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2018 Ones to Watch: Joseph Gibbons, Principal at SWBR

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Name: Joseph Gibbons II, AIA

Title: Principal

Company: SWBR

Address: 387 East Main Street, Rochester, NY 14604

Year that you entered your current field? 1993

How did you get your start in your current field?

My background started with an early passion for drawing, design and architecture but also included working in the construction industry during my high school and college years. I believe this real-world experience in construction during this time helped me gain a better understanding of how to design and detail projects. My first professional jobs out of college were single-family residential design and architecture in a design-build construction setting, so these experiences helped to kick start my overall understanding of the business.

How do you contribute to the future of your industry?

I have spent the better part of my architectural career focused on the design of high quality residential housing specifically related to affordable and supportive needs. I believe that the demand for affordable workforce housing will increase in the upcoming years, and at SWBR we have a talented group of individuals who are committed to this purpose. My contribution at this stage is to make sure that each project starts with this in mind and is focused on the end result. We strive to create projects that will inspire those that will live there for years to come.

Who or what do you attribute to your success?

Like any business, it starts with strong mentors who believe in the work you are doing, give you some flexibility and trust that you will be successful in your work. If you are fortunate to have that, general hard work and persistence can help push the bar forward. You also need to always be slightly uncomfortable in what you are doing to be able to grow and advance the ball. I believe success is a team effort, so the more successful I can help make others, the better the outcome will

be for everyone involved.

How do you contribute to the future of your industry?

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How do you manage the work/life balance?

I no longer consider it a “balance,” as if you are doing one or the other. I like to think of it now more as “Work-Life Integration.” Our business now seems to run 24/7. It’s important now to recognize that this is probably the new normal going forward and individually accept our way of handling this. Technology now allows us the flexibility to work from anywhere, so the key for me is to recognize those times when I am truly off the clock, or when I can allow time to provide value to the business when I am not at the office.

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