



Dear Leaders,

There is a story behind my accent.

I was born in **Washington, D.C.** My father worked here in the 1960s, and my mother was studying for her master's in fine arts at **Howard University**. When I was six months old, my parents took me back to **Baghdad, Iraq**, where I grew up. Living through wars changes you on a cellular level. The **1991 Gulf War** was the tipping point. I learned what it means to feel powerless—and why **invisibility is dangerous**.

To matter, you must speak up, act, and take responsibility for what follows.

So I chose courage. I left on my own with nothing except **hope larger than fear**, and built my life through years of relentless work. That journey shaped how I lead. I believe empowerment begins when you **reclaim your own voice**—and when you use that voice to make room for others. That is when leadership rises.

Today we are carrying real concerns. Our education, professional standing, and value are being diminished. Too often, **architects carry risk without power**. And no one is exempt. I hear stories like: “I was born on the wrong side of the tracks—and even as a white man, that was rough.” Or, “Please don’t mention how many years I’ve been practicing. No one will hire me.” The stories are endless.

We cannot pretend bias does not exist. Progress begins by recognizing it—and choosing not to reproduce it. These moments reveal a shared truth: **architects feel undervalued within the very systems that depend on them**.

I lead with respect for the legacy built before us. I lead with empathy to listen, creative vision to solve, strategic discipline to align, and the courage to act. With **37 years in this profession**, I bring national and international perspective, deep conviction, and the energy to move ideas forward. We have extraordinary leaders across our chapters and communities—**ready to do the work**.

I will restore our **visibility**, defend our **credibility**, and reestablish our **authority**. Architects must return to the center of shaping the built environment.

This moment demands structure. I am proposing what I call the **Four-Track Architectural Leadership System: Foundation, Structure, Envelope, and Future Systems**. This framework is one I will build **with you**, and I invite you to shape it with me for our collective success and for the future of our profession.

This is how I will lead.

Thank you.