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President's Corner

By Dee Dee Jackson

I am humbled, honored, and privileged to serve as your chapter president this year. I would like to thank the board members and directors for their roles in our chapter, as I am inspired by their commitment to SDA and all of their achievements.

So far we've accomplished a lot in 2019, and there's so much more to be done! In January we held our annual strategic planning retreat where we spent the day coordinating schedules for business meetings, monthly educational seminars, volunteer opportunities, networking events and much more. In February we had an informative tax update seminar and in March we had a fantastic introduction to Adobe Creative Suite seminar. I hope to see you all at our next educational seminar on Thursday, April 18, 2019 at Lutron Experience Center in Irvine. This month's topic is 'CyberSecurity' presented by FBI agent Bryan Willet with DarkHound SecOps.

Are you excited to travel to Spokane, WA this year for the SDA national convention, EDSymposium19? If you can't make it, those of us attending will share our new knowledge and experience at the May 23rd lunch seminar. And a big congratulations to Betsy Nickless and Natalie Newman on winning the national convention scholarships. I look forward to reading their written synopsis of their experiences at the conference. And watch for the social media posts on Facebook & Instagram during this time.

Daylight saving time is here, the Painted Lady butterfly migration was magical, and spring has sprung! I've lived in California my entire life and I've never experienced this much rain. I'm really looking forward to warmer weather in the coming months!

Wishing everyone a happy spring!

Dee Dee Jackson
OC Chapter President



It's National Card and Letter Writing Month?

The U.S. Postal Service officially designated April National Card and Letter Writing Month in 2001 "to raise awareness of the importance and historical significance of card and letter writing."

Until somewhat recently, letters were commonplace. These days, letter writing is a lost art. When was the last time you took the time to write a letter? Well, I'm asking you to consider picking up a pen and paper and taking a few minutes to write a letter to someone. Why? Well for one sending cards and letters makes people feel good. And because snail mail deserves a lot more love. Everything about a card or letter screams "somebody cares".

Letters let us pour our emotions out onto a page to share with others. Unlike texting or phone calls, letters demand our attention before writing – a pause to get a word, phrase, or sentence just right because we can't just push the delete button if we get it wrong.

So, dig out those pens and paper and get to writing!

IDEAS FOR NATIONAL LETTER WRITING MONTH

- Get the kids involved and have them write a postcard to grandparents or a teacher
- Have the whole family write a card(s) to the elderly at your local senior's complex
- Remember that great gift you received at Christmas? Write a letter to the person who gave it to you and let them how much you love it
- Send your cousin a card just because you can
- Leave an encouraging note in your local cafe for the next person to find
- Send a piece of snail mail to the first person to comment on your latest Instagram post
- Thank a friend for seeing you for who you are or share a favorite memory you have with them

There are so many other ideas that you can add to this list.

YOUR SEMINAR TOPIC SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME!

Are there business topics or computer programs you would like to suggest for an upcoming seminar? Are you interested in holding a presentation, or do you know a business professional in the A/E/C industry who would be interested?

Pease send your suggestions to Paul Blanchard at paul@pjhm.com

All suggestions, topics, programs and presenters are subject to review by the SDA/OC Board.

Upcoming Lunch Seminars

- ♦ **April 18, 2019**
CyberSecurity Awareness Training
presented by an FBI Agent with
Darkhound Security
- ♦ **May 23, 2019**
EDSymposium19 Recap from
attendees at the SDA National
Convention
- ♦ **June 20, 2019**
TBD
- ♦ **July 18, 2019 - Rock the Yacht**
Social & Networking Cocktail Cruise
- ♦ **August 22, 2019**
Emergency Preparedness
presented by Irvine Police Dept.
- ♦ **September 19, 2019**
TBD
- ♦ **October 17, 2019**
TBD
- ♦ **November 21, 2019**
Roundtable and Annual Business
Meeting
- ♦ **December 8, 2019**
Annual Holiday Potluck and 2020
Officer Installation

Watch for email notifications or check out our
webpage calendar for updates
www.sdaoc.org

Lunch seminars are held each month from
11:30am—1:00pm
at the Lutron Experience Center
2458 Dupont Drive, Irvine CA 92612

2019 Strategic Planning Meeting

by Michelle O'Brien, Douglas Pancake Architects

The SDA Orange County Board of Directors started the new year with a very productive strategic planning meeting on January 12th, working from our '2020 Vision' plan. Nine board members sat together for six hours to look at the year ahead and brainstorm ideas, activities, strategies, and visions for the chapter throughout 2019. A lot of new business was on our agenda, but before diving in, we reviewed the officer position descriptions which National has incorporated into the new bylaws and standing rules. Chapter President, DeeDee Jackson, distributed a Roberts Rules Cheat Sheet and it was nice to refresh our memories on the parliamentary procedures and protocols of a business meeting that we follow for all of our chapter business meetings.



Looking ahead at the calendar, we scheduled all of the chapter business meetings for the upcoming year where each board member will take turns hosting the board of officers, directors, and any chapter members that would like to attend, to discuss ongoing and upcoming business each month. Next, we created a schedule for all of the year's lunch seminars! Our chapter takes great pride on having amazing speakers and seminars for our members to learn from each month to continue their education. We all know things are constantly changing in the A/E/C world and it is up to us as design firm administrators to always be on top of what is new. We try to get a wide range of topics from IT to HR, making sure we get each PEG topic discussed while keeping them relevant and helpful for members and non-members of the A/E/C community. If you have any suggestions for lunch seminars, please contact Paul Blanchard, our new Education/Program committee chair!

SDA relies on sponsors for a handful of reasons, but an important reason is to help cover scholarships for our members. During our meeting, we voted to award two scholarships for EDSymposium19 in Spokane, WA which is a valuable offering of the Orange County to all members. SDA Orange County is also in the works of launching a new website! After discussing multiple options, we decided to pay for our current website hosting company, GoDaddy.com, to host for one more year while we transition the website over to allow us more freedom to update it ourselves and to make it more user-friendly.

Make sure to follow SDA Orange County on Instagram @sdaorangecounty; we posted our first photo at the planning meeting! We plan on being very active on social media throughout the year to update our members on exciting news and events and become more visible in the A/E/C community to attract new members! Follow us on Instagram and Facebook!

This productive meeting was a great way to start the year off to plan new, educational and fun events for our members. With warm weather ahead of us, we are excited for all that 2019 has in store for SDA Orange County!

Word Nerd: Is It Assure, Ensure, or Insure?

There is a difference between **assure**, **ensure**, and **insure**. **Ensure** has to do with making sure something's going to happen or not; **insure** has to do with purchasing some type of insurance to recoup some loss of something. **Assure** means you will promise something.

Can you use them in a sentence, please? Why yes, I can; here are some examples:

- I know I haven't attended the last two Membership Committee meetings, and now that my workload has lightened, I can **assure** you that I will attend next week's meeting.
- You said we gained two new members last month for a total of 40 members in our chapter. I can **assure** you that's not correct, and here's why: Even though our membership list shows those as two new members, I checked, and HQ said it has not yet received their membership fees. So, they are not official members until HQ receives their payment, which may or may not happen this month; thus, we only have 38 members in our chapter.
- The company announced the new phishing button will be installed within the week. "We want to **ensure** that employees have an easier way to report suspicious emails, and the PhishAlarm plug-in from Microsoft Outlook will do that for us. It will forward the message to our IT Service Desk and auto-delete the message from the employee's inbox," said the company's president.
- To **ensure** we increase our chances of gaining more chapter sponsorship, Jim has agreed to reach out to all his associates in Washington.
- Before we hold the A/E/C Scavenger Hunt, we should **insure** the Board of Directors for up to \$100,000.
- Now that HQ has a permanent location to work from, please **insure** the building with extra hurricane coverage.

For more about these words, [Merriam-Webster](#) is a good place to start.

Bonus info! Did you know that two of these Word Nerds are on the red flag list, according to AXA XL (formerly known as DPIC - Design Professionals Insurance Company)? Back in the day, SDA handed out a bookmark (from DPIC) that said, "Think twice before using any of the following red flag words in your contract!" Assure and ensure are on that list.

Judy Beebe, FSDA "Word Nerd: Is it Assure, Ensure, or Insure?"
SDA e-Wire, January 22, 2019

sdanational.org/blogpost/1244735/316567/Word-Nerd-Is-it-Assure-Ensure-or-Insure



CHAPTER BUSINESS MEETING SCHEDULE

April 4, 2019 5:30pm
at Douglas Pancake Architects

May 2, 2019 5:30pm
at ECORP Consulting, Inc.

June 6, 2019 5:30pm
at Steven Langford Architects

July 11, 2019 5:30pm
at Douglas Pancake Architects

Watch for email notifications or check out our webpage at www.sdaoc.org for updates.

All SDA/OC members are welcome to attend and a light dinner will be served. There is no fee to attend, but please RSVP.

January 2019 Lunch Seminar

Labor Laws and Employee Handbooks

You would think that a Human Resources and Employee Handbook seminar would be elementary, but Anita Nygaard, President, CORHR, Inc. presented a Labor Laws and Employee Handbooks seminar on January 17 that was awesome, filled with lots of great information and just the kind of program SDA is proud to present.

Here are some of the highlights:

Some fun for you – with the multiple recognized genders, the following have been suggested, according to Anita:

Ze/zir pronouns: “Ze is a writer and wrote that book zirself. Those ideas are zirs. I like both zir and zir ideas.”

<https://www.mypronouns.org/ze-hir/>

As a result of the Dynamex (2018) clarification, the hiring of independent contractors who perform similar services to the employer's business is not allowed. E.g., if you an architectural firm, you cannot hire an architect or drafter and send them a 1099. You could make them a temporary employee and make sure your employee handbook defines temporary, part time, and regular employees.

However, if they exceed the wait period, then they get benefits. Consider paying them through a temp agency.

DFEH Clarification: Harassment Prevention Training

This week, California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) clarified Harassment Prevention Training requirements for employers with 5 or more employees, as mandated under SB 1343. Per the DFEH, all supervisors and employees must receive compliant harassment training during 2019, even if they trained in 2018.

DFEH Links:

SB 1343 FAQs: https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2018/12/SB_1343_FAQs.pdf

Harassment Prevention Training Toolkit: <https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2018/12/SexualHarassmentandAbusiveConductPreventionTrainingToolkit.pdf>

POST OSHA 300a SUMMARY LOG FEB 1 – APR 30

Employers with 11 or more employees will need to post an OSHA 300a Summary log for each worksite, including total numbers of job-related injuries or illnesses from 2018. A Summary log needs to be completed and posted for each worksite from Feb 1 – Apr 30

<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/RKforms.html>

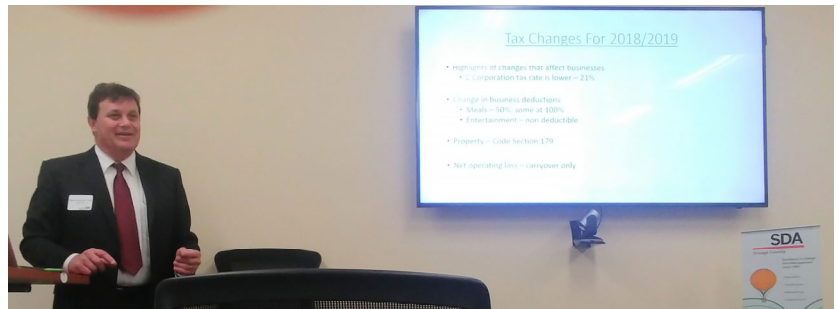


February 2019 Lunch Seminar

Tax and Audit Challenges Made Easy

Mark Simurda, Tax Partner, and Mark Murphy, Managing Partner, with LTSP, Inc. had a lot of material to cover as they presented a Tax and Audit Challenges Made Easy seminar.

As owners, managers and administrators of Architecture, Engineering and Construction companies, we always have questions about the accounting, tax and audit segment of our businesses. Mark and Mark reviewed some of these important topics:



Discussion of Entities

C Corp vs S Corp vs LLC vs LLP vs Sole Proprietor

Many differences such as fiscal year-end choices, deductibility of life insurance and health insurance premiums for owners, self-employment tax, W-2 wages or not?

Tax Changes for 2018/2019

Businesses

C Corp tax rate now at 21%

Business deductions

Meals – 50%, some at 100%

Entertainment is non-deductible

Advertising is deductible

Property -code section 179

IRS wants “contemporaneous documentation”

Individuals

\$10,000 limit on state and local taxes

No miscellaneous itemized deductions (DMV fees, CPA fees, safety deposit fees)

No moving expenses, unless military

Charity – 60% limit (increase)

20% deduction for pass through entities (199A)



Audit Practices

401(k) plan contributions must be deposited in a timely manner. Small plans, typically seven days.

Crackdown on “independent contractors” in the state of California.

What is definition of “compensation”? Know your plan provisions. Typically defined as W2 wages

Forfeitures – disposition will be defined by the Plan Document.

March 2019 Lunch Seminar

Introduction to Adobe Creative Suite

The Introduction to Adobe Create Suite seminar, presented by Jennie Grunstad, Marketing Coordinator at Stephen Dalton Architects and a member of the SDA San Diego Chapter, was fantastic. For a lot of beginners who sat in that room she was awesome, very informative, and gave great instructions. She made us want to go back to our offices to try to replicate what she showed us and gave us the confidence that we could do it.

Jennie demonstrated step-by-step on how to create a brochure in Adobe Illustrator. She shared tips from how to scale proportionally to creating a clipping mask (an object whose shape masks other artwork so that only areas that lie within the shape are visible – like a photo inside a circle used for resumes). She showed us keyboard shortcuts like how to duplicate an object, adding text, and scaling from the center, but also showed us how to do those from the toolbar too.



Here are some of Jennie's other 'Helpful Hints' that she shared:

- File organization is so important. Create an image resources folder that you can pull images from. And create a templates folder to save all the different templates you use for different projects and/or services that you can pull from. We got an 'aha' moment when she mentioned that it's always good to start fresh!
- Align: Window > Align. Use 'Align Panel' to align objects along the axis you specify on your artboard.
- Rulers: View > Rulers > Show Rulers. Then click on ruler and drag to create guidelines. Adding an additional layer and inserting rulers there can help minimize the visibility of guidelines.
- Use 'Flatten' for file size reduction.

Jennie shared some other helpful resources that you may be interested in searching for on the web:

Free High-Resolution Photos – www.unsplash.com

Free Typefaces – www.dafont.com

Quick Graphic Design App – www.canva.com

Wish we had more time to go into other design tools available in Creative Cloud. Maybe we can talk Jennie into coming back for an 'Introduction to Photoshop' presentation at a later date.

Member Profile

Spotlight on: Lindsay Altobello

I'd like to introduce Lindsay Altobello, Operations Coordinator at TWINSTEPS architecture, a fully service architecture firm that specializes in Healthcare, Medical Office, Commercial, Industrial/ Manufacturing, Technology and Lab Projects.

Ms. Altobello handles all firm operations, the creation of policies & procedures, contract management, vendor and consultant coordination, company and client events, marketing, HR activities, new hire onboarding, hiring, new office leasing and construction, and social media. She has been with TWINSTEPS for one year and says they are a small firm that is rapidly growing, so she wears many hats! When asked what's on her desk right now, she said *"water, coffee, tea and a breakfast shake, schedules, contracts, resumes and lease agreements and most importantly my helpful planner."*



Lindsay became a member of SDA in September 2018 and hopes to play a more active role as soon as she has the time! She says her favorite thing about SDA is *"the ability to have others that know your industry or position's struggles and assist in helping you find solutions that make you a stronger professional and aide in supplying our companies with the best in our industry"*.

LET'S GET PERSONAL...

Tell us about your family. My husband's name is Preston. We have been married for 3 years, but together for 11. He is an Art Installer which is fun since some of my firm's projects use his services. We have a 2-year-old daughter named Hartley and she's the biggest joy in my life.

What is your favorite family tradition? Christmas Eve with my entire family. We have a huge pajama party, with lots of authentic Mexican food, we play games and enjoy the holiday with everyone.

If you weren't doing this... you'd be doing? I have always wanted to go to culinary school. I would love to own a restaurant and work side by side with my family.

What are three goals for the next year? 1) Becoming the Director of Operations. 2) Learning to take more time for myself and focusing more on self-care. 3) To be able to read 2-3 books a month.

What's on your bucket list? Obtaining my master's degree. Having a second child. Buying my first home and buying a second home in Palm Springs. And taking a big family vacation to Europe.

What's the best advice you ever received? Know your worth, never settle personally or professionally.

What do you do when you're not at work? Spending time with my little family of three doing outside activities. We love the beach and finding new parks for our little one. Nothing is better than being out and about with each other.

Do you have a favorite quote? *"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."* – Maya Angelou

If you could have any one superpower, which would you choose? Cloning myself so I can be in two places at one time. I would love to be able to work and be with my daughter at the same time.

CONTINUED ON PAGE - 9

Which three individuals, living or dead, would you like to eat dinner with most? My grandfather, just to have one last moment with him. Joan Rivers — she is one of my all-time favorite celebrities. And Walt Disney, his forward thinking and vision for what Disney started as and what it is today is amazing.

Favorite music? Old School Hip Hop, Funk/ Soul Music, Motown (what played in my house as a kid)

Television Shows? Anything Housewives of any location (it's my guilty pleasure)

Radio Station? Pandora – Erykah Badu Radio

Magazine/Newspaper/Blog? People magazine, Orange County Register, anything mommy or beauty related

Website? Pinterest, Amazon

Books / Genre? Biographies, Autobiographies and Memoirs

Artist? Andy Warhol - I love Pop Art

Who you follow on social media? Family members, friends, mommy bloggers and beauty bloggers

Where is your favorite place in the world? London. It's the most magical place I have ever been.

What is the best concert you ever attended? Janet Jackson. I have seen her three times and it's amazing every time.

What's the last book you read? *This Will Only Hurt A Little* by Busy Philipps

Who would you most like to swap places with for a day? My daughter, I love her view on everything she expresses pure joy so often I would like to remember what that is like.

If you were a crayon, what color would you be? Pink Flamingo it was my favorite as a child.

Have you ever met anyone famous? Yes, numerous famous celebrities here in Orange Country through my experience working in retail.

Who is someone you really admire? My grandmother. She has always been the leader of our family and her strength and ability to be positive regardless of the circumstance shows such courage and strength.

Any other interesting tidbits worthy of print that you'd like to share?

I am a member of **Girls Inc.** It's a non-profit organization that serves girls ages 6-18 that supports, mentors, and builds up the future of young girls. It inspires young girls to be strong, smart and bold through different programs that focus on self-esteem, education, professional development and social skills. It's a wonderful organization with wonderful programs and I urge anyone who has some time to look into this organization. www.girlsinc.org



JOB BOARD



Did you know that SDA maintains a job board?
Our board includes current job listings in the A/E industry,
as well as qualified personnel looking for a position.
As the AIA maintains its own job board for licensed architectural staff,
our board includes administrative positions.

If your firm is looking for a person with certain qualifications, or if you know of someone who is looking for a position in an A/E firm, please contact Betsy Nickless at betsy@sladesign.com



SDA/OC MEMBER ANNIVERSARYS

Wendy Woolsey - 22 Years

Marcy Fields - 17 Years

Paul Blanchard - 4 Years

Debra Vaught - 2 Years

**The achievements of an organization
are the results of the combined efforts
of every individual.**

**Congratulations on another successful
year in your career and Happy Anniversary!**

SDA/OC Member Profile

**SDA/OC values all of its members
and would like to spotlight you in an
upcoming newsletter!**

If you are interested or need more information,
please contact Natalie Newman at
nnewman@ecorpconsulting.com

It's your time to shine!



DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW US ON



CERTIFIED DESIGN FIRM ADMINISTRATOR (CDFA) CERTIFICATION

SDA Certification meets a rigorous standard of experience and expertise in design firm management and administration. It adheres to the ethics and responsibilities of the profession as outlined in the SDA Code of Ethics. Certified administrators have enhanced marketability. This is often shown in increased earnings, career security, and respect.

- Are you ready for an opportunity to advance your knowledge in the A/E/C industry?
- Would you like to make yourself more valuable to your employer?
- Are you interested in continuous learning and growth?

If so, then sign up today to earn the CDFA (Certified Design Firm Administrator), SDA's credential demonstrating your expertise in key areas of office administration, finance, marketing, human resources and project administration and management. This voluntary CDFA program shows employers that you are dedicated to the industry and to your own personal and professional development.

The very best part is that our chapter has a **scholarship** for those who earn their CDFA. You will be reimbursed for the cost of the CDFA program upon earning this important credential.

For any questions about this CDFA scholarship, eligibility, study groups, or for more information, contact Penny Nelson, CDFA, SDA National Certification Committee Chair: pennyn@pancakearchitects.com

Sponsors

BECAUSE your contribution has a positive impact in the A/E/C firms you do business with.

Thanks for being such an important influence on our organization, and we truly appreciate having you as a sponsor. With your help, we have been able to host great seminars and provide educational scholarship opportunities for our members, which keep these design firm administrators and managers at the forefront of new ideas and changes that the industry faces.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER AND BECOME A SPONSOR

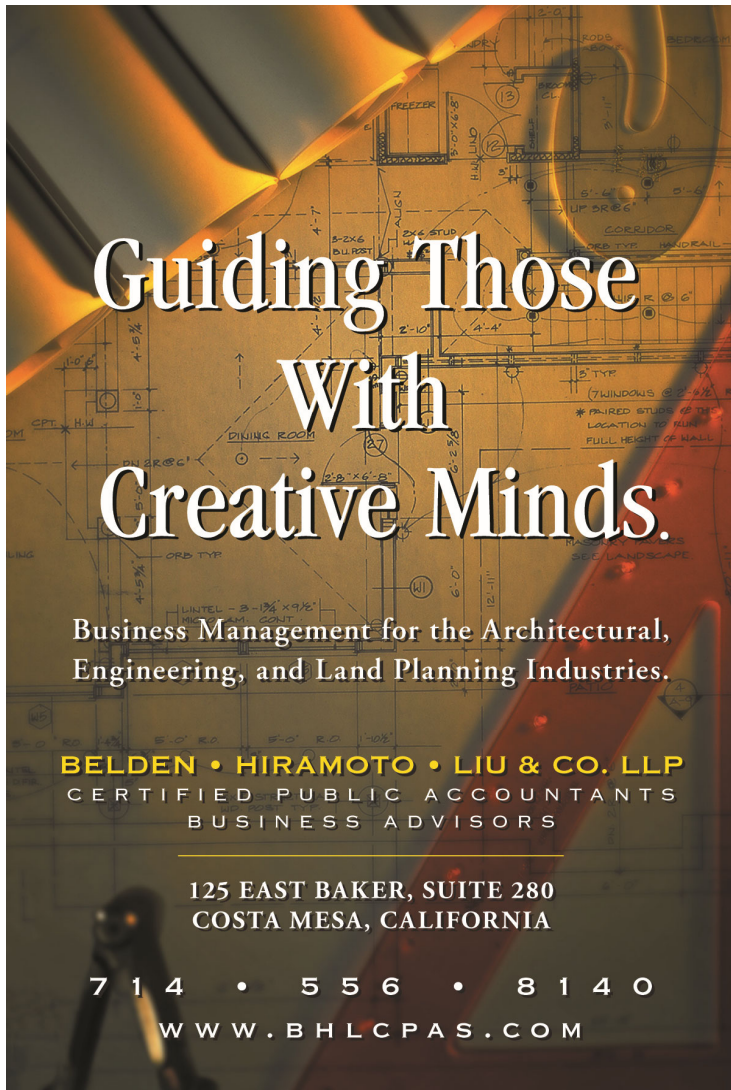
For information regarding sponsorship, please visit our website at www.sdaoc.org
or contact Cheryl Champagne at cchampagne@tk1sc.com



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SDA NATIONAL

News & Press



EDSYMPOSIUM19
Spokane, WA
May 16-18, 2019

The SDA National Convention, EDSymposium19, will be held in Spokane, Washington, Thursday, May 16, 2019 through Saturday, May 18, 2019.

Are You Registered?

Are you donating a raffle prize?

Is your firm donating promotional items to the swag bags?

For more information, check out the SDA National webpage at <https://www.sdanational.org/>

Webinars & Virtual Meetings

April 16, 2019

Quarterly Town Hall Call / Virtual Meeting

April 23, 2019

Business Etiquette from A-Z / Virtual Meeting

May 16—18, 2019

SDA National Convention - EDSymposium19 - Spokane, WA

To register, please visit the SDA National website: www.sdanational.org

Did you know... You can listen to recordings from previous webinars.

If you missed out on one of the many webinars that the SDA has hosted, order the recording(s) today! SDA's webinars target every level of design firms. These programs will enhance your performance, expand your knowledge, and allow you to build a strong community of peers. You can brush up on your own knowledge or train your entire staff. You can find them in the SDA Store under Webinar Recordings.

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The Orange Press



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www.sdaoc.org

Do you have a great idea for an article and would like to see it featured in our next newsletter?

If so, contact our Editor Natalie Newman

c/o ECORP Consulting, Inc. at nnewman@ecorpconsulting.com.