

AIA Northern Virginia Announces 2026 Canstruction Winners

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arlington, Va. – The Northern Virginia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Northern Virginia), in collaboration with Fashion Centre at Pentagon City, announced the 2026 Canstruction Northern Virginia Award winners at a reception held at Matchbox in Arlington, Va. Architecture firms were recognized with awards for their creative designs and innovative use of canned goods.

This annual community hunger relief initiative gathered over 17,500 cans of food estimated to be worth over \$32,000 which will be donated to the Capital Area Food Bank to aid in providing relief to Arlington County residents.

Six awards were given determined by a jury panel including Anh Tran, AIA, 2026 AIA Northern Virginia President and Director of Visioning & Measurement, LITTLE; Lessa Mayfield, AIA – Owner of LMA Architecture; Joseph McCoy, AIA – Founder & Principal of JMc Architects; Christopher Durant – General Manager for the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City. Minh Tran – Structural Engineer with BHKM Structural; Melissa Harmouche – Marketing Coordinator with MEP Designs; and Danilo Simic Restaurateur and Co-Owner of Nina May.

In addition, the public voted online over several days for their favorite featured in the People's Choice Award category.

Awards were given to architecture firm teams whose projects used the most cans, received the highest marks for design, showed the greatest structural ingenuity, best used the canned goods' labels to give life to their designs, and used cans for their structure that would best make a delicious meal.

"Canstruction Northern Virginia is a great demonstration of how architecture and design can be creative and fun, and extend beyond buildings. Even something as simple as a can of food can be used as a construction element," said Anh Tran, AIA, 2026 AIA Northern Virginia President and Director of Visioning & Measurement, LITTLE. "But most importantly, Canstruction is an exciting opportunity for architects, designers, and teams across our industry to use their design and problem-solving talents to support something that really matters. Food insecurity is a huge issue in this area, and every can used in these incredible sculptures helps make a difference for our neighbors. I think as architects, it's essential for us to consider where we can have beneficial impact."

AIA Northern Virginia thanks this year's program sponsors—MEP Designs, Inc.; Burke & Herbert Bank; BHKM Structural; and Nina May—as well as all Canstruction organizers, participants, and voters for helping to make the event such a success.

The 2026 Construction Northern Virginia Award Winners are:

Honorable Mention:

This is Fine – Designed and built by KGD

Honorable Mention:

Gotta Feed ‘Em All – Designed and built by Wiley|Wilson

Honorable Mention:

Painting the Town Fed – Designed and built by Jacobs

Honorable Mention:

Nourishing New Worlds – Designed and built by SAMAHA

Most Cans Award:

Nourishing New Worlds – Designed and built by SAMAHA

Best Meal Award:

Ogre-Coming Hunger – Designed and built by HGA

Structural Ingenuity Award:

Ogre-Coming Hunger – Designed and built by HGA

Best Use of Labels Award:

Bob the Beaver – Can We Build It, Yes, We CAN! – Designed and built by MTFA

Best Original Design Award:

Bob the Beaver – Can We Build It, Yes, We CAN! – Designed and built by MTFA

People’s Choice Award:

Gotta Feed ‘Em All – Designed and built by Wiley|Wilson

See photos of build night, and the final canned good sculptures on Social Media:

Instagram: @aianorthernvirginia

Facebook: @aianova

About AIA Northern Virginia

The American Institute of Architects Northern Virginia Chapter is a non-profit professional association representing more than 1,200 Northern Virginia architects, interns, and allied professionals. It encompasses 25 cities and counties in Virginia and was chartered by the [American Institute of Architects](#) in 1975. AIA Northern Virginia is one of five local components affiliated with [AIA Virginia](#). The Chapter offers professional development, networking, and outreach opportunities as well as tours and lectures to advance the knowledge of architecture and practice among professionals and promote awareness and appreciation of architecture among the public.

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