



## **2025 Ones To Watch - Industry Leaders: Peter Bafitis, RKTB Architects**

April 22, 2025 - Spotlights



Peter Bafitis, AIA  
Managing Principal

“One of the defining characteristics of Peter’s career has been his ability to masterfully coordinate the various, often competing needs of complex projects, while also maintaining a commitment to design excellence. His housing work, such as 455 Central Park West in Manhattan and the prototype Monsignor Anthony Barretta Apartments in Brownsville, Brooklyn are represent transformative projects that demonstrate his commitment to projects that improve and enhance the urban context, cultural preservation, and lives of residents. Peter’s leadership of the AIA-NY Housing Committee, his housing advocacy, service to disadvantaged communities, and promotion of design excellence in affordable housing is evident in all he does. Peter has conceived, developed, and organized many programs, especially the Samuel Ratensky Memorial Lectures, and participated in numerous programs which have elevated the discussion of many key issues affecting housing and the urban environment. He has shown us through his professional work and his service activities that coordination and collaboration are not just facets of practice and knowledge but truly essential components.” - Lance Jay Brown, FAIA, DPACSA, President, Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization.

Recent goal and impact:

Recently the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented RKTB with a Leadership in Housing award, recognizing our firm’s long-standing commitment to and advancement of affordable housing in our city. In addition to burnishing our credentials in the housing field, this recognition by our peers validates our core mission and has invigorated our team’s efforts to achieve design excellence, especially among our younger staff.

Turning problems into opportunities:

The unexpected departure of a key team member prompted us to conduct a strategic review of the operational needs of the design studio they served in. We determined that integrating a technically proficient leader would not only enhance studio efficiency but also allow the principal heading that studio to dedicate more time to critical executive functions. We’ve successfully filled this role with a candidate whose skills and experience align perfectly with our objectives.

Best advice for new leaders:

Lead with integrity and vision, by setting a strong example, and learn to delegate responsibility.

Who was/is your role model and/or leadership mentor? Samuel Ratensky, the architect and public housing advocate who also served with the Monuments Men.

Sharing knowledge and expertise:

Throughout my career, I've consistently contributed to the affordable housing field through leadership roles in professional organizations, including many years as co-Chair of the Housing Committee for AIA-New York. These roles involve actively engaging with diverse audiences through meetings, seminars, and policy development. Beyond these organizational efforts, I've shared my expertise through presentations and panels at academic and civic conferences, and through published writings for professional audiences on key housing topics.

#### Giving Back:

Recently our firm and professional organization strategically lobbied government agencies and officials in support of a zoning policy we deemed highly beneficial for New York City. Through direct meetings, community board engagement, and social media outreach, we helped secure the policy's approval amidst significant controversy.

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