

# Haig Seferian receives highest honour from ASLA

Haig Seferian says he was very emotional when informed he had been named to the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Council of Fellows for 2011.

“When I received the phone call from the ASLA president informing me of my acceptance, prior to the official announcement, I was very emotional,” said Seferian.

Fellowship is among the highest honours the ASLA bestows on members and recognizes the contributions of these individuals to their profession and the society at large based on their works. Individuals considered for this distinction must be ASLA members for at least 10 years and recommended to the Council of Fellows by the Executive Committee of their local chapter.

Only 40 members received the honour this year, with only two Canadians among them. Janet Rosenberg was also nominated by the ASLA Council of Fellows Executive Committee in the Works Category.

LO members will know Haig Seferian from his duties as master of ceremonies at the annual awards night at Congress. Seferian also volunteers on LO building management and landscape design committees, as well as on the Canada Blooms garden build team.

“I had been told by numerous individuals that this process normally takes two to three attempts to finally become a Fellow to the association. When I was applying and putting together my presentation for the ASLA, I read a few of

the previous entrants’ life works and I felt very pale in comparison. Even now, the thought that I am a Fellow of the ASLA fills me so much pride that I want to burst. Honestly, this is something that I thought I might get in another 20 years. I am truly honoured that my peers feel that I am worthy of this at this stage of my life/career.”



Seferian says his chosen vocation does not feel like work. “I have had a lot of fun doing what I do on a daily basis. I guess that the real question is, do you enjoy what you do? The days and weeks fly by and you get to see change take place in front of you through the landscapes you have designed and built through to policy changes in the way our industry is taught and the way apprentices work their way up the ranks.”

He explains that he will wear the FASLA badge with great honour and pride throughout the rest of his life. “I encourage everyone who reads this to know that working for the community and the betterment of our industry will give you great self satisfaction and you will be recognized by your peers for your commitment. I have such passion for our industry and the work our office does. In fact, there is not a day that goes by that I don’t race to get to the office to start another day. There are just not enough hours in the day to do what I want to do. I know that I made the right decision in my career choice.”

Over the past 32 years Seferian has defined strong industry leadership, participated in government affairs advocacy groups, and provided

industry leadership as a student mentor. He has designed and built millions of dollars worth of public-space community projects, and still continues to provide public and industry education in the field of landscape architecture throughout North America. He received his BLA from the University of Guelph.

## Community achievement

Just after the announcement of the Fellowship, Haig Seferian was involved in a special project in his community of Burlington. A public focal point on the waterfront since 1978, time had arrived for the centre courtyard garden space at the Burlington Art Centre to be revitalized. Plants had overgrown the garden and the water feature did not work.

As with all non-profits, the Burlington Art Centre had limited funding to revitalize, beautify and create a great garden that would accommodate expanded activities and the growth of the centre’s programs and events.

Seferian was asked to re-design the garden for the BAC. “It is always an honour to contribute to enhancing the community. The opportunity to update the courtyard garden and bring it into the 21st Century, including updates to ensure accessibility for all people’s needs and ages, was rewarding for me and my team. Everyone that worked on creating this great garden demonstrated a commitment to giving back to the community.”

Haig Seferian will be presented his Fellowship in San Diego during the ASLA general meeting and expo from Oct. 30 to Nov. 2.