



American Planning Association  
New York Metro Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All



**Contact** Kathy Eiseman  
APA LI Section Treasurer  
**Cell** 516-680-7433  
**Email** keiseman@nelsonpopevoorhis.com  
**Website** <http://apalongisland.org/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 25, 2026

THE LONG ISLAND SECTION OF THE NEW YORK METRO CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION (APA) AWARDS **FOUR** SCHOLARSHIPS IN MEMORY OF PLANNER ARTHUR H. KUNZ FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE NATIONAL APA CONFERENCE IN DETROIT

The Long Island Section of the New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 Arthur H. Kunz Memorial Scholarships for attendance at the American Planning Association National Conference in Detroit, Michigan. The scholarships have been awarded annually since 1995 in memory of Arthur H. Kunz, a dedicated Long Island planner who served Suffolk County for nearly 30 years who focused on balanced development and environmental protection. The scholarship provides up to \$2,000 for attendance at the conference, participation in at least one mobile workshop, and a portion of expenses. Recipients are asked to present photographs from a mobile workshop at the annual Arthur Kunz Memorial Scholarship Breakfast to share their experience with Long Island Planners.

**2026 Scholarship Recipients:**

**Justin Ames, AICP, LEED AP O+M** is an Environmental Planner with **Nelson, Pope & Voorhis, LLC**, where he supports municipal and private projects across Nassau and Suffolk Counties, advancing land use approvals, environmental review, and infrastructure planning. With close to four years of experience on Long Island and recent AICP certification, Justin is passionate about balancing development with groundwater protection, environmental justice, and climate resilience. He looks forward to gaining insights from Detroit's greenway and riverfront planning initiatives and applying those lessons to ongoing regional efforts such as the Long Island Greenway.

**Brandon Gimpelman, MPA** is a Project Manager with **Empire State Development's Long Island Regional Office**, where he manages the Long Island Forward Housing Program, providing technical assistance to municipalities to advance housing initiatives. His work focuses on translating local housing goals into actionable plans through consultant coordination, feasibility analysis, and stakeholder engagement. With a background in local government and public service, Brandon is eager to deepen his knowledge of housing supply, zoning, and infrastructure coordination at the national conference and bring those insights back to communities across Long Island.

**Darvin Fuentes** is an Assistant Planner with the **City of Long Beach Department of Economic Development & Planning** and a lifelong Long Island resident. Since graduating summa cum laude from Stony Brook University, Darvin has supported major planning initiatives including waterfront

and parking studies, GIS-based land use analysis, and extensive public outreach efforts. His interests include resiliency, mobility, accessibility, and community-centered development. Darwin is committed to applying best practices learned at the conference to help guide balanced, sustainable growth in Long Island's coastal communities.

**Rachel A. Bruce** is a Revitalization Specialist with the **New York State Department of State**, working with communities across Long Island through programs such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, NY Forward, Brownfield Opportunity Areas, and Smart Growth planning. Her work emphasizes a “plan-then-build” approach to downtown revitalization, housing, transportation, and economic development. Early in her planning career, Rachel is eager to learn from peers nationwide and bring innovative strategies back to strengthen local and state planning efforts on Long Island.

---

In addition to the annual Arthur Kunz Memorial Scholarship program, the APA Long Island Section offers numerous educational and social opportunities for planners, including an annual scholarship breakfast, conferences on timely planning topics, walking tours, and joint meetings with other professional groups.

To learn more about the American Planning Association Long Island Section, please visit our website at [www.apalongisland.org](http://www.apalongisland.org) or contact Kathy Eiseman at [keiseman@nelsonpopevoorhis.com](mailto:keiseman@nelsonpopevoorhis.com) or Sarah Sklar at [ssklar@gza.com](mailto:ssklar@gza.com).

To receive updates, please subscribe at: <https://apalongisland.org/subscribe>.