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Featured Article:

Health(care) Design 2048: Celebrating 30 years of innovation / Preparing for the next 30 years of transformation

Wayne Ruga, PhD, FAIA, FIIDA, Hon. FASID

Thirty-two years ago, when I first conceived of a Healthcare Design Symposium, my concept was unprecedented: *'a multi-stakeholder community passionate about learning and sharing resources to create more life-enhancing environments to improve health'*. By all accounts, and given its 30-year history, the response to this concept was extremely positive and – as a result – the healthcare environment, today, is VERY DIFFERENT than it was then.



In those early days of the mid-80s, healthcare design research

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was little known and evidence-based design hadn't yet been imagined. By engaging the pioneering impulse that emerged from the enthusiastic participation in this fledgling healthcare design industry, I crafted a research clearinghouse – well known throughout the world, today, as The Center for Health Design to bring healthcare design research into mainstream practice – as it now is. From then 'til now, this new healthcare design industry has grown and its influence has radically transformed healthcare throughout the world.

Today, the HFSE and its community of passionate pioneers can rightfully be proud of its legacy, as being – both – the incubator and the crucible for spotlighting healthcare design innovation during these past thirty years. Now, however, the moment has come to step back, and to strategically consider what the next 30 years will require to nurture this maturing healthcare design industry into the progressive leadership engine that healthcare executives are needing it to be, to support them in the transformation of their organizations to become more effective in actualizing their vision, mission, and values.

We can expect that healthcare and design will continuously progress, and – if anything can be imagined – it is that they will progress faster and faster. However, in the face of this, we urgently need to address and improve three systemic shortcomings within our current industry, where each one of these is capable of stalling the forward momentum that our 30 years of success has provided. These are: (1) the imbalance of diversity; (2) the absence of meaningful participation by the younger generations; and (3) fundamentally – how can we become more effective in designing environments that improve care. Indeed – if our goal is to improve health with design, the very design of the composition of our healthcare design industry must be a living, real-time reflection of inclusivity, balance, wholeness, and active multi-stakeholder engagement.

This year's Generative Space Track is dedicated to addressing these shortcomings, and to laying the foundations for a new, more desired future: one that is proudly built upon our 30 year legacy, but now aspires toward being the generative heart-center

for transformative progress beyond our current ability to imagine – which, of course (in case you’ve been wondering), is why this year’s Generative Space Track has chosen the outstanding selection of programs, with its inspiring cast of presenters.

Just as Janus – the Roman god of transitions – looks back to the past for learning and wisdom, views the present for awareness and insight, and gazes into the future for new possibilities; we will use this prescient opportunity of our 30th annual gathering to do the very same – consolidate our learnings and wisdom, increase our awareness and insight, and explore the potential for creating new history-altering possibilities.

I invite – and welcome – your participation in this year’s future focused Generative Space Track program, a highly progressive and ‘outside-the-box’ experience that will emerge, evolve, and expand over its 3 days. Your participation and active support will be the bridge that enables the new future to become reality.

Dr. Wayne Ruga, FAIA, FIIDA,

Hon. FASID Founder and Special Advisor, Healthcare Facilities Symposium and Expo



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55 Walls Drive, Suite 204
Fairfield, CT 06824
(203) 371-6322 (tel)
info@jdevents.com

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