



Society for Design Administration
An Affiliate of The American Institute of Architects



San Diego Chapter

The Advantage

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President's Message



Dear Members:

I hope you are all enjoying this beautiful summer and your firms are thriving.

The SDA EDSymposium 2011 that was held in June was wonderful and Charleston was absolutely beautiful (but very HOT!). Here's a link to the photo group room, where you can see photos: 2011edsymposium-charleston.snapfish.com/snapfish. I was honored to be installed as your 2011-2012 National Secretary and look forward to continuing to serve SDA at the chapter and national level.

This year's conference was chock-full of informative educational seminars. We heard ways to strengthen our workplace ethics with Nan DeMars and heard some client from hell stories from a wonderful panel led by Steve Burns. Our SDA National President, Karen Roman, brought her firm's Principal, Ned White, to treat us to a discussion on the Principal & Administrator Partnership— a philosophy Karen is fortunate to have in her work environment. Many other terrific seminars, as well as a gorgeous dinner cruise and tour of the historical city, all made this an experience to cherish.

The annual conference is the best opportunity to meet members from around the country in person and take home knowledge, fresh ideas, and friendships to last a lifetime! Planning is underway for EDSymposium 2012. Make plans to attend Portland, Oregon in May for what is sure to be as wonderful an experience as Charleston.

If you haven't yet, be sure to check out the newly revamped SDA national website at www.sdaadmin.org! Easier to navigate with a great design, the website provides countless information to assist you and your firm in making the most of your membership.

I hope that all of you are enjoying the newly formatted *SDA Today*. We know how precious your time is during the day. The new format allows readers to quickly skim the topics and click on links of interest, which take you directly to the full article to enjoy the publication at your convenience. I'm sure that you'll find the articles both timely as well as full of great content.

Long time member firm RJC Architects is generously providing us with a site tour of the brand new County Operations Center in Kearny Mesa, I hope you can make it. See page 3 for more info on this wonderful event planned for August 18th.

Last but certainly not least, Canstruction 2011 is fully underway— plan to come see the structures our teams are developing, on display October 19-23 in Horton Plaza.

Wishing you continued success,

Dana Sather, SDA CDFA
Chapter President

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Chapter News

New Board of Director Positions

We are pleased to announce the appointments of the following positions:

Kellyn Sanderson, Treasurer
Erin Flynn, Recording Secretary

We greatly appreciate Kellyn's and Erin's support and commitment to the San Diego Chapter.

Thank you very much!!!



For Your Info

The Basic Components of a Compensation System

As a reflection of leadership's strategy about how it values its employees, a well-established compensation system allows employers to optimize on employee engagement, productivity, financial resources, and organizational goals.

Consider the following components and how to apply them into your business today:

- * **Organizational Goals.** Make sure to pay employees for their individual performances as well as reward them for efforts which support the business goals of the company, department, and/or team.
- * **Employee Communications.** Realistically communicate the company's compensation program. Ensure whatever the message conveys, it is done so in manner that is fair, competitive, appealing and respectable. If the market conveys a particular value and the employer offers below the market value, then employee dissatisfaction and turnover rates will likely increase.
- * **Rewards and Recognitions.** Ensure that project recognition is differentiated from individual recognition; in doing so, each employee's value and relevance can be more easily identified.
- * **Timely Acknowledgements.** Pay attention to the timing of rewards since desired performance should be rewarded as quickly as possible.
- * **Simple Measures.** Keep performance measures as simple as possible, and limit the number of measures to track.

Taking care of employees with a well-designed and well-communicated compensation program will help in the long-term investment of your employees as the company's strongest asset.

REPRINT From NPS HR Advisor Newsletter, August 2011

The U.S. DOL's Free Smartphone App...Made for Your Employees, Part I

On May 9, 2011, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the launch of its first smartphone application, the "DOL-Timesheet" designed specifically for employees. In a DOL news release that same day, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis stated that by leveraging "increasingly popular and available technology ...this app will help empower workers to understand and stand up for their rights when employers have denied their hard-earned pay." However, this tool can be problematic for small to mid-sized businesses. Employers need to take extra caution to ensure that employees are absolutely paid correctly, complaints are handled effectively, and recordkeeping is maintained accurately.

The Timesheet App. Currently available only for the iPhone and iPod Touch, the app helps employee capture pay information and educates them about their wage and hour rights.

- * **Timesheet:** First of all, a user names one or more employers. Then, by creating a timesheet for each employer, the user notes the hourly rate of pay, identifies the company-defined workweek, and tracks the hours worked (including break time, meal periods, and overtime hours).
- * **Summary:** In a daily, weekly or monthly format, the summary displays the timesheet for each employer, the hours worked, and the gross pay.
- * **Report:** The user can customize and easily email a report based on a date range and/or employer.
- * **Glossary:** This section covers basic information for usage of the app and, more importantly, provides additional reference and web links to wage and hour laws.

Contact: For further assistance, users can directly contact the U.S. DOL's Wage and Hour Division.

While the DOL-timesheet app has received only 35 reviews as of this publication, more employees will be informed of its availability, and the DOL with its committed worker rights education campaigns expects usage to increase. As awareness grows, employers also will face a number of new challenges. For example, may an employer prohibit employees from using the app while at work? What if discrepancies exist between the employer's and the employee's records? Issues such as these will be addressed in next month's Netpay news.

REPRINT From NPS HR Advisor Newsletter, August 2011

Member Info

SDA Membership Campaign

Half-Price Membership is now available for all new members!

Grow your career with SDA! If you join during the months of August or September, you will receive your membership half off! That means a professional membership for the remainder of 2011 will only cost \$112.50!

SDA's National Membership Committee and SDA Headquarters will be working in conjunction with chapter leadership and the entire SDA membership to promote the campaign nationally. Share the news with your colleagues who aren't members yet, and stay tuned for the 15 for 12 promotion coming October 1st!

Let's not be the "best-kept secret" in the industry and let everyone know the benefits of SDA. For less than the price of a cup of Starbucks four days a week, people can have access to the best information and networking opportunity in the A/E/C industry. Is it worth the price of a cup of coffee? Absolutely!!

Don't forget about Can-Struct a Member. Any participating firm in this October's Canstruction event without an SDA member is entitled to a free national membership.

IRS Increases Mileage Rate to 55.5 Cents per Mile

Did you know? The rate has increased to 55.5 cents a mile for all business miles driven from July 1, 2011, through Dec. 31, 2011. This is an increase of 4.5 cents from the 51 cent rate in effect for the first six months of 2011, as set forth in Revenue Procedure 2010-51.

In recognition of recent gasoline price increases, the IRS made this special adjustment for the final months of 2011. The IRS normally updates the mileage rates once a year in the fall for the next calendar year.

Independent Contractor or Employee?

Does your firm use outside workers for some jobs? This can result in significant tax breaks if the workers are properly classified as independent contractors rather than employees.

Key point: If a worker is an employee, your company must withhold federal income tax and employment taxes from his or her wages. In addition, your business is responsible for paying the employer's share of federal payroll taxes. Conversely, if a worker is characterized as an independent contractor, your company isn't liable for these payroll tax obligations.

In addition, employers aren't required to offer independent contractors the same fringe benefits that regular employees receive, which can result in extra savings. However, it's not always easy to distinguish independent contractors from employees. There are several factors the IRS and courts examine but it often boils down to a "control" issue. If you control how, where and when the worker does the job, he or she is usually classified as an employee.

Unfortunately, no single factor determines a worker's status. In past cases, the Tax Court looked at these seven questions:

1. What degree of control is exercised by the business? Under this test, the court examined how much control the company exerted over the way the services were performed. But exercising control is not required in an employer-employee relationship, the Tax Court noted, as long as the company has the right to direct a worker if necessary.
2. Which party invests in "work facilities," used by the individual? "The fact that a worker provides his or her own tools generally indicates a non-employee status," the Tax Court explained.
3. Does the individual take any financial risk? "A worker's opportunity to earn a profit and assume risk of loss may indicate a non-employee status," the Court stated.
4. Can the business discharge the individual? "Generally, an employer's right to discharge an employee indicates an employer-employee relationship," the Tax Court noted.
5. Is the work an integral part of the company's regular business? An employer-employee relationship is supported when workers perform a service essential to the success of a business operation.
6. How permanent is the relationship? The Tax Court stated that "a transitory work relationship may point toward a non-employee status."
7. What kind of relationship do the parties believe they are creating? Entering into a written agreement that states a worker is an independent contractor indicates a non-employee relationship. However, a contract alone is not enough. "If an employer-employee relationship exists, characterization by the parties as some other relationship is immaterial," according to the Tax Court.

SDA Upcoming Events

SDA Site Tour: San Diego County Operations Center

RJC Architects is the architect for the \$531 Million redevelopment of the San Diego County Operations Center in the Kearny Mesa area of San Diego. This design/build project is the largest capital facilities project in the history of the region.



The existing 37.2 acre site houses a wide variety of County functions, which were previously conducted in aging facilities that dated from the 1950's and 1960's. The master plan provides 900,000 square feet of new offices, a 15,000 square foot Conference/Training Center, renovation and expansion of a 40,000 square foot Fleet Maintenance Center, and two parking structures for 4,500 cars. The RJC plan was selected for its civic character, its ability to create a compact, pedestrian-oriented campus, and its ability to maintain on-going business operations during redevelopment. The project consolidates and expands County operations to improve operating efficiency.

Join RJC's Project Manager, Brian Schmitt, for a site tour of the new San Diego County Operations Center – the largest capital facilities project in the history of the region! Brian will conduct a tour of the construction site for Buildings 203, 204, (pursuing LEED Gold) and the Conference Center, which will be certified at the Platinum level. The campus offers an inviting and comfortable place for both employees and customers and establishes a new benchmark for future development in Kearny Mesa. Don't miss this opportunity to tour this landmark project!

When: Thursday, August 18th 2:30-4:30 P.M.

Presented by: Brian Schmitt, AIA, RJC Architects

To be held at: 5555 Overland Avenue, Kearny Mesa (site map will be provided closer to program date)



Construction 2011

Construction 2011 is coming soon!

The 7th annual Construction event will take place October 19-23, 2011 at Horton Plaza.

There is still time to enter your team!

Email Steven Glynn for more info at sglynn@aerotek.com.

We hope all of your firms will participate and make this a huge year to donate food to our charities!

This year Construction is also offering a raffle! For a \$1 donation you will be entered for a chance to win some great prizes, like a romantic getaway for two including a two night stay at a bed and breakfast (Julian Meadow View Inn) and a \$75 gift certificate to Jeremy's On The Hill, located just west of Julian, California.

For more info on how to enter and see other prizes, check out the Construction San Diego website:

<http://www.constructionsd.org/raffle2011.html>



SDA San Diego Member Firm Profile:



RJC ARCHITECTS



County Operations Center Building 201

RJC Architects Inc. founded in 1992, offers expertise in architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, and project management. Our firm currently has a staff of twenty-one, including eight licensed professionals. Our firm is located in San Diego and provides services throughout the southwest.

Our consulting practice is characterized by our passion and ability to create places that enhance human potential and enrich human experience. We create value for our clients by creating environments that respond to their functional, economic, and spiritual needs.

Sustainability and a concern for our environment is an intrinsic part of our approach to design and a recognizable

feature of our office culture. We actively pursue sustainable opportunities within all of our projects and help our clients to find assistance through utility company rebates. We apply this approach as a matter of good stewardship, regardless of the projects specific certification goals. We have LEED Accredited professionals on our staff.

Our clients are full partners in the design process. We are widely recognized for our ability to foster partnerships among complex, multilevel user groups. More than 80% of our new business is directly attributable to repeat clients. This and our growing list of design awards speaks to the satisfaction of our clients and our ability to give form to their dreams.

We have completed design and renovation projects on more than 1,000 buildings. Our clients are concerned with life-cycle costs and operating budgets, as well as initial



West City Center, San Diego Community College

construction costs. As a result, we can offer specialized expertise in energy efficient, low maintenance buildings with low operating costs. Our success in this regard has been enhanced by our ability to provide early, thorough, and accurate cost estimates as a basis for design.

The respect of our peers is reflected in the leadership positions our partners have assumed within the design community. James Robbins, AIA is past president of AIA San Diego and has been a Director of the AIA California Council. Janene Christopher is past president of Women in Architecture.

“Our consulting practice is characterized by our passion and ability to create places that enhance human potential and enrich human experience”



Golden Hill Fire Station 11

