



PILLARS

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

2024-2025 REVIEW





2025 PILLARS CLASS

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ABOUT PILLARS

The Pillars Leadership Training Program of the American Institute of Architects Kansas City prepares a representative cross section of the chapter's emerging leaders and individuals from the building community for their role in shaping the future of both the architectural profession and the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. The training program includes active participation in programs and exposure to community leaders and issues. Each class spends their time exploring core issues that affect our profession and the region within which we practice. Through discussions with leaders and colleagues, dialogue among themselves, tours and research the group will be able to understand and present to the AIA as a whole how we can make a positive change within our community. The AIA Kansas City Pillars program is a nationally recognized program for its originality and depth and has inspired similar AIA leadership studies in other US cities. The program continues to raise the bar of what young professionals want out of their profession and how we as professionals can make an impact on our built environment.



Tour of the Juniper Gardens Training Farm with Cultivate KC



Discussing food access and redirecting food waste at Kanbe's Markets

OCTOBER: SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

In October, Pillars explored the processes in our city that bring food from the garden to dinner tables and even beyond. The session appropriately began at Fortunati Pizza in the West Bottoms, a restaurant utilizing flour from Marion Milling which is a local flour company focused on sustainability, nutrition, and, of course, flavor.

Pillars then traveled to Cultivate KC's Juniper Gardens Training Farm in KCK. Pillars spoke with representatives to learn how Cultivate KC advocates for local farmers and agricultural businesses, sustainable food systems, and equitable food access. Cultivate KC hosts a wide variety of organizations focusing on local farming including the Dotte Mobile Grocer, Double Up Food Bucks (allowing more fruits and vegetables to be purchased with EBT), and urban growing sites across the KC metro area. While touring the 9-acre site in KCK, Pillars also learned about the New Roots program. This initiative supports resettled refugees and new Americans through their first years working to become independent farmers supplying healthy food to our communities.

After touring the farm, it was time to witness the farming process firsthand. The Pillars spent time volunteering in one of the Cultivate KC's gardens weeding planting beds and applying new mulch around apple trees. Gardens such as these allow residents to take an active role in the production

of food in their communities and better understand the effort and process that puts food on their tables.

Moving from the start of the food cycle to the end, the Pillars traveled to Kanbe's Markets to see how the nonprofit organization diverts excess food in our city from landfills to convenient healthy grocery corner stores, community pantries, and food banks. The Pillars toured the storage and sorting area for a wide variety of fresh produce destined for community consumption and learned about Kanbe's Markets' work with KC Can Compost to send imperfect food to local farmers as animal feed or compost.

With a new understanding of local food systems, the Pillars ended the session with a happy hour back in the West Bottoms at Voltaire.



Volunteering at Juniper Gardens Training Farm