

Internship & Fellowship Program

“Building Southeast Michigan’s Future Through Design Excellence”

Program Overview

French Associates is committed to nurturing the next generation of architectural professionals through our comprehensive internship and fellowship program. We provide hands-on experience in all areas of architectural practice while contributing meaningfully to our communities’ revitalization and development initiatives.

Mission Statement

We believe the key to building a diverse emerging talent pipeline begins with early exposure to the architectural and interior design professions through meaningful experiences. Our program connects students to Southeast Michigan’s rich design heritage and dynamic future, providing access to skills, knowledge, mentorship, and real-world opportunities.



What You'll Experience



Real Project Impact: Work on projects that shape Southeast Michigan’s schools, municipalities, and commercial entities, retail organizations and faith-based communities.



Mentorship & Professional Development: Work alongside a licensed architect or architectural staff member for career guidance, technical training and insights.



Community Connection: Participate in design charrettes, public meetings and planning sessions.



Technical Excellence: Gain proficiency in AutoCAD, Revit, SketchUp, Adobe Suite, codes, documentation and sustainability.



Professional Network: Build connections through AIA Michigan networking events and collaborations with local partners.

Program Learning Tracks: *

- **Design & Visualization:** Drawing, 3D modeling, rendering, portfolio development
- **Technical Practice:** BIM (Building Information Modeling), construction documentation, codes, sustainability principles
- **Community Engagement:** Stakeholder communication, public presentations, cultural competency
- **Professional Development:** Project management, business management organization.

***Some Prerequisites Required**



Application Requirements and Selection Process

Phases: Application review → Portfolio evaluation → Interview → Notification within 3 weeks → Start Date and Orientation

- **All Applicants:** Application form, transcripts, resume with personal statement (250–500 words), portfolio/work samples, recommendations
- **High School:** Grades 9–12, GPA 3.0+, parent consent, creative samples
- **College Internship:** College enrollment, portfolio, technical software interest/experience
- **Fellowship:** Graduate/recent grad, comprehensive portfolio, research proposal, 3 references
- **Timeline:** Spring (March 1), Summer (Feb 1), Fall (Sept 1)

Success Stories & Alumni Network

Our alumni have advanced to leading firms and contributed to Southeast Michigan's community development.

- **Highlights:** National firm placement, leadership in local organizations, graduate studies, design awards & publications
- **Support:** Quarterly networking events, career mentorship, project collaborations, references, continuing education

Program Leadership

- **Program Director:** Dan Jerome, AIA, NCARB
- **Community Engagement Coordinator:** Suzanne Carlson, AIA, LEED AP, planning/development background
- **Advisory Board:** Senior Partners, Regional Planning Representatives, Community Leaders, Alumni, Academic Partners

Ready to Shape Southeast Michigan's Future?

Join us in creating architecture that serves communities, celebrates our region's heritage, and builds an inclusive, sustainable future.

- **Apply:** info@frenchaia.com
- **Contact:** 248-656-1377
- **Website:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/french-architecture/posts/?feedView=all>

French Associates is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to building an inclusive team that reflects the communities we serve.



Programming Opportunities

High School Exploration Program:

- Duration: 10-11 weeks (summer) or after-school program
- Focus: Students explore different areas of the firm, providing exposure, support, and contribution that feels real but not overwhelming. They are given tasks that are tactile, visual, or organizational, as something they can say “I helped make that.” These types of experience build both career interest and pride, and many students choose to explore additional learning opportunities in the areas that spark their interest.
- Example activities that students may participate in:

Architecture studio tasks

- Assisting with physical models (cutting, assembling, 3D printing prep).
- Drawing setup: organizing sheets, inserting title blocks, cleaning up linework under direction.
- Materials library upkeep: cataloging, organizing, and pulling finishes for pin-ups.
- Site + precedent research: simple web searches, pulling images, compiling reference boards.
- Redline shadowing: watching how designers correct drawings and making minor edits with guidance.
- Helping prep for client meetings: pinning boards, arranging presentation materials.
- Documenting studio life: taking photos of models, archiving drawings for the office record.

Interior design studio tasks

- Assisting with finish boards: cutting samples, labeling, assembling presentations.
- Updating the sample library: checking manufacturer updates, reordering, or filing.
- Pulling inspiration images for mood boards.
- Helping with furniture schedules (data entry, formatting).
- Organizing product binders/catalogs so designers can find what they need quickly.

Cross-studio, general exposure

- Sitting in on design reviews, presentations, or site visits (if liability allows).
- Learning the basics of BIM/CAD/Revit with a low-stakes tutorial project.
- Shadowing different roles: a project architect, interior designer, BIM manager, admin support.
- Helping with firm culture—social media snippets, graphics for an internal presentation, documenting events.
- Compensation: \$12–15/hour or stipend.



Programming Opportunities (Continued)

College Internship Program:

- Duration: 10–12 weeks (summer) or semester-long
- Focus: Students explore different areas of the firm, providing exposure and support with more training and technical skill development (CAD, BIM, Revit) that provides resume-worthy experience. They will contribute on real projects, which are double-checked by licensed staff, giving them both hands-on and intellectual experience like design thinking, problem solving and accurate documentation. Also, job shadowing with licensed professionals gives them that day-in-the-life experience of working in an architectural firm.
- Example activities that students may participate in:

Architecture studio tasks

- **Drawing production:** drafting plans, elevations, sections, and details in Revit/CAD with oversight.
- **3D modeling + visualization:** creating design options, rendering perspectives, diagramming.
- **Site + code research:** digging into zoning, building codes, or case studies to support design decisions.
- **Redline revisions:** making drawing corrections under direction of a project architect.
- Assisting with **spec writing** or editing standard details.
- Supporting **client presentations:** slide deck prep, diagrams, graphics.

Interior design studio tasks

- Developing **finish palettes** and assembling presentation boards with more independence.
- Assisting with **furniture and lighting selections**—research, pricing, spec sheets.
- Creating or updating **Revit families** for interiors.
- Coordinating with reps on material samples or product info.
- Drafting **reflected ceiling plans, furniture layouts, or finish plans** under supervision.

Cross-studio opportunities

- **Project shadowing:** sitting in on coordination meetings, site visits, client calls.
 - Exposure to **consultant coordination:** learning how structural, MEP, and landscape tie in.
 - **Technology and workflow training:** advanced Revit, BIM360, VR/AR walkthroughs.
 - **Marketing exposure:** helping with graphics, project sheets, proposal prep.
 - **Professional development:** attending firm-wide learning sessions, lunch-and-learns, or even contributing to design charrettes.
 - **Special Projects**
- Compensation: \$15–22/hour based on experience level



Programming Opportunities (Continued)

Advanced Design Fellowship:

- Duration: 12 months
- Focus: Created for recent graduates and advanced students, this program offers deeper experiences in design thinking, research and leadership opportunities. Fellows gain more responsibility than in traditional internships, deepening technical skills, contributing unique ideas, and preparing for licensure and leadership roles that make a real impact on communities.
- Example activities that fellows may participate in:

Architecture focus

- Leading small design studies or **concept explorations** on real projects (under principal guidance).
- Developing **research-based proposals**: sustainability strategies, educational design innovations, or community engagement models.
- Producing **competition entries** or special design initiatives for the firm.
- Exploring advanced **visualization tools** (VR/AR, parametric modeling, AI-driven design).
- Testing **prototype details** (mock-ups, performance analysis, daylight/energy modeling).

Interior design focus

- Driving **concept development** for studio or client projects (storytelling, narrative boards, experiential design).
- Investigating **emerging material technologies** (biophilic design, recycled/reclaimed finishes, smart materials).
- Creating **pilot layouts/furniture concepts** for flexible learning or civic spaces.
- Contributing to **design research reports**—documenting findings that inform future standards.

Cross-studio / firm-wide

- **Thought leadership writing**: authoring articles, white papers, or blog posts showcasing the fellowship work.
- Designing and facilitating **community engagement sessions** or workshops.
- Helping frame the **firm's design agenda** (future of K–12 learning environments, municipal resilience, etc.).
- Acting as a mentor for college/high school interns, reinforcing a ladder of growth.
- Presenting outcomes to leadership and clients with polished deliverables, not just internal notes.
- Compensation: \$25–35/hour plus stipend