

Darren L. James, FAIA
President
KAI Enterprises

Darren L. James is President of KAI Enterprises, a national design and construction services firm with seven offices. In this role, Darren is responsible for enterprise marketing/sales and Dallas/Fort Worth market leadership. Darren creates growth strategies for KAI Enterprises' four companies; KAI Design, KAI Engineering, KAI 360 CS & KAI Build tailored for the diverse locations.

After spending three years as Architect/Assistant Director of Construction for Texas Woman's University, Darren rejoined KAI in 2005. Since his return, Darren has led KAI's exceptional growth and expansion throughout Texas. Darren has led the firm's transformation from new market entrant to a DFW leader.

In addition to KAI's executive management, Darren serves as President of Fair Park First, the non-profit tasked with managing the National Historic Landmark Fair Park for inclusive and equitable community daily use. He has also been elected Chair of the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce for five consecutive terms and serves on the Board of Directors for the Dallas Citizen's Council, The Real Estate Council, Dallas Regional Chamber, World Affairs Council and Trinity Park Conservancy. He was just recently appointed to the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners by Governor Abbott.

Darren was elevated to the American Institute of Architects College of Fellows in 2019, one of the highest honors bestowed on architects for their contribution to architecture and the community. Darren is a prolific author and guest lecturer. As an entrepreneur, architect, subject matter expert and servant leader, Darren has spoken for the City of Dallas Arts Month Conversation on Public Space, the University of North Texas-Dallas, UCLA International Design Conference, American Society of Quality, AMAC, Texas Society of Architects, American Institute of Architects, Association for Learning Environment, and American Public Transportation Association to highlight a few.

Darren was named to the 2021 *D CEO* Magazine list of 500 Most Influential Business Leaders in North Texas, recognized as one of 2014 Minority Business Leaders by the *Dallas Business Journal* and as a 2016 Game Changer in *Who's Who in Black Dallas*. He has been awarded the 2015 Regional Black Contractors Association Inaugural Herman Jerome Russell Award, the 2015 Regional Asian American Contractors Association Star Award, the 2018 Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance Business Award, the 2018 Texas Association of African American Chambers William Sidney Pittman Award and the 2019 3T Ministries Sage Service Award.

Originally from St. Louis, Darren graduated from the University of Kansas and currently resides in the Dallas Metroplex with his family. Darren's love for architecture, community development and passion for civic engagement was inspired early in life.