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2026 CHAIRS

MEET TO OUR NEW CHAIRS!
JEN MOORE | NEWSLETTER EDITOR
LILY NORWOOD | SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
ANJANETTE SABIN | WEBSITE MANAGER
JAMIE MARTZ | SPONSORSHIP CHAIR

Have an announcement, achievement, or milestone worth celebrating?

Email us at
hello@IWAEC.org
to be featured here!

IWAEC

IDAHO WOMEN IN ARCHITECTURE • ENGINEERING • CONSTRUCTION

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Happy holidays! As another year comes to a close, we want to acknowledge the many contributions each of you makes to the AEC community. Through my involvement in IWAEC, I've been fortunate to witness friendships that allow us to share our careers. Women sharing personal stories filled with milestones, new opportunities and thoughtful advice.

The board of directors and committee chairs work collaboratively to create events all year to provide the space to have those conversations. I want to give a heartfelt shoutout to all the women I've had the privilege of collaborating with in IWAEC. Each of you has made my experience truly memorable, and I'm hopeful that we will continue to pass the torch and cultivate events that strengthen and advance our shared vision.

Thank you to our members and sponsors for your continued support!

Cheers,

Yanira Saldana
IWAEC Past President

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, December 3rd
5-8 pm
Beside Bardenay
610 W. Grove St. Boise, ID

HOLIDAY PARTY

Come join us for a festive celebration at Beside Bardenay in Boise, Idaho! Get ready for a night of fun, laughter, and holiday cheer. This in-person event will be the perfect opportunity to mingle with fellow IWAEC members & non members and enjoy some of the finest wines Idaho has to offer. Don't miss out on this special occasion to make new memories, welcome the new 2026 board, and toast to the holiday season! Evening highlights to include; heavy appetizers, two complimentary drink tickets, fun raffle prizes, and sponsor appreciation gifts. Please bring your new, unused and unwrapped item for donating to WCA!
This holiday season, IWAEC is honored to support a meaningful cause close to our hearts.
Happy Holidays and we hope to see you there!

THE INNER WORK OF SELF LEADERSHIP: Boundaries and Self Compassion

Michelle Choate MA CTC CEC is a keynote speaker, leadership coach, executive team coach, and organization development consultant with 25 years of experience in organizational culture, individual, and leadership development. In fast moving work environments, it's easy to lose touch with your own needs while rising to meet everyone else's. This session invites you to reconnect with the internal practices that make resilient leadership possible: healthy boundaries, self-awareness, and compassion toward yourself. Through guided reflection and actionable strategies, you'll learn how to show up with more steadiness and personal agency — and decrease feelings of burn out. Registration link coming soon!

Wednesday, January 14th
5-7 pm
CSHQA
200 W. Broad St, Boise, ID

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

VANESSA MURPHY

PROJECT ENGINEER

REAVELY ENGINEERS//

Tell us about yourself and your current role at Reavely Engineers.

My name is Vanessa Murphy. I have a bachelor's and master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Utah and am a licensed Professional Engineer (PE). I currently work as a Structural Project Engineer at Reaveley Engineers, where I have been for over five years. In this role, I manage projects, design buildings, and support business development for our Boise office, which opened about a year ago.

How long have you worked in the industry? What drew you to the AEC industry?

I bring six years of experience in the AEC industry. Engineering and construction are family traditions: my great-grandfather was a structural engineer, and both my grandfather and father were roadway contractors. As a child, I often visited blasting sites, large-scale excavations, and open-pit mines. In high school, I worked on a paving crew and at truck scales. I've always been drawn to building and creating things, so civil engineering was a natural choice in college—fueled by my lifelong passion for understanding how things are built.

Tell me about someone that influenced your career path.

I would say the biggest influence of my career path has been my husband Colton. We met in our freshman Statics Class and spent the next 5 years of our undergraduate and graduate programs in every single course together. Until graduation we interned at the same engineering company and worked in the same structural lab together! We are both competitive people, and Colton and I were constantly competing for better grades on assignments, tests, job opportunities and even our FE and PE licensure. He's my biggest champion, and I am not sure I would have ended up in the structural engineering world without his encouragement and support.

Tell me about your favorite project that you have been a part of.

Although I have thoroughly enjoyed countless design projects, the most exciting has been St. Luke's Hospital in Boise. For most of my career, I worked remotely on Utah-based projects and rarely saw my designs come to life. Joining the St. Luke's team changed everything as I've been able to be apart of the construction efforts without the use of a Zoom meeting 😊!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

I've collaborated in person with the team to troubleshoot issues, built personal relationships with the project partners and watched the structure rise from the ground! Seeing something you had a part in designing come to life, and share that with family and friends in the community, is an experience like no other!

How many kids do you have, what are their ages, and how much support do you have at home ?
I have 2 children: a 3 ½ -year-old son and a 1 ½ -year-old daughter. My husband and I are a strong team—because he's also a structural engineer, we share the same professional rhythm and fully support each other's careers. I was born and raised in Boise, so while we left some family and friends in Utah, we have a strong local network of family and close friends here in Boise who help when needed. Between Colton's flexible schedule and my ability to shift meetings, networking, and site visits, we cover most childcare ourselves and rely on our wonderful nanny for the remaining gaps

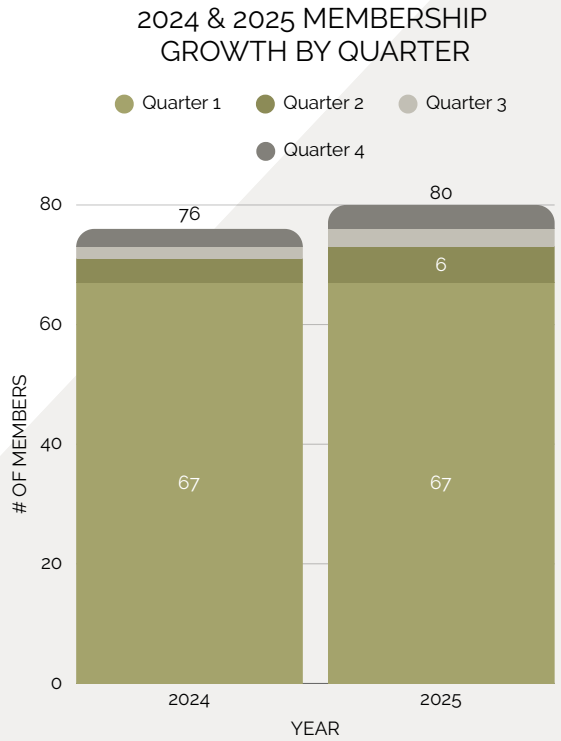
In what ways did your daily professional life shift when you had kids?
Having kids reshaped my daily routine in the best way. Once Hudson was born, I reduced my hours to 30 a week, with flexibility from Reaveley. Our son and daughter both stay home with me; our nanny covers 12 hours a week plus any meetings or events, and my husband Colton fills the rest. I structure my week around three focused workdays when childcare covers most of the day, and I rise early to log hours before the kids wake up (they're luckily late sleepers!). The other two days, I work in flexible blocks as needed. No drop-offs or pick-ups—just a well-planned integration of family and career.

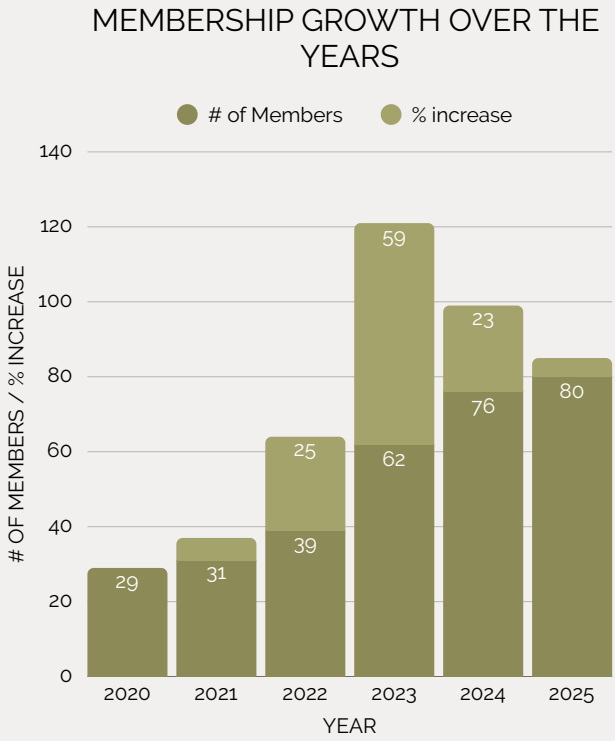
What advice would you give to someone who is planning on having children in A/E/C on how to be best prepared for making the transition from working full-time without kids to working full-time with kids?
Having kids is my greatest accomplishment, and I'm also passionate about my career and its impact. Balancing motherhood with a full-time job can be challenging, but with trial and error and a strong support system, it's absolutely possible. I'm incredibly fortunate to work for Reaveley—a company that fully supports me as a mom and helps me thrive as a structural engineer. After nearly four years of managing both roles, my best advice is to ask your employer for help in making work-life balance attainable. It doesn't have to be all or nothing. Discuss reducing hours, working partially remote, or creating a more flexible schedule. You don't have to choose between career and family—they can work beautifully together.

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

POSITIVE GROWTH

In 2024, we kicked off the year with a new chair position dedicated to Membership. Among many other responsibilities, Samia, our membership chair, has been tracking our membership growth over the past two years in detail to provide us with some visual data. Illustrated in the charts above, you can see that we grew exponentially in 2023, but we have been steady for the most part over the past 5 years. Our average membership increase is 26% per year! We would like to thank our sponsors for supporting us and our members for attending events, inviting friends, and giving us feedback to continue to improve our events! We can't wait to see what is in store for 2026 and the years to come!





IDAHO WOMEN
IN
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EVENTS RECAP

BREAKING GROUND - CAREER PANEL

We had a great panel event where were able to learn and be inspired by four amazing women in the AEC field! Thank you to our panelists, Crystal Olbera, Amber Van Ocker, Paola Eldgredge, and Lily Johnson, for sharing your knowledge and experiences with us.

COFFEE NETWORKING

Our last Happy Hour was actually in the morning! We brought back an oldie but a goodie, our morning networking coffee hour. Thank you to all who were in attendance. In the coming year, we would like to include events at various times to accommodate a variety of schedules!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's that time of the year again... don't forget to renew your membership for next year so that you don't miss out on any of the new events we have planned for 2026!

RENEW HERE

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THANK YOU, SPONSORS!!

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