

Bio Brief:

Janeen A. Harrell

AIA, NOMA, NCARB, LEED AP

Founder | Director, iJ DESIGN STUDIO



As both an architect and interior designer, Janeen Harrell approaches her work with a unique and thorough perspective. She is responsible for the design, management and successful completion of a broad range of projects including commercial, residential, and corporate buildings and interiors. Janeen founded her firm, iJ DESIGN STUDIO, to help broaden access to design and ensure that more businesses and communities of color benefit from great design. The studio's mission is to actively enhance the health and well-being of our communities through design that honors creative expression, the human spirit, and the natural environment. Janeen has extensive experience in varied phases of projects and consistently delivers thoughtful, contextual, well-crafted design solutions to the built environment while maintaining excellent client and consultant relationships. She has a strong interest in the intersection of sustainable and affordable design and has crafted her academic and professional endeavors to explore this intersection.

African American women account for fewer than 0.5% of licensed architects in the United States, and Janeen is proud to have earned this distinction. Janeen's colleagues also recognize her as an exemplary leader and a valuable asset to the profession. She served as the 2020 President of the American Institute of Architects Illinois Board of Directors and is the first African American woman to hold this position. Initially elected to the board in 2013, she has served in numerous positions at national, state (Illinois), and local (Chicago) levels including her immediate past role as an AIA National Strategic Councilor. Janeen is an active member of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) and has been honored by the Illinois Chapter as a trailblazing woman architect. She also enjoyed sharing her professional and personal journey when asked to be a panelist at the 2023 NOMA National Conference.

Janeen has always excelled at the arts and math and realized at a young age that architecture seemed the perfect marriage of her scientific and creative sides. Over the years, she has made it a priority to balance academia and creative expression. Janeen's work in the community seeks to encourage diversity and exposure within the design professions as well as performance arts. Several years ago, she enjoyed filming an interview segment called Diversity in Architecture which highlights the careers of minority architects. She participates in academic mentorship programs and has served as a judge in the categories of architecture, mathematics, and dance for ACT-SO Chicago (the NAACP's Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics for African-American high school students). She has mentored youth through dance ministry choreography and also mentors young architects pursuing licensure.

Janeen is a native of Durham, North Carolina, and a graduate of Hampton University and Cornell University. She exhibits a longstanding commitment to community service through her active membership in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, volunteerism with her church, and support of numerous other community-serving organizations. Janeen thoroughly enjoys her blended roles in architecture and interior design in Chicago where she has lived and practiced since 2007.

Experience Brief:

Professional Firm Experience

iJ DESIGN STUDIO – Founder & Director, Chicago, IL & Durham, NC
GREC Architects – Associate, Architect & Interior Designer, Chicago, IL
HED – Architect & Interior Designer, Chicago, IL
Nicholas Clark Architects – Architect & Interior Designer, Chicago, IL
The Freelon Group – Intern Architect, Durham, NC

Professional Registration

Licensed Architect – Illinois
Self-Certified Architect – Chicago, Illinois
Licensed Architect – North Carolina
NCARB Certified
LEED Accredited Professional

Professional Leadership and Community Service

Illinois Representative - American Institute of Architects National Strategic Council, 2021-2023
President - American Institute of Architects Illinois Board of Directors, 2020
Treasurer/President-Elect - American Institute of Architects Illinois Board of Directors, 2019
Secretary - American Institute of Architects Illinois Board of Directors, 2018
Chicago Delegate - American Institute of Architects Illinois Board of Directors, 2013 – 2017
Trailblazing Woman Architect Recognition - National Organization of Minority Architects Illinois – 2015
Active Member - National Organization of Minority Architects, 2001 - Present
Active Member - American Institute of Architects Chicago 2030 Working Group, 2011 - 2018
Honoree - Hampton University Forty Under 40 Inaugural Class – 2016
Co-chairman - Environmental Stewardship Committee – Chi Omega Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., 2016 – 2018
Co-chairman – The Arts! – Chi Omega Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., 2018
Treasurer and Choreography Chair - Trinity United Church of Christ Adult Dance Ministry, 2009-2014
Choreography Leader - Trinity United Church of Christ Adult and Youth Dance Ministries, 2008-2018

Academics

Interior Design Studio Instructor, Fall 2006 - Cornell University
Master of Arts in Interior Design, 2006 - Cornell University
Bachelor of Architecture, 2001 - Hampton University

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Experience Brief:

LIFE ENHANCEMENT/ RESIDENTIAL/ HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE

Woodlawn Residence, Chicago IL

9000 sf historic home renovation, full-service architecture, interior design, and procurement

Chicagoland Rehabilitation Support, Chicagoland, IL

Code assessments and consulting for recovery homes and substance abuse facilities

The Talbott Hotel, Chicago, IL

Hotel renovation and expansion to 176 keys

845 West Madison, Chicago, IL

708,000 sf new construction of two residential towers including 586 residential units, retail, roof decks, and amenity spaces, including overall project management as well as FFE design and procurement

Mercy Housing Lakefront, Senior Residences of Grayslake, Grayslake, IL

72,500 sf affordable senior housing (70 Units) interior design

Chicago Housing Authority Scattered Sites, Chicago, IL

Prime Design Contract for housing modernization and renovations including project management, consultant coordination, bid management, and CA for a portfolio of 40 multi-family sites

Chicagoland Residential Upgrades, Chicagoland, IL

Design and CA of numerous new single family homes and additions throughout Chicago, Chicago suburbs, and San Diego

CORPORATE COMMERCIAL DESIGN AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

NRDC Chicago

Design collaboration, architect of record, construction management, and furniture design/procurement for 6000 sf office upfit

Berkley

Management and design of 75,000 sf office consolidation

The Community Builders – Oakwood Shores, Chicago, IL

Redesign of interior finishes and furnishings of residential community center

Willis Tower/ EQ Office Management Support, Chicago, IL

Project management, spec suites, space planning, test fits, marketing plans, and demo plans for multiple suites in 110-story office tower

200 West Adams/ JLL Management Support, Chicago, IL

Project management, space planning, test fits, marketing plans, and demo plans for multiple suites in 30-story office tower

200 West Adams/ Amenities and Lobby, Chicago, IL

Lobby and elevator lobby renovation coupled with new construction of two-story amenity space including pantry, yoga, fitness, conference, and lounge space

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Experience Brief:

Association Forum, Chicago, IL
9,000 sf Workplace renovation

AIA Illinois Office Relocation, Springfield, IL
Conceptual design through CA for office relocation and interior renovation

ShopperTrak, Chicago, IL
54,000 sf Relocation of headquarters

Northern Trust Corporation - Global Headquarters, Chicago, IL
19,000 sf Renovation of lobby and conference center – preliminary design

Northern Trust Corporation – Canal Street Refresh, Chicago, IL
37,000 sf Workplace Renovation

Northern Trust Corporation – Canal Street & Madison Accelerated, Chicago, IL
5,200 sf Workplace Renovation

Northern Trust Corporation – Madison Renovations, Chicago, IL
49,000 sf Workplace Renovation

Northern Trust Corporation – Canal Optimization Study, Chicago, IL
540,000 sf Workplace Renovation feasibility study

National Academy for the Recording Arts & Sciences, Chicago, IL
4,000 sf Workplace Relocation and Renovation

Illinois Center Spec Suites, Chicago, IL
25,300 sf Design, Documentation, and CA for multiple new office suites, including furniture order/installation

Illinois Center/ Reit Management Support, Chicago, IL
Project management, space planning, test fits, marketing plans, and demo plans for multiple suites in two 32-story office towers

The Franklin Spec Suites, Chicago, IL 1
30,000 sf Workplace Renovation, amenity atrium, and standard corridor and elevator lobby redesign

Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center, Chicago, IL
Chicago Housing Authority
Code feasibility studies and construction administration for facility renovation of community center

Chicago Public Schools Bridgeport Offices, Chicago, IL
Design and CA of 4 –story loft building conversion to office space 36,587 sf

National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) Office Relocation, Chicago, IL
Project management for 19,200 sf office renovation

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Experience Brief:

Durham Technical Community College, Durham, NC
58,000 sf Programming and design for a new multi-use facility

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

L'Hopital Universitaire de Mirebalais, Mirebalais, Haiti
180,000 sf LEED administrator and feasibility researcher

Virunga Bar, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
Design of rooftop bar and grill

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Born out of a strong belief that design has the power to transform, inspire, and elevate, iJ DESIGN STUDIO is a budding architecture and interior design studio based in Chicago, Illinois. The studio focuses on processes and spaces that inspire, particularly in the realm of dwelling, workplace, and community-centered environments. Clients benefit from a full complement of blended architecture, interior design, and project management services from programming through construction administration. Driven by an ethos that the process is just as important as the product, iJ DESIGN STUDIO finds inspiration in delivering quality work through intentional and collaborative action.

iJ DESIGN STUDIO creates inspired spaces to help transform lives. Our architecture and interior design services culminate in beautifully functional spaces that inspire our clients' best lives and best work. We serve entrepreneurs, homeowners, and visionary nonprofits looking to enhance underserved communities through holistic design.

iJ DESIGN STUDIO is led by its founder, Janeen Harrell, who brings over 20 years of industry experience with her. As both an architect and interior designer, Janeen approaches her work with a unique and thorough perspective. She is responsible for the cohesive design, management, and successful completion of a broad range of project types. Her work spans from affordable

to luxury, private to public, and small to large scale developments.

Janeen has extensive experience in varied project phases and consistently delivers thoughtful, contextual, well-crafted design solutions to the built environment while maintaining excellent client and consultant relationships. She has a strong interest in the intersection of sustainable and affordable design and has crafted her academic and professional endeavors to explore this interest.

Her work with iJ DESIGN STUDIO seeks to further explore this intersection and to contribute to neighborhood development for underserved populations, ultimately resulting in transformation through inspired design.

iJ DESIGN STUDIO is committed to actively enhancing the health and wellbeing of our communities through design that honors creative expression, the human spirit, and the natural environment.

