



EVP/CEO Transition At the AIA National Component

*By Eugene C. Hopkins, FAIA
Chair, EVP/CEO Search Committee*

I'd like my last communiqué on this topic to be somewhat comprehensive, so I've taken the liberty of providing you with an overview of the work of the EVP/CEO Search Committee this year, insights into various decision points, and some highlights from the background of our new EVP/CEO.

Designing a Plan

Thanks to the outstanding work of the Succession Planning Task Force, chaired by Thompson E. Penney, FAIA, the AIA Board of Directors approved an EVP/CEO succession plan in September 2004. The report of the task force included the description of a representative composition for a search committee and the specifics of a search process that would be followed upon a departure of the EVP/CEO incumbent. Three important points in the report are especially worthy of note. First, the steps in the search process were to be uniform, open and transparent, yet the confidentiality of candidates' identities was to be maintained out of respect for their professional careers. Committee members signed a confidentiality agreement to confirm that commitment. Second, no member of the committee could become a candidate for the job at any time in the process. Finally, the work of the committee would result in one candidate being presented to the Executive Committee for approval and subsequently to the Board for ratification.

Implementing the Plan

Subsequently, in December 2004, Norman Koonce, FAIA, announced that he would step down from his role as EVP/CEO on December 31, 2005. Executing the initial steps of the succession plan, AIA President Douglas L Steidl, FAIA, moved quickly in January 2005 to appoint twelve individuals to serve on an EVP/CEO Search Committee. I accepted the role as chair of the committee. Representing their respective Board classes, Douglas Ashe, AIA (2005 class), Mike Rodriguez, AIA (2006

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class) and Linda McCracken-Hunt, AIA (2007 class) served on the committee. John Senhauser, FAIA, AIA Secretary, represented the AIA Executive Committee. Paul Welch, Hon. AIA, represented CACE, Harry Rutledge, FAIA, represented component leadership, and Nicole Kuhar, Assoc. AIA, represented associate members. Barry Posner, Dean of the Business School of Santa Clara University, and former Public Member of the AIA Board of Directors, represented the at-large public constituency and the academic community. George Miller, FAIA, who also served on the succession planning task force, served a key role on the search committee to assure linkage of the work done in 2004 with the actual execution of the plan. Finally, AIA 2005 President Doug Steidl, FAIA, and national component Chief Human Resources Officer Laura Viehmyer served as ex officio members of the search committee.

Getting Expert Guidance

With appointments accepted, the committee's work formally began in mid-February 2005. The committee established subgroups to develop a baseline EVP/CEO job description/profile and a boilerplate employment contract. Mike Rodriguez, AIA, and Doug Ashe, AIA, headed those subgroups, respectively.

Concurrently, the committee worked with an outside consultant to assist in developing an RFP to invite responses from eight executive search firms, diverse in size and geographic location. Two search firms were based on the west coast, two in the mid-west and four on the east coast. Two were large national firms, two were mid-sized and four were smaller firms. Overall, six firms responded and the search committee conducted face-to-face interviews with three finalist firms in April 2005.

The committee selected Association Strategies, Inc. (ASI) a northern Virginia executive search firm, headed by Pamela Kaul, to work with the committee through the process. Ms. Kaul is an organizational development expert with over twenty years of experience, and solid credentials in personally guiding search committees through the selection process. Pamela was the primary contact for 30-40 searches in 2003 and 2004, of which approximately half were for chief executive officer positions.

ASI's 'fill rate' is 99% during its 20 years in business due to a successful three-step methodology. The first step involved conducting an extensive survey of over 60 key stakeholders, plus national component staff, to identify critical characteristics needed in the next EVP/CEO to meet current and future organizational needs. The survey process included meetings, telephone interviews and a web survey, and as a result of the data collected, the committee approved a detailed position profile that

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crystallized the current leadership needs of the organization. The message was clear. The goal was to identify the top candidates from every possible educational and experience background and select the best person for the job.

The second step involved an extensive search effort begun in June 2005. ASI implemented a comprehensive advertising campaign and outreach process to facilitate the recruitment of a diverse pool of qualified candidates from all over the country from the corporate sector, public service, architecture, education, and the association community. They reached out to over 500 individuals, and reviewed over 100 resumes that resulted from the various recruiting initiatives. The third step involved transition planning, a hallmark of the ASI search process. Specifically, ASI helps chart the path for a collaborative relationship with the leadership and the new EVP/CEO in the early stages.

By selecting ASI, the committee enjoyed the benefits of an holistic process, significant expertise in recruiting chief staff executive talent, careful attention to the reference process, and the flexibility to be responsive to the AIA's needs. Special thanks to Association Strategies, Inc. for their outstanding work with the committee during the journey!

Getting into the Details

In late September, recruiting officially concluded, and ASI presented a detailed slate of candidates to the committee in mid-October. After individual review of candidates' credentials and extensive collective deliberation, the committee selected seven candidates for face-to-face interviews in Chicago during the end of October/early November. The committee combined behavioral interviewing and conversational style approaches to obtain quality information about each candidate. As a result, the committee identified 2 finalists for in depth interviews. Finalist interviews were held in mid-November in Washington DC, and included informal and formal time segments of approximately five to six hours per person. The committee evaluated all candidate information obtained through the entire process, including extensive reference and background investigation information conducted by ASI in making its final choice.

I'd like to share some of the search committee's comments about the qualities of our new EVP/CEO during the final deliberations.

- Solid comprehensive approach to strategic planning.
- Thoughtful insights on how to integrate and connect constituencies.
- Understands the roles of members, components, volunteers, Board and staff.

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- Experienced in environmental scanning, looking ahead and seeking out information to help challenge the leadership as it sets strategic direction.
- Understands the essential role of advocacy and thoughtful on how to connect to larger audiences.
- Grasps the significance of being a knowledge organization to advance the profession.
- Calculated and thoughtful risk taker.
- Proven ability and talent to take an organization to next level.
- Visionary, energetic, and personable leader.
- Consummate association executive with a proven leadership track record in a professional membership organization.

A Blueprint for the Future

On December 6, 2005, the EVP/CEO Search Committee made its formal recommendation.

Pursuant to its authority under the Institute's Governance Policies, the 2005 Executive Committee approved the employment of **Christine McEntee** as Executive Vice President/CEO of The American Institute of Architects, commencing on February 1, 2006.

More about Chris.

A recognized leader in association management, Christine McEntee has held senior leadership positions in some of the nation's most well known associations, including the American College of Cardiology (ACC), the American Hospital Association, and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Most recently, as the CEO for the American College of Cardiology and its associated Foundation, Chris distinguished herself as a leader for organizations facing increasingly complex and changing environments. During her seven and a half years with ACC, the organization grew from \$38 million to \$50 million in revenue, membership increased to 33,000, and staff size from 168 to 215.

Chris' key accomplishments included:

- Positioned ACC as a leader in health care quality and improvement, including development of a national data registry with over 3 million patient records.
- Successful creation of a 501(c)6 to guide ACC's advocacy programs.
- Molded internal and external partnerships during her tenure with ACC, such as The Cardiovascular Coalition Organization, a collaboration of related societies.

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- Expanded ACC's global presence through alliances with organizations in Argentina, China, Canada, and Spain via work with 20 country societies.
- Developed new collaborative models with sister societies and ACC chapters.
- Created and launched a leading portal for clinical education and information.
- Instituted best practices in fiscal and operating policies, including early adoption of Sarbanes-Oxley requirements.
- Established linkages between organizational strategies, annual operating plans and budgets, and employee performance management.

Chris believes these successes were achieved by listening to member needs, learning member practice pressures, developing an understanding of the future and members' value to society, and working with members to create and implement new strategic directions, while working actively to deal with the encroachment of professions on one another.

Prior to joining the ACC, Chris spent twelve years with the American Hospital Association (AHA), ending her tenure as the Executive Vice President. She also served as Vice President and Deputy Director, Federal Relations and began her AHA service as the Director, Office of Constituency Relations. As Executive Vice President, Chris provided executive management to a staff of 150 with a \$23 million budget. A hallmark of her AHA career was the creation of a new collaborative model between the national organization and its affiliated professional societies. She also led the effort to produce the first ever association-wide strategic plan and completed a successful merger of an affiliated professional society and an outside organization.

Earlier in her career, Chris held various positions during her five year tenure with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). While there, she piloted and implemented the nationwide Medicare Assistance program that trained more than 1,000 volunteer counselors to assist seniors with their health insurance claims. Chris ended her work with AARP as a Legislative Representative, where she worked as their chief lobbyist as well as editor of the *Legislative Report*.

Chris holds a Master of Health Administration from the George Washington University and a Bachelor of Nursing from Georgetown University. A graduate of the Advanced Executive Program at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Chris currently serves on the Board of Directors of the American Society of Association Executives, and the Edmund Burke School. She is also a

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Guest Lecturer at Georgetown University School of Business. She is listed in Crain's Chicago's Business as an 'Under 40 mover and shaker', received the Greater Washington Society of Association Executives (GWSAE) Executive Update's "Smart CEO" award, and served as a GWSAE visionary in 2002.

Chris is married to Henry McEntee and has two sons, Matt and Brendan. In her spare time, she enjoys skiing, running, hiking, good food and good wine, and relaxing with friends and family.

When I contacted Chris about her selection, this is what she had to say. "I am very excited to be joining the Institute at this time in its history. The American Institute of Architects, building on its rich heritage, is poised to lead nationally and worldwide in designing safe, healthy and livable communities for the future. I am extremely energized to be working with such a dedicated cadre of professionals who are deeply committed to making lives better through spaces and environments they create."

With Appreciation

On behalf of the EVP/CEO Search Committee, I want to thank each of you for your support and ongoing interest in our work this year. We invite you to join in the excitement of the new partnership with Chris McEntee as all of us - One AIA - looks forward to our 150th anniversary and beyond.

December 9, 2005

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