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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDmarket + A4LE Announces 2026 NexGen Rising Stars



Gaithersburg, MD (September 14, 2026) — The Education Market Association (EDmarket) and Association For Learning Environments (A4LE) is pleased to announce the 2026 class of NexGen Rising Stars. This award recognizes and celebrates emerging leaders in the education field. The recipients, 40 years old and younger, have been chosen for their exceptional dedication to the industry, innovative thinking, and positive impact on student achievement and success.

Join us in congratulating this year's NexGen Rising Stars whose outstanding achievements, dedication, and potential have truly set them apart.

- Katelyn Bell, MA+Architecture and University of Oklahoma Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture, Division of Interior Design
- Tyler Bosley, Freedom Interiors
- Rookie Buttle, MUZO
- Sierra Davis, Frost-Barber
- Megan DiBella, DLR Group
- Maya Fraser, Quinn Evans Architects
- Lynne Gruneberg, Demco, Inc.
- Marie Kohne, Legat Architects
- Katrina Kok, Insidesource
- Katie LaCourt, EUA
- Monica Laverman, Indeco Sales
- Christopher Martin, Harrison Kornberg Architects
- Taylor Morgan, The HON Company
- Samantha Peters, Harrison Kornberg Architects
- Melissa Plese, Lakeshore Learning Materials
- Rhiana Ricciotti, Lakeshore Learning Materials
- Heli Shah, CDH Partners
- Nathan Streng, Fielding International
- Erika Williams, MUZO
- Hailey Wrasman, Cuningham

NexGen Rising stars will be recognized at the EDspaces Plenary Session (October 28, 2026) in Kansas City, MO along with being featured in *Essentials* Magazine and on social media. The NexGen Rising Stars community will serve as a platform for collaboration, mentorship, and idea exchange.

“Transformative leadership begins with the courage to imagine what could be—and the commitment to turn bold ideas into meaningful opportunities that change the trajectory of students, educators, and communities. Our NexGen award winners are rising stars committed to this important work! We are proud of this year’s class who have raised the bar for excellence in their work.”

- Dr. Deb Kerr, Former Superintendent St. Francis School District | EDmarket Board Chair

Thank you to our distinguished panels of judges: Dr. Deb Kerr, *former superintendent of St. Francis School District*; Jenn McArt, *Director of Marketing & Events, ClearTouch*; Robin Randall, *Principal/Director of Learning, Legat Architects*; Dr. Kim Robertson, *Executive Director of Choice Schools & Programs, Guilford County Schools*; Drew Wodarski, *Learning Environment Specialist, MiEN Company*

To learn more about the impressive list of NexGen Rising Stars, visit:

<https://www.edmarket.org/nexgen/winners.cfm>

The Association for Learning Environments (A4LE) and the Education Market Association (EDmarket) serve a global network of professionals: planners, designers, educators, industry experts, manufacturers, dealers, and suppliers, all united by a passion for creating high-quality, sustainable, and innovative learning environments. By joining together, we strengthen that community and build one association where every member has a seat at the table to collaborate, share expertise, and shape the future of learning.

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