

# AIA News

## AIA, NOMA Strengthening Ties

*Group explores underrepresentation by minorities within the profession*

**P**aul Taylor, AIA, president of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) came to the AIA headquarters building in Washington, D.C., August 1 to bring his message to the fore: The AIA needs to take a leadership position in increasing the numbers of people who pursue architectural registration.

AIA President John D. Anderson, FAIA, and First Vice President Gordon H. Chong, FAIA, were both present to embrace the challenge, as were representatives of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, and American Institute of Architecture Students.

Taylor called for the meeting in March to address NOMA concerns that African Americans are underrepresented in the architectural community. With a percentage of the total U.S. population standing at 12.3 percent, only 2.3 percent of U.S. architects were African American in 1999, according to the Statistical Abstract of the United States. The numbers are lower than for other minorities. For instance, Hispanics, another minority underrepresented in the profession, make up 4.4 percent of the population of architects in this country



PHOTO BY DOUGLAS E. GORDON, HOIV, AIA

**Participants at the August 1 AIA/NOMA Summit agreed that the first task for the two groups is to gather statistics on minority representation within the profession.**

and 12.5 percent of the overall U.S. population.

Moreover, the growth rate in the percentage of African Americans in architecture has remained flat, at about .7 percent, since 1983, according to AIA membership statistics.

"I sense there is an untapped pool of talent out there that we are overlooking," Anderson said. "This loss of creativity is tragic."

Chong, who will be the AIA president

in 2002, pledged his ongoing support for the AIA/NOMA partnership. The group agreed to continue multilateral communications to define a purpose, create a plan, develop a viable network among the collateral organizations, and develop the tools necessary to get results.

Because hard data on representation by race and gender are scant or nonexistent, the first defined task is to gather these statistics for analysis, the group agreed. ■