

Architect, UrbanWorks, LTD – Patricia Saldana Natke, Maria High School '82



Patricia Saldana Natke is the principal founder of UrbanWorks, a community-based female minority owned architecture firm. Her professional architecture experience encompasses both public and private sectors. As a member of the New Construction Managing Architect Team for Chicago Public Schools' Capital Improvement Program, she spearheads programming and design implementation for new elementary schools, additions and ancillary building prototypes.

Under her leadership, emphasizing design excellence, the firm received the HACIA Firm of the Year award in 2002. Committed to encouraging diversity within design and architecture professions, she is a member of the National AIA Diversity Committee and she has served as the president of Chicago Women in Architecture. She has won multiple architecture competitions and honors for her design work.

A former project architect at Ross Barney + Jankowski Architects, she earned her bachelor's degree in architectural studies at the University of Illinois. Natke grew up on Chicago's South Side (Back of the Yards) and graduated from Maria High School in 1982. She and her firm re-designed Maria's cafeteria into its present Student Life Center and also designed Chavez school located in the Back of Yards neighborhood. Patricia was inducted into the Maria High School Hall of Fame in 2004.

Co-founder of Urban Works, LTD, Ms. Patricia Saldana Natke witnessed first hand that people at low income levels have little power to change the problems in their community. Those individuals with money and power make decisions on infrastructure for them. While this has improved in the past few years, Ms. Natke and the other employees at Urban Works, Ltd. are committed to negating this injustice with good design.

Urban Works is an agent for socially and environmentally responsible design. Its members are dedicated to improving the urban fabric and striving to create buildings that are durable and healthy, energy conserving and resource-efficient, and adaptable and harmonious within their communities.

"We, the founders and officers of Urban Works, Ltd., are change agents for socially and environmentally responsive design in the areas of architecture, interior design, and planning. Our organization has as its mission the rendering of these services in a manner that demonstrates our dedication and determination to improving and positively imprinting the ecology and environment of the urban fabric.

We will render the highest quality service in a professional manner that anticipates and visually articulates the needs of our client base – be they individual, group, or community in the local or global markets. In the interest of providing outstanding service, the working environment we create will be one that fosters and encourages quality design, diversity and creativity. We will communicate openly and honestly with our client base and staff to ensure an atmosphere of trust and good relations."