

Structure and service

Tony Garcia '95 B.S.D.

The emotion a beautifully designed church can evoke is what led alumnus Jose Antonio (Tony) Garcia into architecture.

"Churches of any denomination can be very inspiring," he said. Garcia, who immigrated from Mexico as a child, grew up sketching and drawing caricatures. He gained an appreciation for architecture at an early age during his visits back to Mexico. "I was very intrigued by some of the older, more historic architecture," he said.

Garcia, a 1995 graduate, has been receiving attention and accolades for his work recently. He was the recipient of the 2014 American Institute of Architects (AIA) San Diego Chapter Young Architect of the Year Award and was awarded the 2015 City of San Diego Historical Preservation Award for contributions to the architectural rehabilitation of the George & Kathagene McCormack House, located adjacent to Morley Field and the Balboa Park Golf Course in the community of North Park. His architectural studio also was awarded an AIA San Diego Design Award of Merit for Architecture for its work on the Richard's Grove Pavilion in Windsor, Calif. in 2015. He also was named a 2010 California Senior Housing Design competition finalist, and has won two awards from San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyle for his design projects.

He credits his ASU education for giving him the ability to think critically about design.

"Critical thinking has helped me better learn the craft of architecture, as well as have empathy for others' points of view, which has enhanced my ability to work with many different people," Garcia said.

He began his career in architecture at CCBG Architects in Phoenix, focusing on large scale mixed-used projects. After traveling through Europe for three months, Garcia landed in San Diego to help establish a satellite office for CCBG. In 2005, Garcia founded A² (A Squared) Studios in San Diego with fellow owners (and ASU alumni) Jessie



Photo by: Kevin Sutton

Whitesides '95 B.S.D. and Vince Stroop '95 B.S.D. The studio focuses on residential and commercial work, as well as historic property renovations, public service work, hospitality and winery design projects.

During a studio class at ASU, Garcia participated in the charity Habitat for Humanity, and public service projects

continue to be a part of his focus as an architect today.

"Public service is always an emphasis in our profession and it is certainly an ideology that was influenced by my time at ASU," he said.

By Jenny Keeler, a Chandler-based freelance writer.