice of architecture by licensed engineers other than Licensed Civil Engineers.

Our Compliance Review Committee met several times this year to determine a replacement for the Board Investigator position to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Robert Edelman. Requirements and qualifications were discussed and established. Teeny and staff provided the appropriate solicitation, and applications were accepted and reviewed during the summer. A short list was developed for individual interviews, which were conducted in October. It is anticipated that a new Investigator will be nominated by CRC and approved by the Board at the December Board meeting.

In conclusion of my term as Board President, my deepest appreciation goes to Teeny and her staff. All three ladies in the office have been a pleasure to work with, and it’s their hard work that keeps the Board office operating smoothly and efficiently. A working relationship with Teeny has existed for more than 30 years. Mary and Holly’s predecessors, Anita and Dot, helped with IDP for a decade. Mary has continued and enhanced assistance when I’ve needed reminders, corrections and much needed cyber challenges. Many thanks to all of you.

I have had the unique opportunity to associate and serve with a significant number of Board compositions over the past 30 years. It has been a great honor and privilege to serve with all of them, and it has been distinct privilege to serve with this current board of distinguished gentlemen and professionals, and my long-time friend, Paul Spaht, Board attorney.
Mark your calendars for the Louisiana Licensure Forum!

On Saturday, February 13, 2016, you are invited to join practitioners, educators and students from throughout the state and region to discuss and collaborate relative to current issues and opportunities within our field. This is a continuation of the statewide event that previously has taken place under the name “Louisiana IDP Forum.” In 2016, it will take place in conjunction with the Region 3 Educator/Practitioner Conference in an effort to include even more diversity.

The conference will take place on the campus of Tulane University School in Richardson Memorial Hall, with a Friday night reception at the AIA Center for Design. The schedule for the conference includes presentations on the evolving IDP and ARE, and NAAB updates, as well as panel discussions addressing Emerging Professional preparedness.

More information and an agenda is available at http://llfandpec.eventbrite.com. Spaces are limited so register as soon as possible. We would like to have many voices to enrich the conversation – please let yours be heard!
Submission of plans to Fire Marshal – As mentioned in the last newsletter, the suit entitled Merritt E. McDonald, P.E. v. The Honorable H. Butch Browning, Jr. in his capacity as Fire Marshal for the State of Louisiana, No. 614,502, is pending in the Nineteenth Judicial District Court for the Parish of East Baton Rouge.

In this suit Mr. McDonald, trained as an agricultural engineer, alleges that the Fire Marshal and his office require (a) that any plans submitted by a principal design professional who is an engineer must be prepared and signed by a civil engineer and must bear the discipline specific seal of a civil engineer, and (b) that any plans for building subsystems be prepared, signed and bear the seal of a licensed professional engineer listed in the engineering discipline that encompasses that subsystem. Mr. McDonald seeks a declaratory judgment that the imposition of these requirements by the Fire Marshal exceeds the authority granted the Fire Marshal, infringes on the exclusive power of the Louisiana Professional Engineering and Land Surveying Board (LAPELS) to regulate the practice of engineering, and violates the equal protection and due process clauses of the U.S. and Louisiana Constitutions. By amending petition, Mr. McDonald joined LAPELS as a party defendant.

Although Mr. McDonald was trained as an agricultural engineer, he alleges that by education and experience he possesses the expertise necessary to prepare building plans and specifications for structures. Mr. McDonald was not trained as a civil engineer, and he does not have the discipline-specific seal of a civil engineer. The suit raises the issue of who can submit building plans to the Fire Marshal, and thus the issue of who can prepare such plans.

To the extent that Mr. McDonald seeks judgment declaring that he is entitled to submit plans for buildings or structures which constitute the practice architecture, the board’s position is that Mr. McDonald’s petition for declaratory judgment should be denied. Since the last newsletter, the board has intervened into the suit, as has AIA-Louisiana. In addition, the board has propounded written discovery seeking to clarify the exact contentions of the plaintiff.

Future updates on this suit will depend upon what activities occur in the suit. No trial date is presently fixed.

2016 legislation – In the upcoming legislative session, it is anticipated that a few changes in the licensing law may be proposed. Possible legislation which has been discussed by the board includes the establishment of a Louisiana Architectural Education and Research Fund, similar to what has been established in South Carolina. If such a fund is authorized by the legislature, the board may allocate a small percentage of renewal and delinquent fees (no more than 10%) to the fund, to be used for the benefit of NAAB credited universities in Louisiana to better prepare students for internships and future careers as architects. The establishment of such a fund will require enabling legislation, and an amendment to the Architects’ Licensing Law will be required.

The board has also discussed possible legislation concerning firm practice. This has been mentioned in several previous newsletters. Presently, some architectural firms (professional architectural corporations, architectural-engineering corporations, and limited liability companies) are required to obtain certificates of registration or licenses from the board; other firms (such as partnerships) are not. Any proposed legislation will level the playing field and require that all firms practicing architecture in Louisiana obtain a certificate of authority from the board.

Compliance officer – Since the last newsletter, the board has advertised for a part-time compliance officer/investigator and interviewed several outstanding applicants for this position. It is anticipated that the position will soon be filled.

Individual licensing – Please remember that the deadline for renewal is December 31, 2015. The form which must be completed is found on the board website, www.lastbdarchs.com.
AIA Baton Rouge Can Wars Canstruction 2015

AIA Baton Rouge’s Can Wars Canstruction, held this fall, raised 16,451 pounds of food for The Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. The annual canned food building competition among architecture firms focused on the Star Wars theme this year. Shown are some of the can creations by various teams.
The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) has listed the first 14 accredited architectural programs to be accepted for participation in the NCARB Integrated Path Initiative. The initiative encourages programs that are accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) to propose a pre-graduation integration of education, experience requirements and the opportunity to take each of the six divisions of the new Architect Registration Examination® 5.0.

The acceptance of initial participants culminates a two-year effort of the Council’s Licensure Task Force (LTF) to design an integrated path framework that promotes individual academic program flexibility while addressing all regulatory requirements for architectural licensure. The LTF, composed of licensing board members, former presidents of related architectural organizations, recently licensed architects and aspiring architects, deans and instructors, and members of the public, reviewed existing programs requiring experience as a pre-graduation requisite and conducted a Request for Interest & Information and a formal Request for Proposals as part of its deliberations.

NCARB has established a new Integrated Path Evaluation Committee (IPEC) to oversee the ongoing work of this initiative. It is anticipated that the IPEC will continue to coach accepted programs, promote engagement with jurisdictional licensing boards regarding necessary law or rule changes to incorporate integrated path candidates, and oversee the acceptance of future program applicants.

These 14 accepted schools represent a wide range of accredited B.Arch and M.Arch programs in 11 jurisdictions, and are equally split between public and private institutions.

The inaugural class of NCARB-accepted Integrated Path programs is composed of:

- Boston Architectural College; Boston, Massachusetts
- Clemson University; Clemson, South Carolina
- Drexel University; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Lawrence Technological University; Southfield, Michigan
- NewSchool of Architecture and Design; San Diego, California
- North Carolina State University; Raleigh, North Carolina
- Portland State University; Portland, Oregon
- Savannah College of Art and Design; Savannah, Georgia
- University of Cincinnati; Cincinnati, Ohio
- University of Detroit Mercy; Detroit, Michigan
- University of Kansas; Lawrence, Kansas
- University of North Carolina-Charlotte; Charlotte, North Carolina
- University of Southern California; Los Angeles, California
- Woodbury University; Los Angeles, California

“Each of these programs has impressed our Licensure Task Force with their creativity, commitment to maintaining their NAAB-accreditation, and desire to provide a conduit for students who choose a rigorous path that will enrich both the academic and experience elements of architectural licensure,” said NCARB President and LTF Member Dennis S. Ward, NCARB, AIA. “We look forward to coaching these programs, and future program participants, as well as celebrating the licensure of their alumni. Over the next few years we will provide support to our licensing board members as they work to evolve their regulations toward accepting this new licensure path.”
La. State Museum & Sports Hall of Fame
Trahan Architects

Barbara Greenbaum House
Waggoner & Ball with
Architecture Research Office

David Brinson, President
Architect, AIA, NCARB
Baton Rouge, LA

Allen Bacque’, Secretary
Architect, AIA, NCARB
Lafayette, LA

Ron Blitch
Architect, FAIA, FACHA, NCARB
New Orleans, LA

John Cardone, Jr.
Public Member
Lake Charles, LA

Richard LeBlanc
Architect, AIA, NCARB
Shreveport, LA

Robert McKinney,
Architect/Educator, AIA, NCARB
Lafayette, LA

Knox Tumlin
Architect, AIA, NCARB, CSI
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