

**From:** Fretts, Jeremy <jfretts@ncarb.org>

**Sent:** Monday, April 20, 2026 10:09 AM

**To:** chandler@fiu.edu

**Subject:** Follow-up on ARE pass rate statistics

Jason,

On behalf of NCARB, I'd like to follow up on the questions you posed at the conclusion of the Region 3 SEP event. It's been a very busy spring, so I apologize for a long delay in getting this additional information to you. Unfortunately, the data you presented is not an accurate reflection of current candidate performance on the Architect Registration Exam. I'd ask that you refrain from presenting this data any longer, and, instead, share the information we are providing below.

continued on the next page

Most critically, your presentation statistic that drew the conclusion that an average licensure candidate has a 3.8% chance of passing all six divisions of the ARE on their first attempt inappropriately applied examination data leading to a critical misrepresentation. Published exam pass rates reflect the average of what did happen in a given period based on the performance of that group of candidates. Unfortunately, you calculated a conclusion as if the average pass rates were a fixed probability. As you are aware, passing an exam isn't based merely on chance, such as flipping a coin or rolling a die. Passing an exam is based on each individual candidate's knowledge, skill, and preparation.

NCARB has dug into exam candidate performance from the most recent complete year of test data, calendar year 2025. During that time, we looked at every candidate that has completed the ARE and found the following performance:

- 33% of candidates completed all six divisions in six attempts (i.e., they failed no divisions)
- An additional 18% completed all six divisions in seven attempts, and another 13% completed all divisions in eight attempts.
- Meaning nearly two-thirds of recent candidates who completed the ARE did so with two or less retests.

Our analysis also looked into those that are not yet ARE complete and we found the following:

- For those that have 3 divisions complete, more than 50% of them were able to achieve this in five or less attempts, with 21% of them being successful on each of their first three attempts.

It is clear that your presented 3.8% chance in no way reflects the reality of candidate success on the ARE.

Some additional points I'd like to address regarding your presentation include:

The data presented in your slide was not first-time tester pass rates of each division. The information you shared was the overall pass rates as reported for 2023. Note, overall pass rates are always lower than first-time tester rates as they include candidates that have already tested, failed, and are retesting additional times. The data continues to support that what is happening is a smaller percentage of candidates are needing to test and retest continuously to pass the ARE. This 'long tail' of performance is what is pulling the overall average pass rate down

Second, note that the pass rates for the Florida Bar were not as you represented. The July 2025, first-time pass rate was 78.4%. ([reference](#)) For another reference to other professional

exams, note that first-time pass rates for the various Professional Engineer exams range from 48 - 91%, with the most analogous engineering disciplines firmly in the 58-61% range.

[\(reference\)](#)

Regarding comparison between professions, it is important to note that unlike the Architect Registration Exam, the Bar exam is not a uniform national exam. Further, it is inappropriate to make a comparison between the singular nature of the Bar Exam and the multi-division approach of the ARE. The two exams are built for different purposes based on very different licensure approaches.

I hope you find this follow-up helpful in providing data you are interested in regarding exam performance. As you continue to explore aspects of licensure, please reach out to NCARB and share your thoughts and ideas on what data points we could be tracking and reporting to best assist educators, students, licensure candidates, and practitioners. We continue to expand what we are reporting in our annual NCARB by the Numbers publication and are always open to new ideas on what to study.

Regards,

Jeremy Fretts, AIA, NCARB, M.A. Ed.  
Assistant Vice President, Programs: Education & Certification



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## 2026 Educator/Practitioner Conference Summary Report

### Attendees

Chelsea Abella  
Inaki Alday  
Pedro Alfaro  
Mike Alvarado  
Craig Aquart  
Gorham Bird  
Jah Blackman  
Riley Calderon  
Jassen Callender  
Elizabeth Camargo  
Jason Chandler  
John Cothran  
Greg Durrell  
Chris Elberson  
John Folan  
Jeremy Fretts  
Christina Guitierrez  
Eric Harris  
Naomi Harrison  
Rick Thompson

Justin Hiles  
David Hill  
Darren James  
Katherine Kennon  
Lorena Knezevic  
Olga Kusche-Iglesias  
Mark Marine  
Kristen Mauch  
Zalmy Meyer  
Richard McNeel  
Cathe M. Monte Carlo  
Cathy Morrison  
Marilys Nepomechie  
Peter Nguyen  
Kaylan Phillips  
Ralph Raymond  
William Riehm  
Henry Rueda  
Jakiel Sanders

Vanessa Smith-Torres  
Marika Snider  
Enrique Socarras  
Jim Stevens  
Walt Teague  
Frank Wagster



The 2026 Southern Conference of NCARB held its 2026 Educator/Practitioner Conference on February 7, 2026, at Florida International University's Paul Cejas School of Architecture in Miami, Florida. Former Department Chair, Henry Rueda and incoming Department Chair Jason Chandler were the hosts of the event.

[Click here for slides.](#)

We appreciate their assistance and guidance while planning the conference. There were fifteen schools of architecture from the Southern Region represented.

The Chair of the Conference Planning Committee, Pedro Alfaro RA, AIA, CAAPPR, SAP, Vice Chair of the Region, was assisted by the following committee members:

Darren James, FAIA, NOMA - Secretary/Treasurer of NCARB Southern Conference

Chris Elbersen, AIA, NCARB

Jackiel Sanders, RA, NOMA, NCARB

Ralph Raymond, RA AIA, NOMA, NCARB

Walt Teague, FAIA, NCARB, LEED AP, SEED AP

Cathe M. Monte Carlo, Executive Director of NCARB Southern Conference and Executive Director of the North Carolina Board of Architecture and Registered Interior Designers.



The theme of the 2026 conference was “Bridging the Gap Between Practice and Academia:

Integrating the Current State and Future of Architecture”. The keynote speaker was Peter Nguyen, a policy researcher at RAND and a professor of policy analysis at the RAND School of Public Policy, [Rand Report Committee Member](#). His

research is focused on



strengthening pathways in education and the workforce.

The morning sessions included a presentation of the RAND report on “Building Impact-Perspectives and Recommendations on the Current State and Future of Architecture”. The report was commissioned by NCARB and the AIA.

[Click here for the presentation slides.](#)



Jeremy Fretts, NCARB Assistant Vice President discussed the Pathways to Practice initiative focusing on education’s role in licensure. This sparked a lively discussion on the role of the educator and the role of the practitioner. This continued into the afternoon panel discussions.

An inspiring presentation on “Building the Pipeline” highlighting K–12 architecture pipeline programs such as

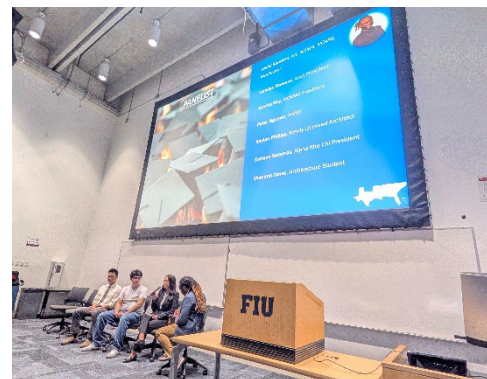


Architects in the Making (AIM), Black Architects in the Making (BAM), and Project Pipeline, highlighting community engagement and diversity efforts led by Craig Aquart, Vanessa Smith-Torres, Naomi Harrison, and Chelsea Abella.



[Click here for slides.](#)

After lunch, a panel discussion featured the perspective of newly licensed architects, recent graduates and students on the Rand Report, Pathways to Practice and the overall state of the profession. They offered clear, honest relevant opinions of architecture school experiences as well as the need to create a work/life balance while finishing school, taking exams and beginning a career in the field of architecture. The panel included Kaylan Phillips, Newly Licensed Architect Enrique Socarrás, Alpha Rho Chi President and Peter Nguyen.





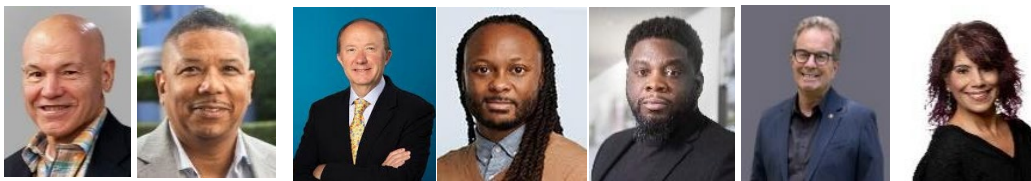
The second panel discussion focused on the Practitioner/Educator perspective and included Chris Elberson, AIA, NCARB, Jeremy Fretts, AIA, NCARB, David Hill, NCSU, Jason Chandler, FIU Professional Office Practice Professor.

The conference concluded with remarks by Jason Chandler and Greg Durrell, the Regional Chair. Pedro Alfaro presented the speakers and panelists with certificates of appreciation.



## Southern Conference of NCARB 2026 Educators and Practitioners Conference

### Organizing Committee



Pedro Alfaro, RA, AIA, CAAPPR, SAP - Committee Chair and Vice Chair of NCARB Southern Conference

Darren James, FAIA, NOMA - Secretary/Treasurer of NCARB Southern Conference

Chris Elberson, AIA, NCARB

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