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GRAction

a government relations newsletter published by the association for interior design professionals

January 11, 2007

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Interior Design Laws

Happy New Year!

GRA activity was at an all-time peak for IIDA Chapters in 2006 and 2007 looks to be just as active. If your New Year's resolution included getting more involved in your local or state design community, I hope you will contact your chapter, coalition or regulatory board to see how you can assist them with their efforts this year.

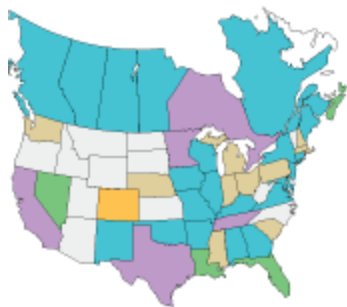
This edition of GRAction highlights an article written by Cindy Coleman, a highly respected designer and educator in Chicago. This article comes from my own Illinois Interior Design Coalition, which Cindy is involved with assisting our public relations efforts to connect with the public to clarify what a registered interior design professional does and why it is so important to utilize the registered professionals to protect their health, safety and welfare. I know you will all find this article useful with clients, friends, family and legislators in conversations you may have. The Illinois Interior Design Coalition is soliciting other publications to print this article, but you all are seeing it here first!

I wish you all a healthy, prosperous 2007,

Carrie L. Fitzpatrick
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Legislative Grants Awarded

of North America



- Title Act
- Practice Act
- Permitting Statute
- Legislation Introduced
- Title Act Enacted, Practice Act Introduced

2007 Membership Renewals & Legislative Grant Donations

Renew your IIDA membership for 2007 now by clicking [here](#). Students, remember to fill out a [new application](#) for 2007. Also, don't forget to include an additional contribution to support IIDA's legislative grant program.

Get Published in GRAction

Do you have an article or image to share? Submit content and images related to bill language, codes, coalitions, construction,

IIDA received legislative grant proposals from twenty-five (25) chapters this year. The proposals reflect a broad range of GRA pursuits ranging from upgrading current title and practice acts to implementing and enforcing existing statutes. Several chapters indicated a need to increase the number of registered / certified interior designers with integrated marketing efforts via legislative web sites, brochures, and educational events. Each Chapter will be awarded a grant check in person at the Winter CLC February 16-18, 2007.

*This issue of GRAction features an article from Cindy Coleman, a partner in the Chicago-based design and communications firm **Frankel + Coleman**. Cindy teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is a contributing editor for **Interior Design** magazine.*

[Nice Asset](#) (PDF)

The term professional implies achieving a certain level of education, experience and qualification. Let's face it, we are all in a hurry, and we assume professional status by title: Doctor, Attorney, or Accountant. It's the peace-of-mind factor when you consider all that's at stake: money, time, reputation, and the fact that you'll have to live with the outcome of the engagement. Oddly, when it comes to hiring an interior designer, title alone won't cut it. You'll need to dig deeper to match a designer's qualifications with your expectations.

Aren't all interior designers the same? There's an old communication adage that says if it takes longer than a three-floor elevator ride to explain something, the something is poorly defined. Defining the profession of interior design falls into this category. That's because interior design is a hybrid profession whose responsibilities and authorities trace back to architecture, the fine and decorative arts, and even home economics. The title interior designer, until recently, was (and in some states still is) open to anyone willing and able to voice an aesthetic thought. Mixed together within this melting pot of interior designers are the interior decorators, interior designers and the architects, the do-it-yourselfers, the television celebrities, and those with advanced, professional degrees.

Fortunately for the public, this is beginning to change thanks to some concerned national and regional design associations who are pushing hard to secure licensing for interior designers, on a state-by-state basis. When in place, this move limits the use of the title interior designer to only those who meet the qualifying educational and professional standards. An important move, when you consider what's at risk.

What is at risk? At risk is an important asset: The places we inhabit. It doesn't matter whether it's your kitchen, your home, or your workplace, where you hangout,

interior design laws and regulations, legislation, and other issues relating to the practice of interior design.

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or shop; these places are all assets. In view of the amount of money that goes into the purchase or lease of a space, not to mention the cost of a build-out, it should perform, and it should provide a positive return on investment. To get this positive return, you need a qualified designer—someone who will go beyond making your asset simply look good—it has to work, too.

What does a professional interior designer do? The profession of interior design has its own body of knowledge that makes it unique, distinguishing it from its closest allies, interior decoration and architecture.

The central focus of a professional interior designer concerns the specific knowledge required for the design of space for habitation and human interaction. Making aesthetic choices; color, furniture and finish recommendations, are all part of the basic scope of service of a professional interior designer, but not its limitation. Embedded into the scope of work are considerations for protecting and enhancing the health, safety and welfare of the public.

The work of a professional interior designer is accomplished through a phased process that centers on being an advocate for the client or owner. The process begins with research and understanding the goals a client or owner has for the project, the budget and schedule implications for the scope of work, and continues through the design phases where the goals are given form. Next, a professional interior designer prepares documents for interior construction and specification and, on behalf of the client or owner, supports the pricing process. The designer coordinates, on an ongoing basis, with all outside consultants and stakeholders, and monitors the interior construction phase of the project through project completion to ensure the work, costs, and schedule, on behalf of the owner or client are all on track.

If it sounds complicated, it's because the process is. That's why having a professional on board to advocate will ultimately pay-off. If it sounds expensive, it's not; just consider what's at risk.

Now that you know, how do you get started? Referrals are a great way to get started. Look around and ask around. Most design associations like the International Interior Design Association (IIDA), www.iida.org, can provide you with names of qualified professional interior designers working in your area whose work is aligned with your project scope and goals. General contractors may also be able to provide a list of names from their own project experiences. Spend time to meet and interview a few designers so that you feel confident about your selection.

Interior design firms range in size from sole-proprietorships to large firms. The size of the firm doesn't dictate what kind of service you will receive, nor does it influence the cost of service. In general, most professional interior designers offer a similar scope of service. What should drive your choice for hiring a designer or design firm is



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a compatibility of project complexity, aesthetic, and an ability to communicate comfortably. Next, consider your budget and your mutual schedules and verify that there's alignment.

Throughout it all, be prepared to stay involved; consider yourself part of the team. Clients often feel that they should leave aesthetic decisions to the experts. This is wrong. If you are part of the decision process, the end result will be a better fit for your original goals. The last thing you want to say at the end of the project is, "I had no idea it was going to look like this." After all, it's your asset. Make it work!

— *Cindy Coleman*

Licensing / Registration / Certification

Licensure, registration and certification assists the profession in establishing and maintaining standards to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public. Visit IIDA's online [licensing guide](#) to find out what states and jurisdictions have interior design laws.

IIDA firmly believes that legal recognition, achieved through licensing, registration, and certification brings uniformity to the profession, defines responsibility, and encourages excellence in the interior design industry.

IIDA Participates in NCIDQ Annual Conference of Delegates Meeting

IIDA staff and board joined representatives from NCIDQ's member boards November 10 – 12 in Louisville, Kentucky to review current and proposed licensing and registration laws. Visit [NCIDQ](#) online for additional information on NCIDQ testing requirements, or, to view your personal CE record.

State GRA Updates

Arizona

[IDCA](#) hosted an informational session on October 26 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Nebraska

As the 100th [Nebraska Legislature](#) began on Wednesday, January 3, 2007, IIDA's Great Plain's Chapter was already hard at work with IDCNebraska on proposed interior design legislation for the upcoming session. In addition to working with the AIA Nebraska Government

California

[CCIDC](#) is scheduled to launch a new online marketing directory for Certified Interior Designers. The CID Pages will help Certified Interior designers display their personalized information and a photograph of their work.

Illinois

The [Carbon Monoxide Alarm Detector Act](#) was signed into law on May 8, 2006. The new state law requires carbon monoxide detectors in houses, condos, and apartments by January 1, 2007.

Maryland

[IIDA Mid-Atlantic](#) secured a legislative grant in support of a practice act to be considered by the 2008 Maryland legislature. The Mid-Atlantic chapter will also provide the Maryland Coalition of Interior Designers (MDCID) with \$1,000 from chapter funds, and WMCC and BCC have contributed an additional \$500 each. We believe that the success of this effort will help turn our region toward professional interior designer practice acts, and will ultimately facilitate similar acts in the remainder of the country.

Michigan

[CIDR](#) launched a new web site in support of the right to practice the profession of interior design.

Minnesota

The IIDA Northland Chapter, through its support of and participation in the Minnesota Interior Design Legislative Action Committee (MIDLAC), is preparing to re-submit a bill in early 2007. MIDLAC is also hosting several

Affairs Committee, the coalition is actively pursuing additional funds from a number of sources.

New Jersey

The final submittal date for the grandfathering application is April 27, 2007. In order to request an application, you must send a letter to:

James S. Hsu
Executive Director
Division of Consumer Affairs
New Jersey State Board of Architects
P.O. Box 45001
Newark, NJ 07101

It is highly suggested that interior designers plan to submit their 'grandfather applications' prior to this date.

Oregon

[IIDA's Oregon Chapter](#) has been leading the launch of the [Interior Design Collaborative – Oregon](#). In addition to holding meetings on the last Tuesday of every month, the chapter is supporting the collaborative with funds from a legislative grant to educate members about the health and safety implications of licensing / registration.

Pennsylvania

[IDLCPA](#) members are preparing to submit a bill in early 2007.

upcoming events including a CEU ON Designing for Children and Youth on January 9th, a CEU presented by Ms. Phyllis Moore, FASID at the [MN Legislative Kickoff, January 24th](#), Bowling for Bills III Fundraiser on February 1 and Rally Day at the St. Paul Capitol on February 21.

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