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MILWAUKEE ARCHITECT WILLIAM WENZLER RECEIVES PROFESSION'S TOP HONOR: The 2009 AIA WISCONSIN "GOLDEN AWARD"

Madison (May 10, 2009)...Architect William P. Wenzler, FAIA, Milwaukee, has been chosen to receive the 2009 "Golden Award" from AIA Wisconsin, the state society of The American Institute of Architects (AIA). The Golden Award is the highest honor the state architects' society can bestow upon a member architect.

As both architect and architectural humanitarian, Wenzler is being recognized for his distinguished record of service, spanning nearly 55 years, for the advancement of the profession of architecture and for his exceptional commitment to providing quality housing for low income families in the Milwaukee community. He has served his profession well in key leadership positions at the state and national level as well as demonstrated an ongoing dedication to his community, as evidenced with the Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity, where he is a founding member of its board of directors. Due to his tireless efforts on many fronts, he is admired by and continues to inspire his peers and emerging professionals across Wisconsin.

The Golden Award will be formally presented to Wenzler during a special awards program on May 20 at the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison. The event is being held in conjunction with 2009 AIA Wisconsin Convention & Expo. The first Golden Award was presented by the Wisconsin Society of Architects in 1986. Wenzler is the twenty-second Wisconsin architect to receive the award.

"Bill Wenzler epitomizes the Golden Award," said Josh Johnson, AIA, Madison, 2009 president of AIA Wisconsin. "He represents all the qualities it embodies from his active participation in leadership roles that

have kept the profession strong and relevant to applying his time, energy, and creativity for the common good of our communities.”

When notified last December of his selection as the Golden Award recipient for 2009, Wenzler expressed he was “deeply gratified yet amazed by this most unexpected honor.” However, the unexpected continues. In February, Governor Doyle and the Wisconsin State Building Commission, well aware of his estimable career, recognized Wenzler and his firm William Wenzler and Associates – Architects, Inc. with its Lifetime Service Award.

Wenzler is a graduate of the University of Illinois, receiving a Bachelor of Science Architectural Engineering in 1952, and opened his own office in Milwaukee in 1955. With a passion for design, his firm has flourished and earned numerous national, regional and state architectural awards for its church, university and urban housing projects.

A life-long resident of Milwaukee, Wenzler’s personal achievements reflect a dedication to strong design and the profession of architecture. In 1967, he was presented with the Governor’s Award for Creativity in the Arts. By 1971, Wenzler had accomplished a major milestone when he was advanced to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects. At age 42, he was one of the youngest Fellows of the Institute. “Today,” Wenzler quips, “I am one of the oldest Fellows in Wisconsin.”

Other notable triumphs include: “Award of Excellence for Life Work in Architecture” (1985) from the Milwaukee Art Commission and the “Citation for Distinguished Service” for his contribution to the establishment of the School of Architecture in Wisconsin from AIA Wisconsin (2001).

Still working part-time, Wenzler continues to practice architecture and is known to attend an occasional local AIA chapter meeting, still believing in the value of advancing the profession through participation as well as the importance of contributing your talents and time in your own community. His career underscores his beliefs.

Over a 20 year period, Wenzler served the profession in key leadership roles while balancing the responsibilities of a thriving firm. In the area of governance, he provided distinguished representation as a member of the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Society of Architects (AIA Wisconsin), the National Panel of the American Arbitration Association, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) and the State of Wisconsin Examining Board of Architects, Professional Engineers, Designers and Land Surveyors. According to Wenzler, "While all positions were indeed worthwhile, my most fulfilling assignment was from 1979-84 as a member of the State of Wisconsin Examining Board."

Volunteering in his own community, with a blend of expertise and elbow grease, has become the hallmark of Bill Wenzler. As a founding director of the Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity, he has shared his knowledge and skills since its inception in 1984. Wenzler is an architectural humanitarian in his own right as demonstrated in 1987 when his firm designed six Carter Work Week houses that became homes for low income families. Through the Habitat for Humanity program, he had organized volunteers and worked alongside his recruits to build or rehab houses that have spurred the revitalization of neighborhoods in Milwaukee.

"Wenzler set the bar high throughout his career," explained AIA Wisconsin President Johnson, "and his widely respected attribute as a 'doer' will continue to inspire architects and our emerging professionals for years to come."

With 1,500 members, AIA Wisconsin is the statewide professional society representing architects, architectural interns, students and allied design and construction industry leaders. AIA Wisconsin members include architects in private practice, business, industry, government and education.