

First 500 documents the achievements of Black women architects

A new global initiative has been launched to document the achievements of Black women architects from around the world. Called First 500, the initiative, founded and led by Tiara Hughes, aims to raise awareness about Black women architects and their accomplishments and will provide resources for students, practitioners and aspiring architects, and build a community for Black women in the field.



Currently, Black women architects make up less than 1% of all licensed architects in the United States. Raising concerns on this industry-wide equity gap, Hughes founded this global platform to elevate and celebrate Black women architects and their accomplishments, intending to provide a centralised community and resources for designers of all levels.

"When I finished my masters in 2015 and made the big move from Springfield, Missouri to Chicago, my goal was to connect with Black women architects and learn the ropes of the industry," says Hughes, founder and executive director of First 500.

"I quickly learned there was no central resource for this distinguished group and their accomplishments, and that of the 105,000+ licensed architects in the United States at that time, less than 500 of them identified as Black women."

"Equipped with this information, I founded First 500, a global initiative dedicated to celebrating and connecting Black women architects," Hughes adds.

Board members

First 500's board members include Adaeze Cadet, Danei Cesario, Dawn David-Pierre, Kiwana McClung, Latoya Kamdang, Lisa Cholmondeley, and Valarie Franklin, and the advisory council includes Anzilla Gilmore, FAIA; June Grant, FAIA; Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA; and Dina Griffin, FAIA.

MEET THE LEADERSHIP BOARD
AND ADVISORY COUNCIL OF
FIRST 500!



Board Members (left to right) Adaeze Cadet, Danei Cesario, Dawn David-Fierre, Kiwana McClung, Latoya Kamdang, Lisa Cholmondeley, and Valarie Franklin, and the advisory council includes Anzilla Gilmore, FAIA; June Grant, FAIA; Gabrielle Bullock, FAIA; and Dina Griffin, FAIA.

"Since its inception, First 500 has served as a crucial platform for advocacy and awareness, and instilled a sense of momentum in the industry, motivating Black women to increase their representation and expand their professional opportunities by getting licensed," explained a statement.

"The website now provides a permanent place to showcase their stories to inspire us all."

For more information, go to [First500.org](https://www.First500.org).

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For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>