

From: Presidents Office <presidents-office@cca.edu>
Date: Tue May 11 2021 11:34:34 GMT-0700 (Pacific Daylight Time)
Subject: [All Faculty] Remembering CCA Board Chair Art Gensler

Dear CCA Community,

It is with great sadness I write to share the news of the passing of California College of the Arts Board Chair and Trustee Art Gensler. Art passed away peacefully yesterday at his home in Mill Valley. He was a transformational leader within our CCA community, and his absence will be greatly felt. So too will his legacy.

For 11 years as a trustee and the past four as board chair, Art championed the role of art and design education as an engine for cultural and economic vitality. He was a generous supporter and inspired many others to invest in our students, faculty, and programs.

Art played a critical role in creating and implementing the multi-year plan for the unification of CCA's campuses in San Francisco, leading our work on every aspect from architect selection to the capital campaign. It has been my great privilege to partner with him on this work, which he approached with an intelligence, openness, and warm, enthusiastic manner that has defined his life and career, even as he grew his namesake company from a three-person studio with a homemade drafting table to the largest design firm in the world.

His focus on students—their talents, challenges, and potential—was unwavering. He inspired CCA to dream big and achieve more specifically for the benefit of our students. He thrived on campus, meeting with students and faculty, greeting visitors at events, and attending exhibitions and lectures. His philanthropic support for students has been unwavering as well, beginning with a gift to the CCA Library 27 years ago and continuing with growing generosity for a variety of programs year after year. Upon his passing, it was Art's wish that, in lieu of flowers, people give to diversity scholarships for CCA students. Gifts can be made at cca.edu/give.

Earlier this year, when Art announced he would step down from the Board of Trustees, we were fortunate to have the opportunity to celebrate his countless contributions to the CCA community with a video tribute and small virtual gathering. My wife Dee and I were also so pleased to have a chance to visit with Art and his friend Rita just a few weeks ago. We shared a bottle of wine, and I listened while Art, as ambitious and optimistic as usual, mused about people we should meet with to discuss the future campus.

This surely was the key to his success and longevity. He knew how to build things—ideas, businesses, skyscrapers, schools. Please join me in remembering Art Gensler with fondness and respect. While he will be greatly missed, his positive impact on our campus and community will live on for generations.

Sincerely,

Stephen Beal