

LA Stands for Landscape Advocacy – Rich Risner, CCASLA Director and Tracy Morgan Hollingworth, CCASLA Executive Director

How many times have you introduced yourself to potential clients and in business settings and said “I’m a Landscape Architect” just to see a quizzical look on that person’s face who has no concept of what a landscape architect does.

Our Chapter and the other three ASLA Chapters in California banded together to create the California Council of ASLA (CCASLA) and have been lobbying state legislators and their staff for over three decades. CCASLA has a new website at www.cc-asla.org where we invite you to view the legislation that we are tracking in Sacramento and refer to our Chapter newsletter CCASLA columns each quarter to see what new laws and regulations CCASLA is monitoring and weighing in on with the unified efforts of our four state Chapters.

Recently though, many of the other similar design professions have been making noise that they are the “go to” industries for everything sustainable and water-related and have made their presence known at City and County meetings and in more targeted meetings and programs with the local water agencies.

ASLA San Diego will be embarking on a path to involve more of our members in local, state and national initiatives to address new regulations impacting Water Conservation, Climate Change and Land Use changes that can impact our profession but, most importantly, we want to build more recognition by elected officials and key policy staff regarding our profession’s policy and practice knowledge to help solve environmental issues that will work in the real world.

The LA (Landscape Advocacy) Platform we are developing will identify local Chapter members who can speak at public meetings, forums and policy making committees to educate decision makers regarding the guidance landscape architects can provide for sound policies impacting water, air and land use.

We know we need to use all the communications tools that are available through print, online and social media that can reach all the generations and also inspire the future generation of landscape architects who have very different values and interests than those who are currently retiring.

If all four of our ASLA California Chapters can meet with key agency officials and offer our expertise, we will be the “go to” profession to advise how to successfully implement new water conservation policies when the next Governor decides to roll back water use even further. We can advise local water districts regarding how to separate the monitoring of indoor and outdoor water use so a new law (SB 606), which will be implemented by local water districts in 2022, can successfully require indoor water use to be restricted to 55 gallons per person per day without severely reducing outdoor water uses.

We ask you to join us in this effort by offering to meet with your local and state elected officials. We have the ability to set up several meetings in the upcoming months (state officials will be in their districts during the July-August interim break) and many City and County officials have legislative breaks in the same summer months.

Email us at Rich@grounded101.com or ASLASD@sbcglobal.net and tell us what City, County or State officials you would like to meet with and we will find Board leaders and state Directors to join those meetings with you so we can be the best Landscape Advocates for our profession.