



MILESTONE MOMENTS

with Paula Lutz, NCIDQ No. 7311

Connecting our past to our future 1974–2024

50
YEARS
STRONG

Q: How long have you been involved with CIDQ?

A: Since the fall of 2000

Q: How did you first get involved?

A: I responded to a survey expressing interest in becoming a volunteer. I believe the fall of 2000 (or maybe 2001) I was invited to join the Chicago Jury team. That is where I met Barbara Pallat, who was the Jury Team leader at that time. After serving on the Jury team for a couple of years I was recruited by Barbara to take over as the Team Leader because she had been elected to serve on the Board of Directors. I served as the Team Leader and Chair of the Jury/ Grading Committee through 2013.

Around 2007 (?) CIDQ formed a Holistic Scoring Task Force to determine if it was feasible to change the method of grading/jurying the Practicum portion of the exam — the only part of the exam still scored manually. I was on the Task Force that recommended we change to a Holistic scoring method, similar to the method used by CLARB. We also switched from six regional Jury Centers to one national center, so all the exams were scored at the same time rather than across 4 time zones. This shortened the score turnaround because the “tiebreaker” third reviews were done on the same weekend.

Q: In CIDQ’s 50-year history, from your perspective, what would you say is CIDQ’s/NCIDQ’s biggest accomplishment?

A: There were so many important achievements that it’s hard to say which was the biggest, but my top two are:

1. Taking the exam to a fully digital platform, eliminated the inevitable subjectivity out of the pass/fail judgments.
2. Developing respectful relationships with

related professional testing organizations added to the credibility of interior design as a separate yet integral profession in the building industry.

Q: What is CIDQ’s most important contribution to the profession?

A: Administering a legally defensible exam that provides certification of a professional interior designer and leads to registration and/or licensing, equal to their peers in the building industry.

Q: What role did NCIDQ play in your career?

A: Having NCIDQ Certification became important to employers much later in my career. However, I will say that my employer at the time I sat for the exam was very supportive of my efforts and even reimbursed me for study programs and the exam fees when I passed — for which I will be eternally grateful. But more importantly, passing the NCIDQ provided me with the self-confidence I needed to grow professionally. The leadership skills I gained as a leader of volunteer groups for NCIDQ/CIDQ translated well to my leadership roles in various design firms.

Q: What are the key issues you see CIDQ addressing in the future?

A: Maintaining and/or improving the level of integrity and continually engaging new design professionals in the process of exam development and organizational leadership.

Continuing to support the design professionals in their efforts to attain licensing in all jurisdictions.

Q: What do you think the next 50 years will look like for the profession?

A: There will continue to be the need to prove our

worth as long as the related professions continue to plant the seed of superiority in their emerging professionals. This will hopefully lessen as more of our peers in the building industry accept interior designers as separate yet equal parts of the team.

Q: Describe what NCIDQ (or CIDQ) means to you, on a personal level, in 15 words or less

A: Proof positive I'm not just a pretty face, mwahahaha!! Just kidding! My measure of competency, integrity, and commitment to my profession.

Q: What is one of your best memories of CIDQ?

A: This is an easy one: ALL of my experiences collaborating with other interior designers across the country and Canada, and the lifelong friends developed as a result of the collaboration.