

SIGN OF THE TIMES

Caren Martin, NCIDQ No. 2216, CIDQ President

CIDQ presidents in past years have used this issue of Q Connection to inform CIDQ's stakeholders about experiences and new knowledge gleaned from representing CIDQ at meetings, conferences, and events thus far into the year—but then COVID-19 happened.

[See how you can engage](#)



THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Thom Banks, Chief Executive Officer

In addition to the enormous human toll COVID has exacted globally, it's also impacted the operations of virtually every business around the world. CIDQ is no different.

[Learn what's next](#)

NCIDQ Examination

NCIDQ FALL 2020 EXAM DETAILS

Applications for fall will be accepted thru **July 31st**.

The exam payment and scheduling period is **open thru September 30th**.

The fall exam administration window has been **extended to run October 1st - November 24th**.

The NCIDQ Exam is **offered globally in the fall**.

NCIDQ EXAM DEVELOPMENT

While we have not been able to meet in person, we are not allowing this to stop the important work of continuing to move our exam development process forward. We have and will continue to conduct virtual **Item Writing and Review** sessions. Specifically we conducted a virtual recoding exercise for the **IDFX** and **IDPX** exam items to match items up to the new exam blueprints which we will begin testing on in 2021. Additionally, we will be holding a virtual **Item Writing** session this month for the **Practicum** exam.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT
Marcus Appleby, AIA
NCIDQ Certificate No. 31482

Marcus Appleby, project manager with Acquilano, shared with us his experience of volunteering with CIDQ and talks about the impact that volunteerism has on the NCIDQ Exam and his career.

[Get to Know Marcus](#)

CIDQ Annual Conference 2020

We're Going Virtual!

Due to the public health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, travel restrictions, and to support the health and well-being of our stakeholders, employees, and their families, CIDQ has made the decision not to move forward with an in-person meeting, but to hold a virtual version instead.

The CIDQ Annual Conference will take place on Thursday, November 12th, 2020, where CIDQ will present the meeting program in a shorter, virtual format.



During the conference, state and provincial regulatory board staff, their Delegates, and representatives from interior design professional organizations will come together virtually to discuss CIDQ, the NCIDQ Exam, and issues related to the interior design profession as a whole. Attendees will be able to learn key strategic initiatives for CIDQ, exchange ideas and tools, and collaborate with their peers.

[Additional details will be posted online soon!](#)



[Watch and share them all](#)

CIDQ collaborated with the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) and the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) on a three-part video initiative to demonstrate the value of interior design and its affects on the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

These videos can be used as strategic tools to engage people to create change.





Caren Martin
CIDQ President
NCIDQ Certificate
No. 2216

President's Message

CIDQ presidents in past years have used this issue of Q Connection to inform CIDQ's stakeholders about experiences and new knowledge gleaned from representing CIDQ at meetings, conferences, and events thus far into the year—but then COVID-19 happened. "Staying put" while we all do our work has clearly illuminated CIDQ's dependency on its trusted, engaged, and dedicated volunteers and staff—especially in these uncertain times. Without exception, all have risen to the challenge to apply design thinking principles around problem solving to keep CIDQ and the NCIDQ Exam moving forward. Together, we have had to identify and adopt new—and sometimes even better ways to deliver the products and services key to our Member Boards, exam applicants, exam candidates, and certificate holders. CIDQ continues to keep the bar high and consistently provides quality exams, services, and responses in both traditional and innovative ways. Holding our annual meeting virtually this November is one such example and echoes the decisions by our allied and collateral organizations. Thinking of holding the meeting remotely, please connect with the CIDQ office, me, or your board buddies to offer any feedback or suggestions that will help make the meeting valuable for you.

Furthermore, this is a time civic/social justice and welfare are in a state of flux. Racial disparities that I witnessed in my teens are shockingly still crippling us as a society today—50 years later, from my perspective. As interior designers, we have not done enough to diversify our ranks, which is well known. The evidence makes clear that most interior designers come from middle/upper class homes (including me) exposing them to interior design and architecture in ways that lower income children/young adults are not. There have not been nearly enough interior designers going into the K-12 environment to expose youth to interior design—especially in urban schools with higher populations of persons of color. I would like to encourage you to engage at that level. Perhaps speak to a class via Zoom. Teachers are hungry for course content that is engaging, especially if in-person education does not fully return in the fall. Years ago, I developed a one-week summer camp course focused on retail design entitled "Places of Your Imagination" offered through the University of Minnesota to expose teens to interior design; it ran for three summers. The classes were taken by kids of diverse economic backgrounds and nearly 40% were boys—likely due to the broad title, purposely selected. I hesitate to even offer that as an example of positive outreach because it was a small effort. However, if we each contribute, the collective effort becomes meaningful—just as we are all relying on each other now to help protect our collective health. Thank you for all you do and stay safe!



Thom Banks
CIDQ Chief
Executive Officer

CEO's Message

In addition to the enormous human toll COVID has exacted globally, it's also impacted the operations of virtually every business around the world. CIDQ is no different. After being forced to postpone the spring (April) NCIDQ Exam administration due to test center closures, our staff and board have had to reevaluate many of our organizational processes and systems. Our office building in Alexandria, Virginia, like most in the DC area, remains closed due to COVID concerns. Our staff is fortunate in that much of their work can be done remotely. I'm proud of how our team has stepped up to minimize customer disruption though I miss our ability to interact face to face.

Our priorities remain our member boards, certificate holders, and of course, our exam candidates. I'm grateful to our spring 2020 exam candidates, all but 12% of whom permitted us to roll their exams over to the fall. I'm appreciative of the many, many NCIDQ certificate holders who renewed their certificates in the face of what I know is a time of economic uncertainty and anxiety for many. I'm especially thankful for our member boards that have engaged with us in creative problem-solving dialogue even while laboring under their own set of new operational realities.

In an effort to provide candidates every opportunity to test in the fall, CIDQ has worked with our testing vendor to extend our testing window beyond the usual month of October through November 24th. As interior design is the profession best equipped to help organizations figure out how to return to the workplace and public spaces safely, the NCIDQ Exam has been added to the list of essential exams, further increasing candidates opportunities for testing come October.

Of course, we recognize that the impacts of COVID will continue to be felt for quite some time and that the situation remains fluid and unpredictable. CIDQ, like many of our credentialing organization peers, has been aggressively exploring contingency plans, including the feasibility of remote proctoring. As part of that process, we've had dialogue with several of our member boards and are looking forward to further engagement with others to discuss our path forward in ways that balance our shared mission to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public with the realities of our current circumstance.

With great challenges come great opportunities. At CIDQ, we're preparing for the road ahead and anxious to support you in whatever way we can. Please feel free to share your thoughts with me at tbanks@cidq.org.

Volunteer Spotlight



**Marcus Appleby,
AIA**

NCIDQ Certificate
No. 31482

Marcus Appleby, project manager with Acquilano, shared with us his experience of volunteering with CIDQ and talks about the impact that volunteerism has on the NCIDQ Exam and his career.

Q: How did you first get involved with CIDQ and why did you decide to volunteer?

A: I initially answered the call for volunteers to serve as an Exam Ambassador. The process to get involved was easy and my commitment was appreciated. Through serving as an Exam Ambassador, I learned there were many opportunities to volunteer that I never knew existed. I became more engaged with CIDQ by volunteering on the Practicum Item Writing Committee. There have been too many misconceptions about the profession of interior design, by both the public and governmental regulatory agencies. By volunteering, I hope to advance the mission of CIDQ and the profession as a whole.

Q: Tell us a little about your most recent CIDQ volunteering experiences.

A: Most recently, I traveled to Washington, D.C. for a Practicum Item Writing Committee meeting. It is inspiring to come together with educators and practitioners from all over North America with diverse and varying backgrounds. After attending a few writing sessions, it's always fun to see familiar faces. Together, we analyzed the success of specific questions and got to work on revising and crafting new questions to align with the new exam blueprint.

Q: When did you become NCIDQ Certified and why?

A: I became NCIDQ Certified in April 2016. I wanted to distinguish myself among peers and clients. Not only does the NCIDQ appellation show dedication to the profession, but it assures a level of competency in creating functional and beautiful spaces that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Q: How has having an NCIDQ Certificate impacted you and your career?

A: The NCIDQ certificate has allowed me to grow in my career by distinguishing me as a dedicated and competent professional. Volunteering with CIDQ has allowed me to grow my network of equally passionate individuals.

Q: What would you tell a colleague who is considering taking the NCIDQ Exam?

A: Do it! It's going to take a lot of time and commitment, but it's worth it.

Q: Why does NCIDQ Certification matter?

A: NCIDQ Certification is the foundation for the legitimacy, recognition, and understanding of the profession of interior design by both the public and government regulatory agencies.

Q: What have you learned thru volunteering with CIDQ?

A: There are a lot of dedicated and passionate individuals behind each of the questions that pop-up on that computer screen while taking the exam. The thought, time, and thoroughness that goes into each and every question is commendable.

Q: What advice would you give to those considering volunteering their time with CIDQ?

A: Again, do it! Not only are you contributing to advancing the foundation of the exam, therefore advancing the profession, but you'll likely make connections with likeminded professionals, and if you're lucky may even find yourself at a karaoke bar afterwards.