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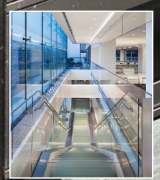
ARCHITECTURE DC

Tour de Force:
The Annual Chapter Awards Issue



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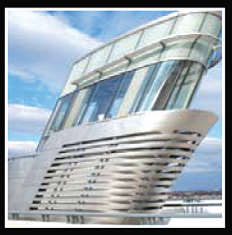
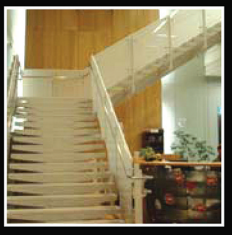
Making Sacred Places





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The atrium of Eastern High School in Washington, DC, as renovated by Fanning Howey and cox graae + spack architects.

Photo by Jim Maguire

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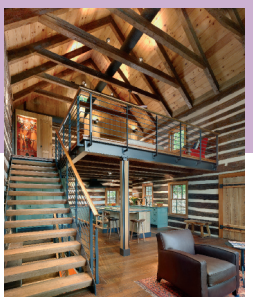

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Photo © Paul Warchol Photography



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WHAT I LEARNED AT THE SOLAR DECATHLON


David Hamilton

Although the fifth biennial Solar Decathlon was recently held on the National Mall, it took place not in the heavily trafficked area between the Smithsonian museums, like the previous four, but on a more distant plot in West Potomac Park that was accessible from the museum zone by a special shuttle bus or a fairly long walk. The new location offered much less potential for drawing in museum visitors who might not know about the Decathlon, so this year's version was perhaps more of a preaching-to-the-converted event.

Even so, it was gratifying so see thousands of people take the time to reach the Decathlon at its new location, particularly during what turned out to be a very cloudy and rainy period. Following my own visit, visitors on the shuttle bus heading back to the museum zone were enthusiastically trading comments about what they had seen, demonstrating (once again) the hunger that people have to see more of this kind of thing in American homes.

A big congratulations to the University of Maryland team for taking the grand prize with their entry, called Water Shed. The team's faculty advisor, AIA | DC member **Amy Gardner, AIA,** reported that there was just enough sun one day to get their entry's systems up and running and reach the all-important net-zero energy mark.

Welcome!

Two other entries also caught my attention. One was the E-cube from Team Belgium (Ghent University), which was highly modular and largely made from off-the-shelf components. The other was the Y Container from Team China (Tongji University), which used shipping containers to both transport its components and form its shell. Both teams emphasized how their entries were affordable and easy to transport and build.

Although I was initially drawn to these two entries in part because the lines to get into them were somewhat shorter (see rain above), I came away impressed at how easily they could be manufactured and sent to natural disaster areas to quickly provide comfortable and affordable permanent housing. Rather than moving hurricane and tornado victims into trailers for years at a time, why not use something like E-cubes to quickly give them nicely designed (and energy-efficient) homes? The entries at the solar decathlon show that architects can create home designs that are not only sustainable, but suitable for meeting important post-disaster needs. In short, great design ideas are already here—we just need to take advantage of them.

By the time you read this, the new District Architecture Center (DAC) will be open. One of DAC's aims will be to explore ideas like the one above—how architecture can improve lives and re-knit communities.

The first exhibition in the Sigal Gallery at DAC will show the projects featured in this issue of the magazine, which are the winners of the 2011 Chapter Awards. Enjoy reading about them in these pages—and then come to DAC to see more photos of them than we can include here.

We're really excited about the opening of DAC, and we hope you'll come visit us at 421 7th Street, NW. Please also log on to our newly redesigned website, www.aiadc.com, for more information. And thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make DAC happen—I and the Chapter will always be grateful.

Mary Fitch, AICP, Hon. AIA
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Ronald O'Rourke ("In Living Black and White" and "Modern Hospitality") is a regular contributor to *ARCHITECTUREDC*. His father, Jack O'Rourke, was an architect in San Francisco for more than four decades.

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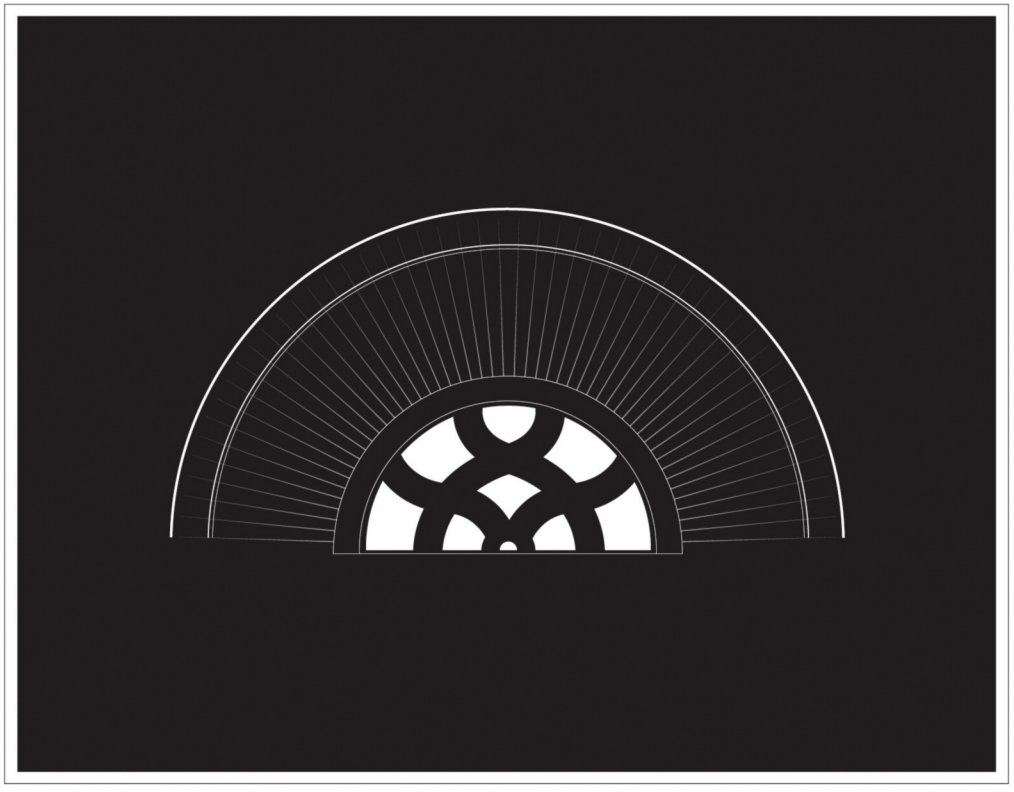

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Your AIA|DC Staff: (from left) Bradley Johnson, Beth Judy, Sarah Smith, Katie Spencer, Michael Andrade, Melody Harrison, Mary Fitch

District Architecture Center is Open!





by Ronald O'Rourke

The beautiful new District Architecture Center (DAC) is completed and in operation! AIA|DC moved in on October 21, the first classes were held the following week, and the facility's grand opening was held on November 4.

The inaugural exhibit at DAC's Sigal Gallery is now on display, showing the winners of this year's annual AIA|DC design competition in greater detail than we can accommodate in these pages.

DAC is a place for the public to enjoy and learn more about architecture and architects. So please come by to see the inaugural exhibit and the rest of facility, and make DAC one of your new regular destinations. You can get to DAC very easily by Metro—it's a two-minute walk from the Gallery Place station. For DAC's hours of operation, log on to www.aiadc.com.

We look forward to seeing you!

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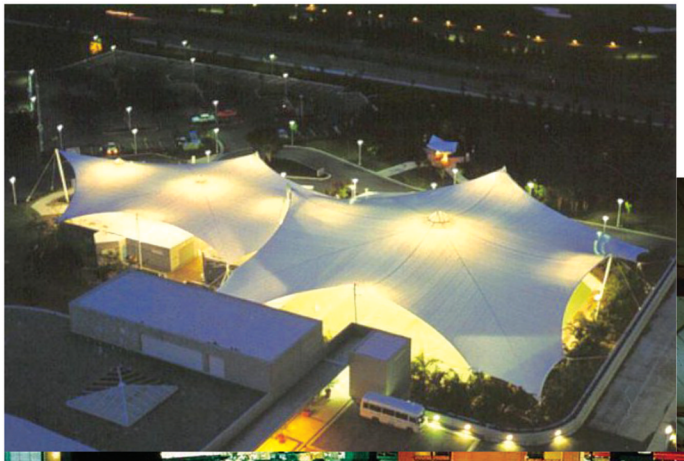

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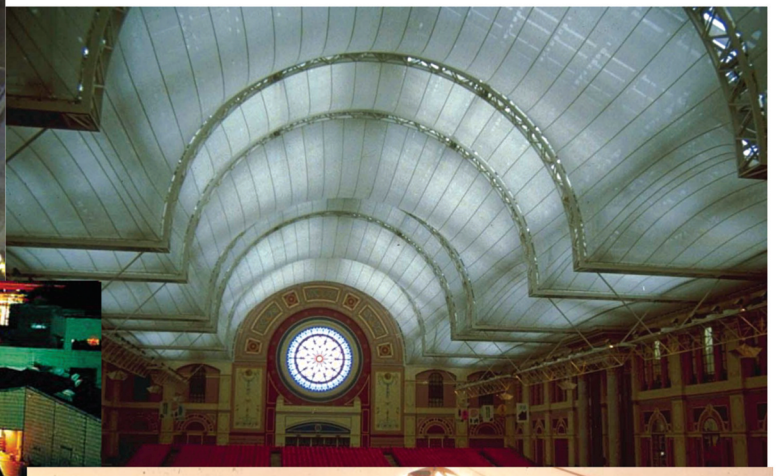

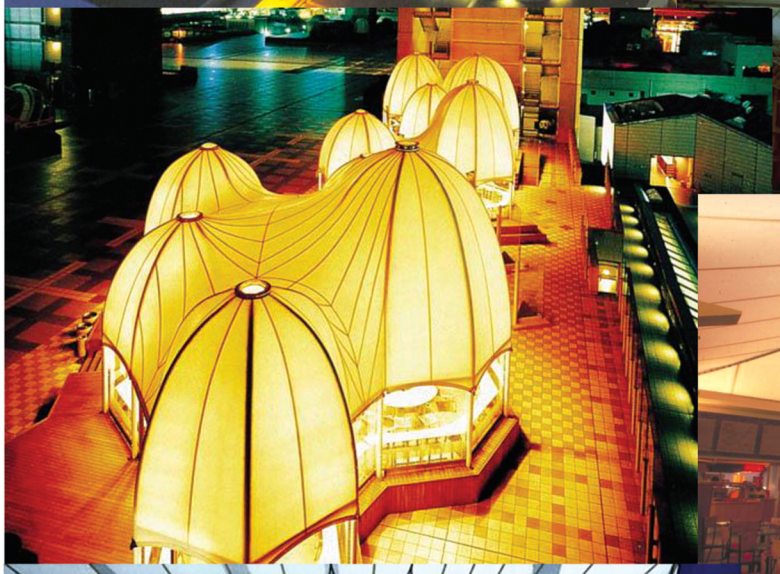





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Exterior view of PNC Place. Photo © Prakash Patel

The Art of the Modern Workplace

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA, LEED AP

The lobby of PNC Place. Photo © Prakash Patel

Gensler is the among the largest design firms in the world, with over 3,000 employees in 20 offices in the U.S. and another dozen or so overseas. The firm's portfolio focuses on corporate/commercial projects. Although the firm has plenty of talented competition in D.C. and elsewhere, this year Gensler's Washington office swept the Chapter Awards for corporate projects with three winners, which represent different facets of office design.

PNC Place is a new office building at 17th and H streets, NW, in the heart of downtown Washington. Previously the site was occupied by two 1950s office buildings forming the headquarters of Riggs Bank, which PNC acquired in 2005. In addition to its award for excellence in architecture the project received a Presidential Citation for Sustainable Design. The building achieved a Platinum rating under the LEED Core & Shell 2.0 rating system, which is the highest rating possible.

LEED Core & Shell covers elements such as structure, envelope, and HVAC systems. It arose from the reality that more often than not, base office buildings are designed and constructed separately from their interiors, and that the interiors are typically redone several times during the lifetime of the building. Core & Shell is designed to be complementary to LEED for Commercial Interiors.

The building's exterior sets the tone in a very basic design move: It's a crisp glass-box office building, but the east façade (on 17th Street) is quite different than the south (on H Street). The south façade has sunshades, which are effective at reducing heat gain and controlling glare on a southern exposure. The east façade, instead, has ceramic frit in the glazing, which is more effective with the lower sun angles of the east and west sun exposures.

The lobby also advertises the building's sustainability without any loss of style or corporate seriousness. A three-story "climate wall" of water flowing over steel mesh curtains conditions the lobby's temperature and humidity. Across the lobby from the "climate wall" is a vegetated wall of actual growing plants. These special elements stand out against the chic, corporate-white finishes of the rest of the lobby.

Achieving Platinum certification requires a full range of sustainability strategies, the broad categories of which are familiar to *ARCHITECTUREDC* readers: siting that promotes multiple forms of transportation, use of sustainable materials, lowered energy consumption, interior air quality, daylighting, reduced water consumption, and so forth. A couple of standouts for the PNC Place project include extensive recycling of materials from the demolished buildings and the use of condensate from the air conditioning system to irrigate the green roof. The latter addresses an exploitable aspect of the yearly cycles of buildings: In the summer, they produce a lot of water (in the form of condensation), and it is also in the summer that plants need water the most.

Award for Excellence in Architecture

PNC Place

Washington, DC

Gensler

Structural Engineers: Tadjer Cohen Edelson Associates
MEP Engineers: GHT Limited
Sustainable Design Consultants: Paladino and Company
Civil Engineers: Bohler Engineering
Contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

Award for Excellence in Interior Architecture

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Washington, DC

Gensler

MEP Engineers: GHT Limited
Structural Engineers: Thornton Tomasetti
Lighting Designers: HLDC Lighting
Contractors: Rand Construction; Hitt Contracting

The Philadelphia-based Pew Charitable Trusts bought the existing 1980s office building at 901 E Street, NW, in 2008. With Gensler at the helm, Pew has transformed the building into the headquarters office for many of Pew's national and international initiatives, a state-of-the-art conference center, and a "non-profit village," with tenants such as the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. The base-building transformation achieved Silver status under the LEED Existing Building rating system, and Pew's own offices achieved Gold under the LEED Commercial Interiors rating system.

The Chapter Award is for the interior architecture of Pew's offices, which are expertly executed as a modern workplace of crisp white walls and terrazzo floors, glass, and metal, with studiously neutral carpets underfoot in workstation areas and splashes of color from art. Although most of the work is strictly interiors, the focal element—a new connecting stairway—is in newly-enclosed space, where the original building had an exterior setback. The enclosure creates a three-story atrium space separated by butt-glazed walls from conference rooms and reception areas.

Pew's central requirement was to create a work environment that "breaks down barriers between programs and departments and emphasizes internal collaboration," as Gensler phrases it in the competition entry. This is most clearly seen in the atrium. Not only does one pass multiple meeting spaces clearly visible through glass walls, but the stairway has extra-generous mid-point landings to promote spontaneous discussions. (Perhaps people meet each other half way, literally?) Elsewhere, workstations have low partitions and offices have glass walls and no doors.



Staircase within the offices of the Pew Charitable Trusts. **Photo © Michael Moran**

Lobby of the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Photo © Michael Moran

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

Under Armour Innovation Lab

Baltimore, MD

Gensler

Structural, Mechanical, and Plumbing Engineers: Morris & Ritchie Associates
Electrical Engineers: Telegent Engineering
Lighting Designers: Bliss Fasman
Audio/Visual Consultants: Nelson White Systems
Contractor: Turner Construction Company

Gensler used a similar aesthetic to create the Under Armour Innovation Lab, part of the multinational sports apparel company's corporate headquarters in Baltimore. But the character here is molded by the industrial base building, high-tech gadgetry, and corporate secrecy. Like Pew, Under Armour views free flow of ideas and collaboration as critical to its mission. But unlike Pew, Under Armour greatly restricts the pool of personnel and consultants privy to these ideas.

Accordingly, the Innovation Lab is a much more self-contained, introverted facility than Pew. It is essentially one large, double-height space that includes workstations, prototype development workrooms, and a variety of meeting, socializing, and brainstorming areas. All of these areas revolve around a black-painted space frame, which defines the central stop-motion product testing area, in which actual athletes are recorded performing various sports moves (swinging golf clubs or tennis rackets, throwing footballs, etc.) while wearing prototypes of future Under Armour products.



Workspace at the Under Armour Innovation Lab. **Photo © Michael Moran**

For more on the Innovation Lab, see the article about the project in the Fall 2011 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

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Merit Award in Architecture

Barcode House
Washington, DC

David Jameson Architect
Engineers: Linton Engineering
Contractor: The Ley Group



Barcode House
(also pictured on the cover).

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography



In Living Black and White

David Jameson, FAIA, Wins Four More AIA|DC Design Awards

by Ronald O'Rourke



It's David Jameson's moment in the sun. Again.

Of the eight residential projects selected for awards in this year's AIA|DC design competition, four were designed by **David Jameson, FAIA.**

As noted in the Summer 2011 issue of *ARCHITECTUREDC*, Jameson and fellow modernist residential architects **Mark McInturff, FAIA**, and **Robert M. Gurney, FAIA,** have been the most frequent winners in the spring *Washingtonian* residential design awards in recent years. A similar pattern holds true for the residential projects honored in the fall AIA|DC design competition.

Incredibly, this is not the first time that Jameson has won four awards in a single competition—he managed the same feat in the 2009 *Washingtonian* residential design competition (see the Summer 2009 issue of *ARCHITECTUREDC*). On other occasions, Jameson has won two or three awards at a time.

People are noticing: A recent *Washington Post* article profiled Jameson and his work, noting his elevation to AIA Fellowship five years ago, at the young age of 37, and his total of 27 state, national, and international design awards in the last year alone.

Together with McInturff, Gurney, and other DC-area architects, Jameson's award-winning projects have established Washington—a city once known for its architectural conservatism—as a national hotbed of high-quality modernist residential architecture.

Jameson's work is characterized by a strong theoretical underpinning: Each project is informed by a theory that Jameson develops in response to the project's site conditions and the client's program. As a result, his houses, while all modernist, are quite different from one another.

Jameson's work employs pure forms and minimalist detailing. White is frequently the primary color, and interiors are filled with light. Although his work tends toward the spare, his projects are nevertheless functional and comfortable.

The Barcode House shown above is a three-story (plus roof deck) addition to the back of a row house in Washington's Dupont Circle neighborhood. Jameson's design for the addition pairs a transparent glass box containing a kitchen and living area with a solid, stucco-clad mass that encloses a stairwell and anchors the addition to the existing house. Structural steel rods in the glass window wall are aligned with features in neighboring houses.



The Jigsaw house.

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography



Interior of the Jigsaw house.

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography

The project, Jameson says, responds to the client's desire for transparent living space. On the inside, the glass-enclosed spaces, and particularly the upper-level living room, seem almost to float in the sky. At night, the glass box glows with a soft, pure light. The design's restraint keeps the focus on the contrast between the glass and stucco volumes.

The project "explores juxtapositions between the heavy and light, and the old and the new," Jameson says. "The brittle masonry walls of the existing row house governed that the addition be engineered as a freestanding structure. Site constraints dictated a vertically oriented spatial solution."

Merit Award in Architecture

Jigsaw

Bethesda, MD

David Jameson Architect

Contractor: Steve Howard
Engineers: Linton Engineering

Jameson describes the Jigsaw project, located on a busy corner site in Bethesda, Maryland, as the "recycling" of an existing single-level house. The resulting two-level house is formed by a collection of overlapping rectangular volumes that, Jameson says, "introverts itself in a continuous spatial flow around an open air courtyard carved from the [original] home's remains." Clerestory glazing and other windows were carefully sited to afford privacy to the occupants while framing and extending views through the site.

The house's overlapping volumes, Jameson says, create "a matrix of spaces" that are linked by movement through them. "Stories merge, and spaces relate to each other as they rise and fall in a series of interlocked puzzle-like volumes." The result, he says, is a unique three-dimensional framework that responds to the client's program.

Interior spaces employ a combination of white walls, medium-toned wood cabinets, and dark wood flooring. The materials, windows, and complex geometry combine to create spaces with changing plays of light and shadow through the day.

"Fundamental to the conception of the house," Jameson says, "is the notion of reflectivity, rendering unclear the boundaries between inside and outside. Light and space are modulated by meshing ribbons of wall and glass that form a tessellation [a complex arranged pattern] of solid and void. The conditioning of these internal and external walls is identical. Planes of stucco exterior walls transform into plaster interior walls while passing through glass."

The Jigsaw house was previously published in the Summer 2009 issue of ARCHITECTURE**DC**.



The Kensington Residence.

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography

This project renovated a house in Kensington, Maryland. But "renovated" hardly captures the end result, which transformed a traditional house into a startling, rectangular form with a daring, cantilevered wing hovering over one end. The house, Jameson says, "takes the form of a simple mass whose purity is interrupted by the void space of a carport."

The overhanging wing looks massive enough to possibly tip the house over, which keeps you looking at the 2,250-square-foot, three-level residence long enough to begin noticing its other design gestures, including the large, glass-clad area that erodes one corner of the upper level, and the smaller, complementary, glazed corner diagonally below, on the first floor. The vertical mullions of the glazed areas stand in tension to the horizontal lines in the wall cladding. The sheets of cement board used for the cladding, Jameson says, "are sheared into abstract siding shingles that contribute to the unreadable scale of the building."

On the inside are pure, open, light-filled spaces with white walls anchored by dark wood floors. "Bounded by an introverted exterior, luminous living spaces unfold in a series of interlocking volumes that are more urban and contained," Jameson says. "Stairs become a series of intersecting diagonal slices through space."

Merit Award in Architecture

Kensington Residence

Kensington, MD

David Jameson Architect

Engineers: Linton Engineering

Contractor: SIGAL Construction Corporation

Interior of the Kensington Residence.

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography

Award for Excellence in Architecture

Graticule

Great Falls, VA

David Jameson Architect

Engineers: Linton Engineering
Contractor: MT Puskar Construction

We'll save you a moment of online research by telling you up front that a graticule is a grid of intersecting lines, such as those showing latitude and longitude on a map. It's an apt word to describe this new three-level house, located on a forested hillside in Great Falls, Virginia. The home, formed by two rectilinear volumes joined at a 45-degree angle to one another, employs a grid of crisp vertical and horizontal lines to create an interplay of white walls and black-framed glass voids.

"Fundamental to the conception of the house," Jameson says, "is the notion of cadence, where repetitious vertical and horizontal markers of the building's tectonics are juxtaposed with the particularity of the forest and ground plane."

From the outside, the house stands in vivid contrast to its natural setting, marking a clear human intervention in the landscape. On the inside, however, the glass-enclosed spaces merge with the tree-filled environment, blurring the distinction between inside and out. Blond wood flooring and medium-toned wood wall panels offset the white interior walls and strengthen the connection between interior and exterior.

The house, Jameson says, "is conceived to be a trace, or reference datum [line], allowing a reading of the relationship between the building and nature."



Graticule house. **Photo © Nic Lehoux Photography**

The Graticule house was previously published in the Summer 2010 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

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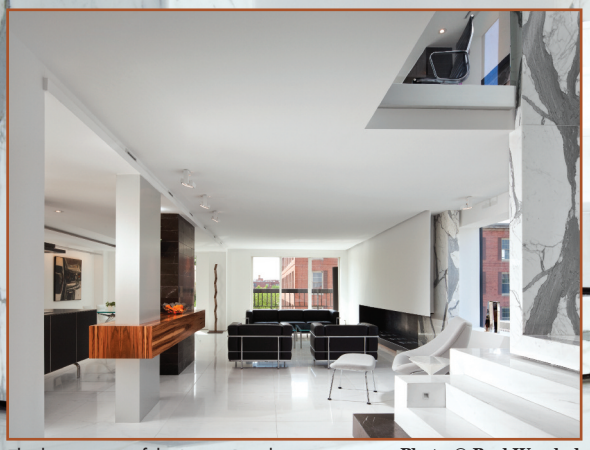
The staircase within the Lassus Residence.



The living room of the Lassus Residence, with the kitchen to the left.

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography

GEORGETOWN MODERN

by Denise Liebowitz

Photo © Paul Warchol Photography

Award for Excellence in Interior Architecture

Lassus Residence

Washington, DC

Schlesinger Associates Architects

Contractor: Peter Sands

This sleek, gleaming space required a special client—"the kind of person who can have glass closets," said **Christy Schlesinger,** of **Schlesigner Associates Architects.** The European owner wanted a very modern Washington pied-a-terre, clutter free and museum-like. He didn't want warmth or wood, so together architects and client tackled a dark, 80s-style, two-level condo in Georgetown, transforming it into a luminously elegant residence.

Using "enough marble to outweigh four Nissans," Schlesinger recalled, she rebuilt the space centered on a new stair composed of a series of marble, L-shaped angles that, when viewed from the living room, is more abstract sculpture than circulation. The white marble flooring throughout much of the apartment required special quarry orders and a long wait for stone masons to cut through seams of colored marble to reach the pure white layers. For the contrasting veined marble stairway, Schlesinger created a photomontage to decide how best to align and match the slabs.

On the first level, the living, dining, and kitchen areas are defined by a dark marble column hiding pipes and ducts, changes in ceiling heights, and a small stretch of wood flooring in the entry area. The long, linear fireplace incorporates a marble support that continues the material of the stairway. The four gas flames of the hearth and dramatic lighting give the living room a glamorous nighttime glow. Although spare, the European kitchen is functional and provides plenty of workspace.

Upstairs, a study, bedroom, bath, and laundry are organized around a central glass spine that separates the public and private spaces and eliminates the need for doors. The frosted glass closets, lit from above, allow hints of their (organized and tasteful) contents. The bath with its long counter leads to a skylit shower area.

By employing a limited palette of materials and color, the clean lines of frameless windows and doors, and hidden lighting, the design unabashedly embraces a strong, masculine minimalism, wiped clean of distracting things and stripped to its essentials.

Award for Excellence in Interior Architecture

N Street Trust

Washington, DC

Jacobsen Architecture

Contractor: Glass Construction

It wasn't supposed to be a down-to-the-studs gut renovation, but this Georgetown landmark on Smith Row had been so poorly maintained and marred by shoddy "improvements" over the years, that it turned into a complete redo. "Nothing was original, so there was nothing to save," said **Simon Jacobsen, Assoc. AIA,** of **Jacobsen Architecture**.

This circa 1810 federal-style row house was renovated for a doctor and a retired diplomat and their extensive collection of mid-20th-century art and furniture. On the lower level, designers dug into the old slave cellar to accommodate the 10-foot ceilings of a modern, open kitchen, breakfast area, and dining room. Upstairs on the main level, the library and living room were reconfigured to display a prized piece of art—a large painting by Ad Reinhardt, an abstract expressionist active in the middle of the 20th century. From the living room, a modern staircase with glass railings and floating wood treads leads to the second floor with master bedroom, bath, and office. Three more bedrooms and baths are found on the third and fourth levels.

Throughout the 10,000-square-foot house, wallboards hung to give the impression of floating walls infuse a historic structure with a contemporary, minimalist aesthetic. Floor-to-ceiling windows bring in abundant natural light, and careful furniture and lighting choices highlight the art and create a clean, serene setting for its appreciation.

At the rear of the house, a decaying 1920s porch was removed to open the views to the garden and carve out space for an outdoor dining terrace accessible from the lower-level kitchen and dining areas. A new swimming pool occupies much of the rear yard and under the pool, 15 geothermal loops ensure the heating and cooling of this ultra-high-efficiency house. "The first Georgetown historic house with a complete geothermal system," Jacobsen proudly notes.

Living room of the N Street Trust house.

Photo by Robert C. Lautman



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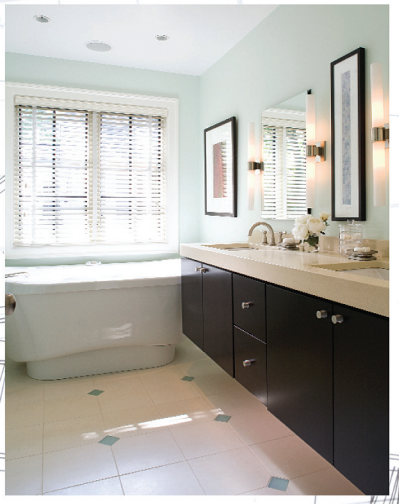



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These Old Houses

by Denise Liebowitz



Rear of the house before renovation. Courtesy of David Jones Architects

Rear of the House at Folly's Cove following renovation. Photo by Robert C. Lautman

Merit Award in Architecture

House at Folly's Cove

St. Michael's, Maryland

David Jones Architects

Structural Engineers: Ehlert/Bryan Inc.
Interior Designer: Thomas Pheasant Inc.
Landscape Architects: Graham Landscape Architecture
Contractor: Accent General Contracting

The site was breathtaking—but the house, not so much. The clients had been seduced by the property's idyllic waterfront setting at the end of a road and on a bend in a tributary feeding into the Chesapeake Bay. With visions of resplendent sunsets, sublime summer breezes, and boundless wildlife in a natural habitat, the couple bought the house and called in the architect.

The 1950s Cape Cod-style house was structurally sound, but aesthetically tired. Unsightly additions on the side and rear resulted in an interior rabbit warren of rooms with low ceilings and disappointing views to the water. Rather than raze the house and start over, the clients were committed to recycling as much of the structure as possible. They wanted open rooms that easily flowed into one another, higher ceilings, and a second-floor master bedroom that looked out to the river.

To meet these requirements, architect **David Jones, AIA,** reorganized the floor plan centered on a large, symmetrical living/dining room opening onto an expansive waterfront porch. Natural light floods through a glassy wall of French doors, sidelights, and transoms, and matching fireplaces at either end of the room serve as focal points. Painted pilasters and beams visually anchor the large space and, for the architect, the painted beadboard "hints at a casual informality." Jones raised the roof of this center block of the structure to give higher ceilings on the first floor and provide new space for a master suite above.



Even more than the interior, the rambling, dowdy exterior of the house called for signifcant improvements to make it worthy of its majestic setting. New dormers and a balustrade over the existing porch give focus to the the front of the house, and raised chimneys and a pedimented porch off the master bedroom make the house a dramatic presence on the waterfront. The brick walls, clapboard siding, and wood trim were all painted a unifying white, and new shutters and wood shingles provide texture and character.

The original swimming pool that interrupted the views from the house out to the water was eliminated, and a new one built to the side, nearer the family room. New clapboard outbuildings shield the pool area from the diveway and garage. And, as requested, the columns and trellis of the new pool pavillion let those summer breezes flow through.

The House at Folly's Cove was also featured in the Summer 2010 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Merit Award in Historic Resources

House in Newport, Rhode Island

Newport, RI

Outerbridge Horsey Associates

Structural Engineers: Seaquist Investigative Engineering
Landscape Architects: Balmori Associates, Inc.
Contractor: Peter S. Kent & Sons

Restoration of the original fabric of this 18th-century house in Newport, Rhode Island, required five years of expert study, historic analysis, and painstaking preservation. And the steadfast patience of a committed client, who rented a small nearby house for the duration of the work. The house was constructed in two periods: the front portion in 1720 and the rear half in 1740. "It was originally a typical 'half house'—two stories, two rooms on each floor, and one stairway," explained the architect, **Outerbridge Horsey, AIA**. "The 1740 expansion essentially added another half house resulting in four rooms on each floor, an attic, and somewhat unusually, two staircases."

Because the house had been divided into apartments in the 1960s, the first step was to replace the ground-floor bedroom and full bath with a library. The open kitchen with a generous hearth is compatible with a spacious 18th-century house, and space was found for a new powder room. The removal of the bathroom allowed an exterior door on the south side of the house to be re-established. The second-floor apartment was restored to a master bedroom and sitting area with a new bath tucked between the chimneystacks. Two more bedrooms and a renovated bath open on the rear staircase landing. The attic level was made usable again as it had been in the 18th century with two bedrooms and a sitting room. A new bathroom was added and missing dormer windows were restored, once again filling the space with light. The client, a manuscripts and collections librarian, uses the third floor for his extensive book collections and large library tables for manuscript viewing.

In restoring the rooms to their original sizes and uses, almost no original fabric was removed. The kitchen's rotting "summer" beam—the large supporting timber—was restored with epoxyed, matching wood; flues and dampers were installed in eight of the eleven fireplaces; the heating system was updated re-using existing radiators; and central air-conditioning was installed. For the architect, one of the most satisfying aspects of the project was crafting modern, functional spaces including bathrooms and the kitchen, within the constraints of a post-and-beam structure. "Actually, it's two post-and-beam houses," he said. "There are posts and beams everywhere, and creating rooms that are aesthetically and functionally successful was highly satisfying."



Kitchen of the Newport house following renovation. **Photo by John Corbett**



Exterior of the Newport house. **Photo by John Corbett**

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Learning and Doing

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA, LEED AP



A classroom at Eastern High School. **Photo by Jim Maguire**

Award for Excellence in Historic Resources

Eastern High School

Washington, DC

Fanning Howey and cox, graae + spack architects

Structural Engineers: Fanning Howey
Electrical Engineers: Mona Electric Group
Mechanical Engineers: Limbach
Food Service Consultants: Nyikos
Fire Protection Consultants: S.A. Comunale
Contractor: Turner Construction Company

Eastern High School is sometimes known as "The Pride of Capitol Hill," partly a reference to the generations proud to have been educated there, and partly a reference to its monumental, Collegiate Gothic-style building. Built in 1923, the school has never been abandoned, nor even seriously mistreated. But the piecemeal degradation of decades of often inadequate and insensitive maintenance had accumulated, and in any case the building needed serious systems upgrades—electrical and communications, especially—to support the computer-centric learning of today.

In contrast with most charter schools, which have targeted educational missions, Eastern is a full-service public high school requiring the full range of facilities: multiple kinds of offices and classrooms, specialty spaces like science labs and a greenhouse, loud spaces like music rooms and the gymnasium, quiet rooms like the media center and study halls, even the Parent Center and Guidance Suite, which is specifically aimed at bringing the parents into the process of determining appropriate colleges and majors for their children.

To the public passing by, the project appears as a high-quality restoration of an important building, but this is not just a straightforward preservation/restoration project. Under the guidance of architects **Fanning Howey** and **cox, graae + spack,** new and old were intricately woven together. Key interior spaces such were restored to original splendor: it could almost be 1923 in the grand staircase and auditorium, for example. Most interior spaces exhibit a mix of restoration and new work. Two existing courtyards—previously dismal, forgotten spaces—were given new, glass roofs and are now highly useful, flexible spaces for informal socializing or formal programs.



The atrium of Eastern High School. **Photo by Jim Maguire**

Wheelchair accessibility was added, the educational spaces were reconfigured to be flexible spaces addressing ever-shifting needs, and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were all replaced and seamlessly integrated with the architecture. The school facility is expected to earn a LEED Silver or Gold rating, yet another facet of the highly complex project, and a sign that the operating costs should be low.

At Eastern's grand reopening, then-Mayor Adrian Fenty said, "The transformation of Eastern is spectacular. You can see the care and attention to detail that the architects and builders took while restoring the school."

Merit Award in Architecture

Marriott Hall, St. Albans School

Washington, DC

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

Engineers: Arup Consulting Engineers
Landscape Architects: Richard Burke Associates
Contractor: Coakley & Williams Construction

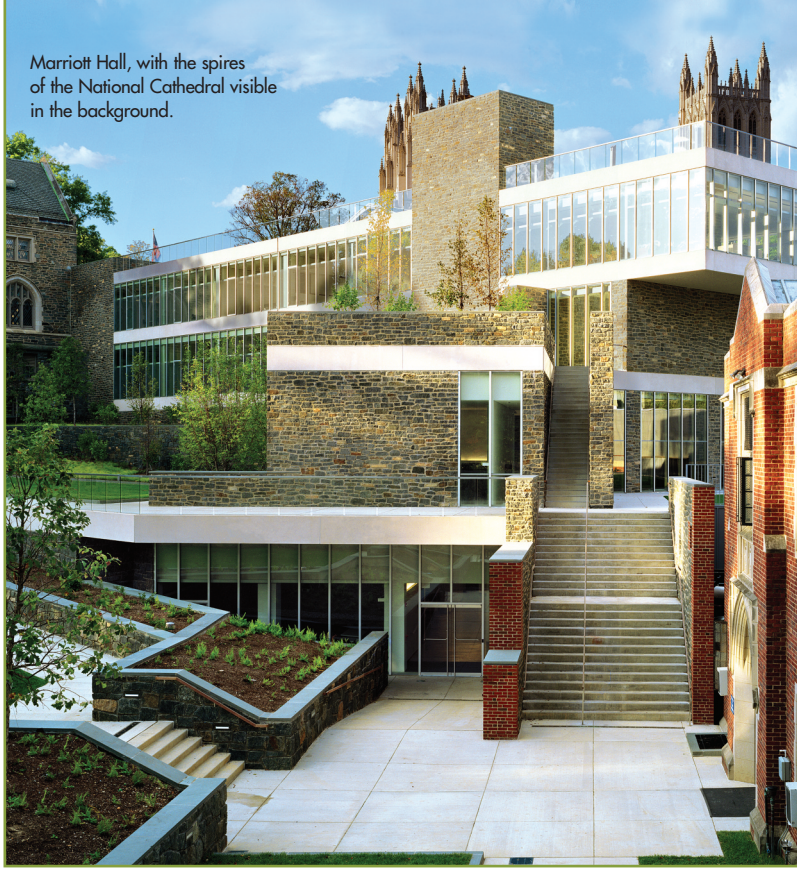
Clearly visible from the busy intersection of Wisconsin and Massachusetts Avenues in Northwest Washington, the new Marriott Hall at St. Albans School is an intricate series of paradoxes beautifully resolved. Architects **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** seemingly turned every challenge into an opportunity, aided by a generous budget and committed clients.

The architecture is simultaneously self-effacing and bold, with expanses of low-iron (ultraclear) glazing offset by stone that matches the older buildings on campus. It occupies the center of the campus, yet is neither the prominent void (quadrangle) nor architectural landmark one might expect in that position. The genesis of the building seems to be a complex circulation system that provides a dizzying array of connections—vertical and horizontal, interior and exterior, and programmatic and service-related—among the multiple pre-existing buildings and exterior spaces of the campus, yet the building's plan would be coherent as a stand-alone building.

Technically, this is "the new Marriott Hall" because there was a pre-existing hall of the same name, a pleasant if architecturally dull building occupying the northwestern half of the current building's footprint. This building was gutted to its concrete frame, another cellar was excavated below it, a new elevator shaft was cut through it, the new work expanded it, and it received entirely new interiors and exterior walls. The roof was transformed into a green roof, responding to another salient feature of the site: thanks to the slope of the land, the roof is highly visible. The vegetation and soil on the roof also assist with stormwater control and provide insulation.

St. Albans School is part of the National Cathedral complex, whose grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.. The project reconnects some of the lost "pilgrim's paths" of Olmsted's design. As if all of this—on an extremely visible, sensitive site—weren't enough, the building is designed to meet LEED Silver standards.

Marriott Hall was previously published in the Spring 2010 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.



Marriott Hall, with the spires of the National Cathedral visible in the background.

Photo © Robert Polidori

Merit Award in Architecture

George Mason University Founders Hall

Arlington, VA

SmithGroupJJR

Structural Engineers: McMullan & Associates
Contractor: Manhattan Construction Company



Founders Hall at George Mason University's Arlington campus.

Photo © Maxwell MacKenzie

Much of George Mason University's (GMU) main campus, in Fairfax City, has the character of a pleasant suburban office park. In their design of Founders Hall at GMU's Arlington campus, however, architects at **SmithGroupJJR** embraced the density of the Virginia Square location, creating a highly urban building. Its distinctive architectural articulation provides a landmark not only for GMU but for the area as a whole, while the plaza provides a first-rate front door to the campus.

Founders Hall is composed of five basic elements of massing, plus the all-important void of the plaza. First, a three-story glass box houses the lobby/lounge, bookstore, and food service at grade and two floors of library above. Its highly transparent, floor-to-ceiling glazing connects the activities of the school with the plaza and street, especially at night when it becomes a glowing lantern. Second, behind the glass box (largely unseen from the front view) is a four-story bar of classrooms arranged along a broad corridor that connects to the adjacent law school building to the east, and will connect to a future building at the west. The intention is that the classrooms can be flexibly used by any component of the campus.

Third, at the west of the plaza is a one-story wedge element, clad in vertical, insulated metal panels in a range of soft, light blue-gray colors, which houses an auditorium and two large meeting rooms. These have internal connections to the rest of the complex, but also a separate entrance from the plaza, so that they can host either community events or GMU functions. Large windows on the street side of the wedge, which is the rear of the auditorium, give the public a peek at the activities within.

The focal element is the seven-story wedge in the middle of the complex, which mostly houses offices. It is clad in the same metal panels as the auditorium wing, but horizontally oriented and with ribbon windows. At the high end, the sloping top encloses and conceals mechanical equipment so that there is no penthouse structure compromising the purity of the wedge. The fifth basic element is the white box that cantilevers out at the seventh story, a frame around floor-to-ceiling glass. It marks the location of a multipurpose room intended for smaller events and meetings.

Each of the five elements is distinctive, simple, and cleanly executed. It is the masterful composition of the elements that lends the project landmark quality. Moreover, Founders Hall is expected to earn Silver certification under the LEED for New Construction ratings system.

Merit Award in Historic Resources

Petworth Neighborhood Library

Washington, DC

Franck & Lohsen

Library Design Architects: Fletcher Farr Ayotte
Structural Engineers: Spiegel Zamecnik & Shah
MEP Engineers: META Engineers
Contractor: SIGAL Construction Corporation

Launched a decade ago, the D.C. Public Library's (DCPL) facilities modernization program aims to bring all DCPL buildings into the present, in some cases with rigorously 21st-century new buildings, in others, via careful-but-thorough restorations or



Interior of the Petworth Neighborhood Library. Photo © Gordon Beall Photography



Exterior of the Petworth Neighborhood Library.

Photo © Gordon Beall Photography







Courtyard of the Lorton Correctional Complex before renovation.

Courtesy of BBG-BBGM



Courtyard of the Workhouse Arts Center after renovation.

Photo by Jeffrey Totaro



Interior of the Lorton facility before renovation.

Courtesy of BBG-BBGM



Interior of the Workhouse Arts Center after renovation.

Photo by Jeffrey Totaro

renovations of landmarked historic buildings. The Petworth Library renovation, which clearly falls in the latter category, is the latest in a string of Chapter Award-winning D.C. branch libraries.

Architect Nathan C. Wyeth, who designed a number of Colonial Revival structures during his tenure as D.C.'s municipal architect from 1934 to 1946, modeled the building after the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg. In the same time period, Wyeth designed the Georgetown DCPL branch, which is similar in appearance. His interest in these projects, he said, was to "recapture the spirit of early American builders." The Petworth branch opened in 1939 and was an immediate success. (Both the Georgetown and Petworth buildings have the confident, simple designs and solid construction associated with the work of New Deal agencies, and therefore are often mistaken as products of the PWA or WPA. In these cases, however, Congress directly allocated the funding as part of its pre-Home Rule role overseeing the affairs of the District.)

The Petworth neighborhood saw a surge of development following the 1999 opening of the Green Line Metro station. But the landmark public library seemed frozen in time, not a horrible or dysfunctional place by any means, but shabby and lacking the communications systems required by modern libraries as digital media centers.

The renovation by **Franck & Lohsen** is principally a straightforward restoration, inside and out, in which historic room configurations were rediscovered and new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire alarm and suppression systems incorporated as invisibly as possible. Two new features are the terrazzo floor in the circulation room/main entrance lobby, which has a street map of the Petworth neighborhood, and the exterior cupola, part of Wyeth's original design but not constructed due to budget limitations. In different ways, these two items serve to reconnect the library and its neighborhood.

Merit Award in Historic Resources

Workhouse Arts Center

Lorton, VA

BBG-BBGM

Landscape Architects: Studio 39
Lighting Designers: MCLA
Contractor: BE&K Building Group

The Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, Virginia, shows a different side of the large architecture/interiors firm **BBG-BBGM.** The firm is best known for its hotel designs, which are often very luxurious, but here it is working on a shoestring budget to create an artists' haven out of a former prison.

When most Washingtonians think of the Lorton Correctional Complex, they think of its troubled latter decades. Its origins, however, are quite different. In a Progressive Era experiment in penology, the first prisoners built the cellblocks themselves, using brick manufactured on site. There were no bars or fences, and there was a

great deal of care devoted to the architecture. The original design, by architect Snowden Ashford, comes off as a larger, but lower-rise and lower-budget, version of Thomas Jefferson's design for the University of Virginia. Here are simple brick arcades, prison dormitories, and a common-use central building in lieu of the university's neoclassical colonnades, pavilion-houses, and library (respectively), but the overall effect is quite similar, and the intention—to improve people—was the same.

The last prisoner was transferred out in 2001, and Fairfax County gained title to the property in 2002. As part of the master plan, the Workhouse, as the original prison facility is known, was to become a world-class arts venue. For this, the Lorton Arts Foundation was created, and it commissioned BBG-BBGM to oversee the transformation.

Because some of the financing came from state tax credits, which had short deadlines, the architects had only ten weeks to complete the permit package. Design decisions were made as a team with the client and builder, both to expedite the process and maintain both the very limited construction budget and the foundation's operational budget, which had little wiggle room. The majority of the budget went to the basics: restoration of the exteriors and entirely new infrastructure of bathrooms and base utilities. The interiors are done in a "loft" aesthetic, with concrete floors, painted drywall partitions with single-panel glazed doors and simple trim, carefully located but utilitarian light fixtures, and exposed mechanical, electrical, and structural elements in the ceiling above. There is a modest upgrade for the main gallery space, with wood flooring and areas of dropped drywall ceilings with recessed downlights, but even there, an art-appropriate loft feel is maintained.



California Army National Guard—Sacramento Readiness Center.

Photo © Alan Karchmer

Merit Award in Architecture

California Army National Guard—Sacramento Readiness Center

Sacramento, CA

URS Corporation

Engineers, Landscape Architects, and Interior Designers: URS Corporation
Cost Consultants: Durden Group
Contractor: MASCON Incorporated

With the lengthy engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, plus occasional actions in other global trouble spots, America's military is constantly in the news. But when was the last time a military *building* made headlines? For better and for worse, military architecture is usually about functionality, durability, and ease (often speed) of construction. The architecture firm **URS,** in its design of the California Army National Guard Readiness Center outside Sacramento, were able to provide those traditional military qualities while also bringing some serious architecture into the picture.

The facility's 102,000 square feet accommodate a varied program, including a large medical clinic, scores of storage rooms for various types of equipment, classrooms, a library, a commercial kitchen, and a 500-person locker room. (The genders have separate bathroom facilities with showers and a small changing area, but the locker room itself is not divided. Most changing, apparently, involves donning or doffing equipment over one's street clothing.)

Some of these spaces are continuously used, while others are extremely busy during weekend training sessions, but largely empty otherwise. URS organized the plan so that the daily-use spaces—clinic, classrooms, and administration—are accessed from the initial entry vestibule, so that the weekday emptiness of much of the facility is not apparent to these users. The vestibule also opens to a large atrium space, from which the weekend-use spaces open. The atrium is a multipurpose space for assemblies, special events, food service, and even National Guard-related social events.

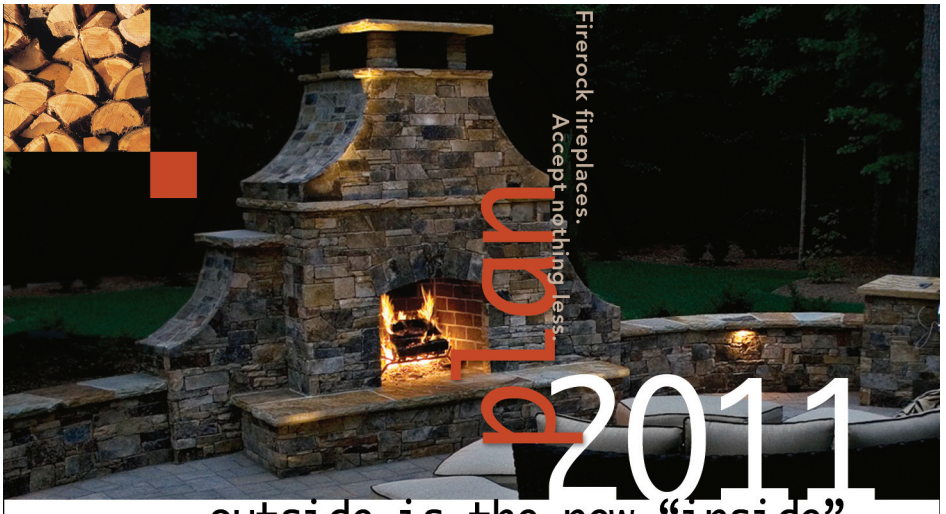
The main formal element is the enveloping folded roof, which, like the Stealth Bomber that perhaps inspired it, is at once warmly protective and vaguely menacing—which is to say, it embodies the elemental dichotomy of the military. The roof is subtly sculpted to provide skylights and a low-profile area for rooftop mechanical equipment on the east, and office windows on the west.

Architectural character is provided by manipulation of light and forms, not by any type of ornamentation or sensual materials. Exterior materials are basic and solid, standard-issue for industrial projects: concrete block, corrugated metal roofing and siding, and simple windows. The interiors are a touch less industrial, but not much, yet when sunlight floods through the skylights into the atrium (and from there to some of the classrooms and office spaces), the effect is marvelous.



Exterior of the California Army National Guard—Sacramento Readiness Center.

Photo © Alan Karchmer



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Modern Hospitality

by Ronald O'Rourke



Cava Grill.

Photo © Michael Moran

The design of restaurants, hotels, resorts, and similar facilities—a category of architectural practice sometimes called hospitality design—includes a wide range of projects, as shown by the two very different award-winners described below. Despite their differences, the two projects share a common thread in their careful attention to design details.

Merit Award in Interior Architecture

Cava Grill

Bethesda, MD

CORE architecture | design

Kitchen Designers: Next Step Design
Lighting Designers: MCLA
MEP Engineers: Allen & Shariff
Contractor: Potomac Construction Services

The Cava Grill, in downtown Bethesda, is a prototype fast-casual restaurant designed for the owners of Cava Mezze, a full-service restaurant with three Washington-area locations. The 1,800-square-foot eatery was designed by **CORE architecture | design,** a DC-based firm whose hospitality work includes more than two dozen restaurants and cafes.

Although designing a small eatery might seem like a relatively simple undertaking, the limited amount of space actually increases the challenge for the architect, who must figure out how to accommodate numerous restaurant functions and achieve aesthetic and branding goals within a tight envelope while at the same time creating an environment for customers that feels adequately spacious and avoids visual overload.



Exterior of Cava Grill.

Photo © Michael Moran

To achieve these goals for Cava Grill, Core employed a rustic-meets-modern combination of materials and finishes. The cafe, the firm says, "was designed with modern abstractions of Mediterranean vernacular architecture utilizing simple rustic finishes, custom copper light fixtures, and digital wall graphics depicting scenes of pastoral Greece from family photographs."

Rustic white oak and pine millwork and fixed furniture separate dining and queuing and create a clear circulation path. "Cava Grill's signature golden amber accent," CORE says, "solidifies the branded environment and is prominent throughout in the menu, exterior signage and light-box at the entry."

Expanses of plain white walls support the Mediterranean theme and keep the overall design from getting too busy. The result is a pleasantly simple and clean interior with select elements of warmth and richness. CORE also states that Cava Grill "has a strong environmental commitment and is possibly the first restaurant exclusively featuring LED lighting in its main dining room."

Merit Award in Historic Resources

W Hotel

Washington, DC

BBG-BBGM

Interior Designers: Dianna Wong Architecture + Design
MEP Engineers: Joseph R. Loring & Associates
Structural Engineers: Tadjer Cohen Edelson Associates
Contractor: HITT Contracting

This project renovated the former Hotel Washington, one of the city's most historic hotel properties, and converted it into the area's first W Hotel. The project was designed by **BBG-BBGM,** an allied pair of architecture and interior design firms with offices in Washington, New York, and Shanghai.

The project's central goal was to preserve and restore the building's historic features while bringing its amenities up to current standards and gently fitting it into the W Hotel's modern design brand.

The renovation included demolition of non-historic interiors and all building systems. The guestroom floors were reconfigured to match the exterior window pattern, and the public spaces were reconfigured to incorporate modern amenities and living patterns. The main lobby, BBG-BBGM says, "remains true to the original design for layout and ornamentation. In locations where elements were missing or damaged identical pieces were created to blend with the original." The renovation of the hotel's street-level restaurant restored the room's original, double-height space.

"Although little remained of the historic interiors in the public areas," the firm says, "residual elements were retained and extended as needed to complete spaces and the sense of the building's history while overlaying the very contemporary image of the W brand."

"The exterior work," BBG-BBGM says, "involved cleaning and repairing the limestone cladding, repointing the brick façade in certain areas, replacing the circa-1980s windows with new units that blend with the historic building, and adding window awnings to match original decorative adornment on the façade. The renovation respected the historic character of the exterior through minimal modifications and additions that blend with the surrounding aesthetic."

"The conversion of the hotel to a different brand required a delicate approach regarding signage," the firm says. "The new signage was designed to fit within the color palette and style of the existing building while creating an understated identity on the exterior. The historic canopies were renovated through replacement of missing parts, including glass panels and decorative metal elements. Fabric awnings were reintroduced to the ground floor windows to match the historic precedent. The entry doors were replaced with raised panel bronze doors that contain insulated beveled glass panels and decorative hardware. All entry doors at the ground floor were designed to match each other."



Lobby of the Hotel Washington before renovation.

Courtesy of BBG-BBGM.



Historic photo of the Hotel Washington lobby.

Courtesy of BBG-BBGM.

W Hotel lobby following renovation.



Photo by Jeffrey Totaro











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Making Sacred Places

by Steven K. Dickens, AIA, LEED AP



The Magar Memorial to the Ancestors. **Photo by Travis L. Price, III, FAIA**

The poetry of form is central to the field of architecture, but only rarely is it the central consideration in a specific project. Architect **Travis Price, FAIA,** leads a "design-build expedition program" at the Catholic University of America each year called "Spirit of Place / Spirit of Design." Students spend a semester programming and designing small buildings or architectural landscape forms for specific cultures and dramatic settings. Price and the students travel to the destination and spearhead construction of the design in nine-day marathons of work. The project from 2010, in Finland, and from 2011, in Nepal, both received awards in the Architecture category this year.

Award for Excellence in Architecture

Magar Memorial to the Ancestors

Namje-Thumki, Nepal

Travis Price Architects/ Spirit of Place—Spirit of Design

Engineers: SPADECO

Local Collaborators: Learning Grounds, Rajeev Goyal, Priyanka Bista, Hari Ale Magar, Temba Bohte

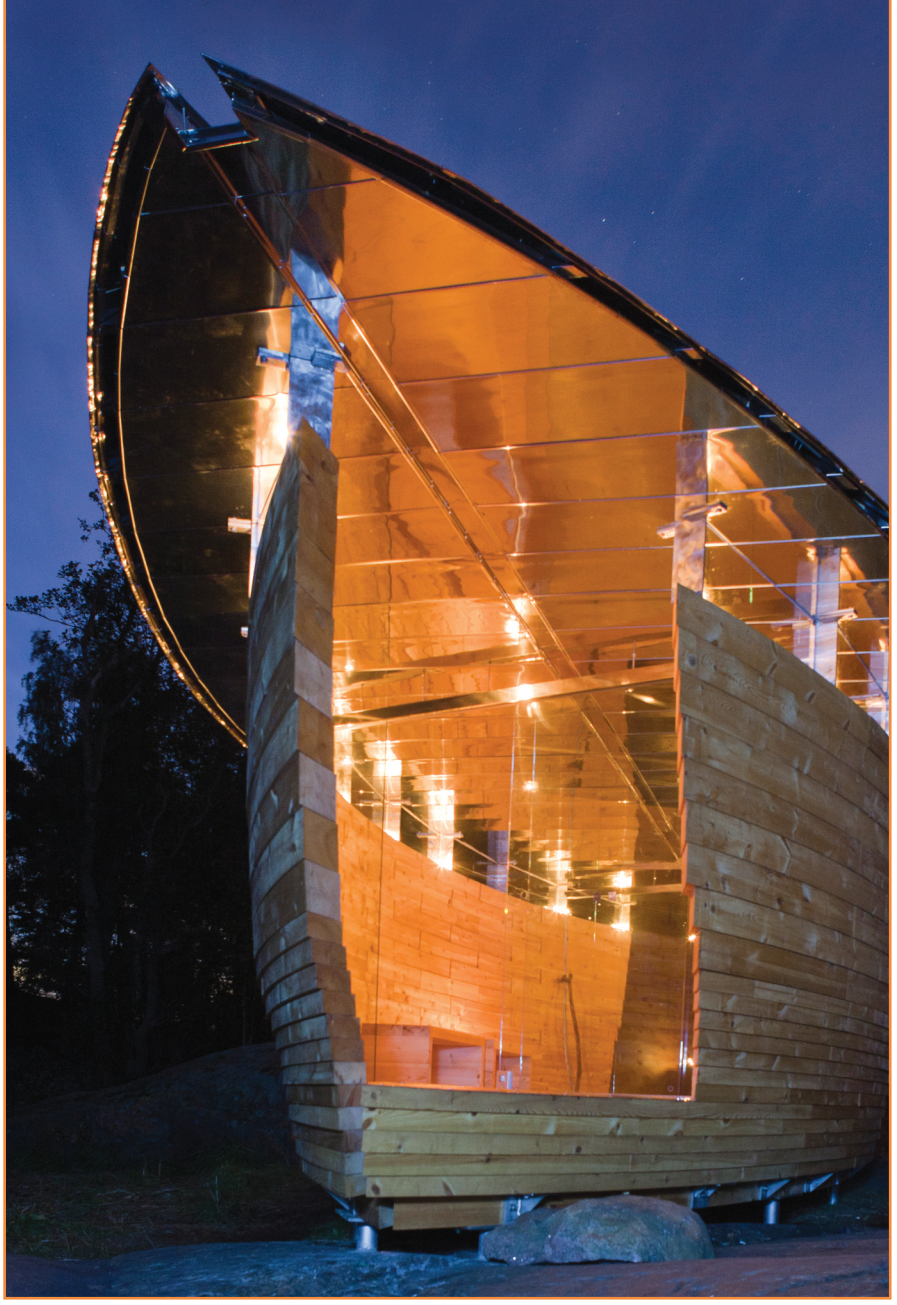
The Nepalese project is a memorial to the ancestors, located on the highest hill of Thumki village, in the foothills of the Himalayas. The memorial is situated in an ancient burial ground. According to Price, "In the Magar shamanistic tradition, the ancestors are venerated as sacred figures, while simultaneously recognized in Hinduism and Buddhism as souls regenerating and reincarnating, finally to enter a cosmic oneness with all."

The project comprises two rings of thick stone wall segments semi-enclosing a central reflective element. Stacked stone was chosen because it is the material of Magar burial tombs. Moreover, in the Magar funeral tradition, mourners carry stones in a procession, which are placed onto the tombs as offerings.

The project's construction involved everyone in the village, including master stonemasons who instructed the Catholic students in the craft. Children passed stones up to the site, and elder shamans dedicated the temple with a ritual called "puja."

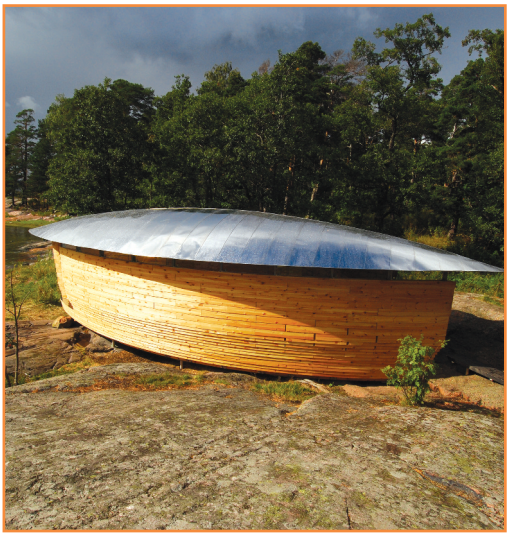


Internal area of the Magar Memorial. **Photo by Travis L. Price, III, FAIA**



Prow of the Kalevalakehto.

Photo by Travis L. Price, III, FAIA



General view of the Kalevalakehto.

Photo by Travis L. Price, III, FAIA



Interior of the Kalevalakehto.

Photo by Travis L. Price, III, FAIA

Merit Award in Architecture

Kalevalakehto: Shaman's Haven of the Kalevala

Helsinki, Finland

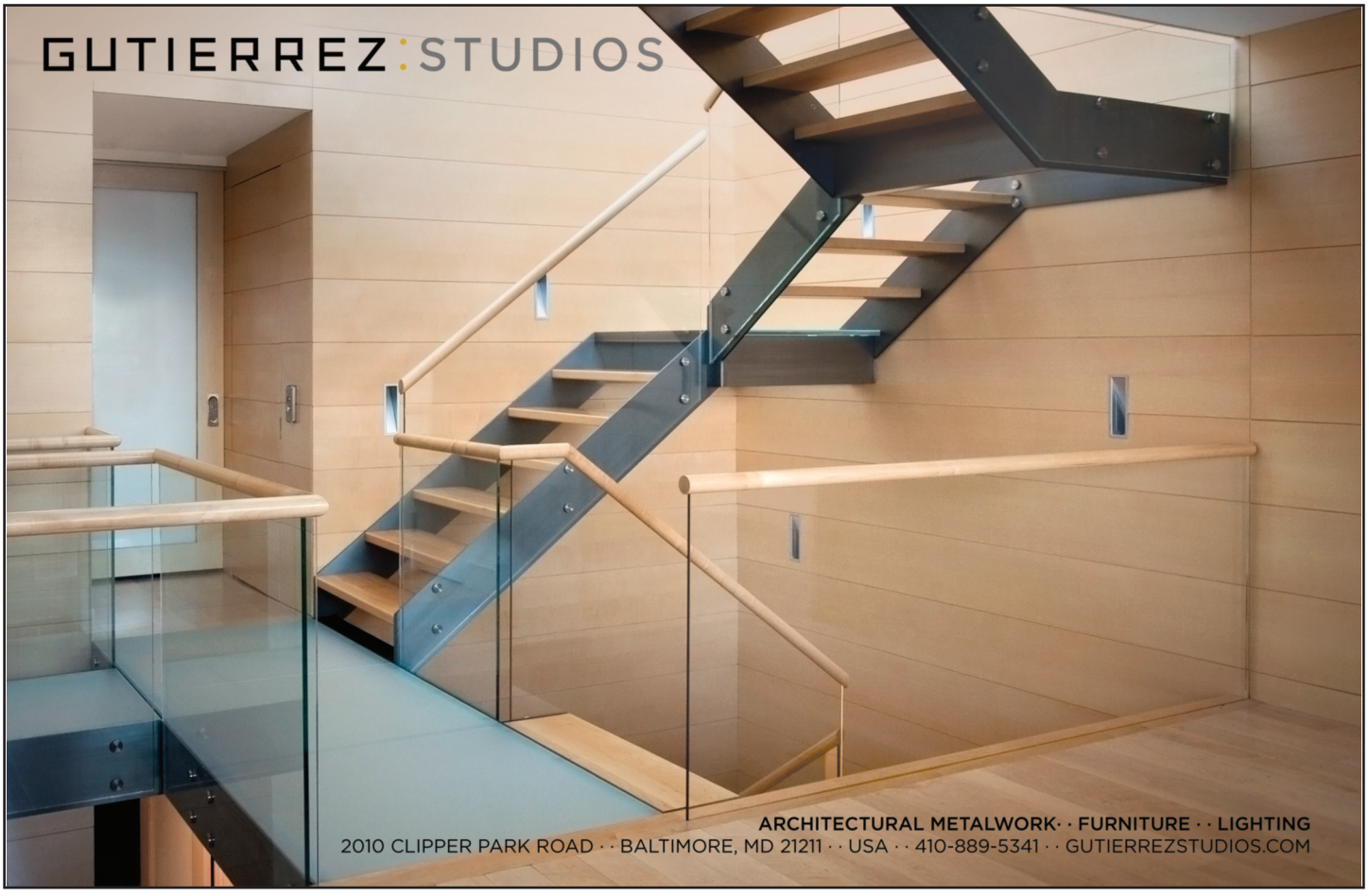
Travis Price Architects/ Spirit of Place—Spirit of Design

Structural and Civil Engineers:
Arkkitehtuuritoimisto Kari Ristola Oy
Stainless Steel Supplier and Fabricator: Outokumpu
Wood Supplier: Woodpolis
Contractor: Stara

The Finnish project, located on an island in Helsinki which is a nature preserve, is known as "Kalevalakehto." Its design draws from the Finnish epic Kalevala, which is a 19th-century compilation of Finnish and Karelian folklore and mythology. It is the "national epic" of Finland and a cornerstone of Finnish literature. The most common current version is a poem of more than 22,000 verses, divided into 50 songs. The storyline defies summary, but the primary subjects are the creation of the world and the rivalry between the people of Kalevala (led by the shamanistic hero Väinämöinen) and the people of Pohjola, vying for a powerful, mystical object known as the Sampo.

In the epic, Väinämöinen frequently builds and sails boats, which became the inspiration for the primary imagery of the project. It faces the water, its form and function obviously purposeful yet shrouded in mystery. According to the competition entry, it will serve as a "think tank" and "meeting place for reflection and creative dialogue."

The materials—wood, glass, and stainless steel—were all donated by Finnish sources. The wood, used as solid planks to create the walls, was sustainably harvested in the forests of northeastern Finland, which is where the stories of the Kalevala originated. The students worked with Finnish craftsmen on the construction.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Presidential Citations for 2011

by G. Martin Moeller, Jr., Assoc. AIA



Sorenson Language and Communication Center, Gallaudet University.

Photos © Prakash Patel

Photos © Prakash Patel

Presidential Citation for Universal Design

James Lee Sorenson Language and Communication Center, Gallaudet University

Washington, DC

SmithGroupJJR

Mechanical Engineer: Cindy Cogil
Electrical Engineer: Il Kim
Contractor: Forrester Construction Company

"Universal design" is the now-preferred term for design that responds to the needs of people with disabilities. The idea, and the reason this term is supplanting its predecessor, "accessible design," is that such buildings can be used comfortably and effectively by *all* people, and are thus "universal."

The Sorenson Language and Communication Center (SLCC) bills itself as Gallaudet University's "first true space deliberately designed for deaf and hard of hearing people," which is perhaps surprising given Gallaudet's almost 150-year history as the nation's premier university for hearing-impaired students. The SLCC's purpose is to provide a collaborative environment for multiple departments that had been separated in the past.

The challenge in designing this project was that the nature of collaborative activities is distinctly different for those who are deaf or hard of hearing because their primary form of communication is visual. The building is *visu-centric,* to use the term coined by the architects at **SmithGroupJJR,** meaning that every aspect of the design attempts to facilitate the use of sign language. This entailed some simple design decisions, such as the avoidance of distracting colors and patterns. Along main circulation paths, corners are rounded so that students can safely walk and communicate without worrying about an unseen person around a sharp corner. Large amounts of glass, between interior spaces and between inside and outside, provide light and crucial visual connections, but are carefully positioned to avoid glare, which could impede visual communication.

The building takes advantage of simple technologies such as automatic doors, so that people do not have to interrupt their conversations as they walk through the building. The facility also includes a wireless frequency loop that amplifies speeches and lessons and puts them on the same frequency as hearing aids.

Presidential Citation for Urban Design

Mary Catherine Bunting Center at Mercy

Baltimore, MD

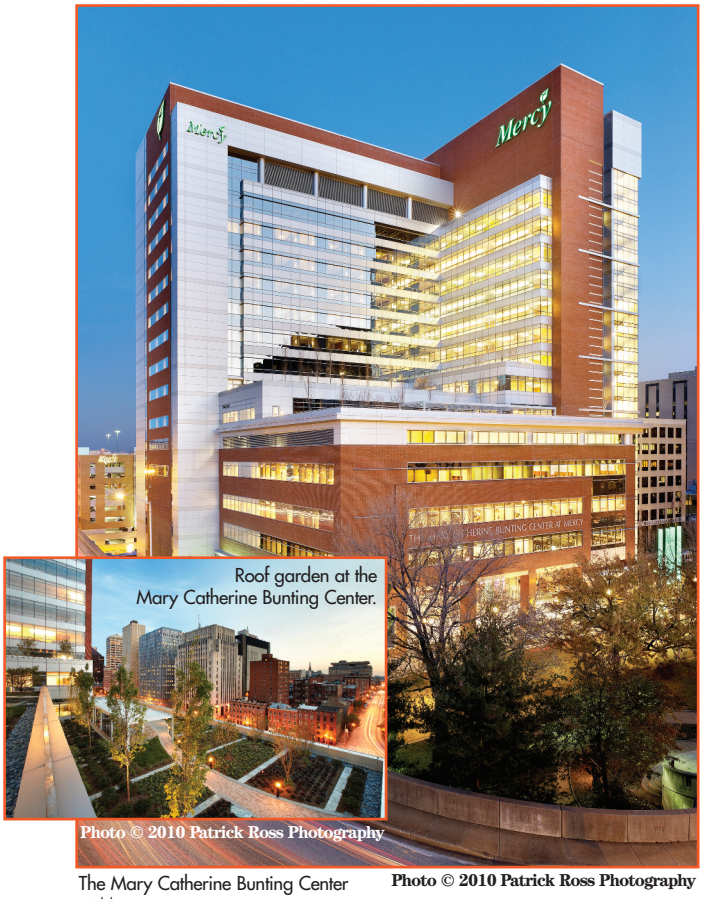
AECOM

Landscape Architects: Mahan Rykiel Associates
Civil Engineers: Whitman, Requardt & Associates
Environmental Graphics: Gensler
Contractor: The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

In planning a replacement for its existing facility, Baltimore's Mercy Medical Center faced challenges that are common to urban hospitals, such as limited space and infrastructure constraints, but the hospital's management was also concerned about access to the natural environment, which is increasingly recognized as a potentially valuable aid to patient recovery. The new building, designed by **AECOM,** incorporates an elaborate, multilevel rooftop garden, which not only reduces the hospital's environmental footprint, but also creates a visual reciprocity between the facility and its neighborhood, earning the project a Presidential Citation for Urban Design.

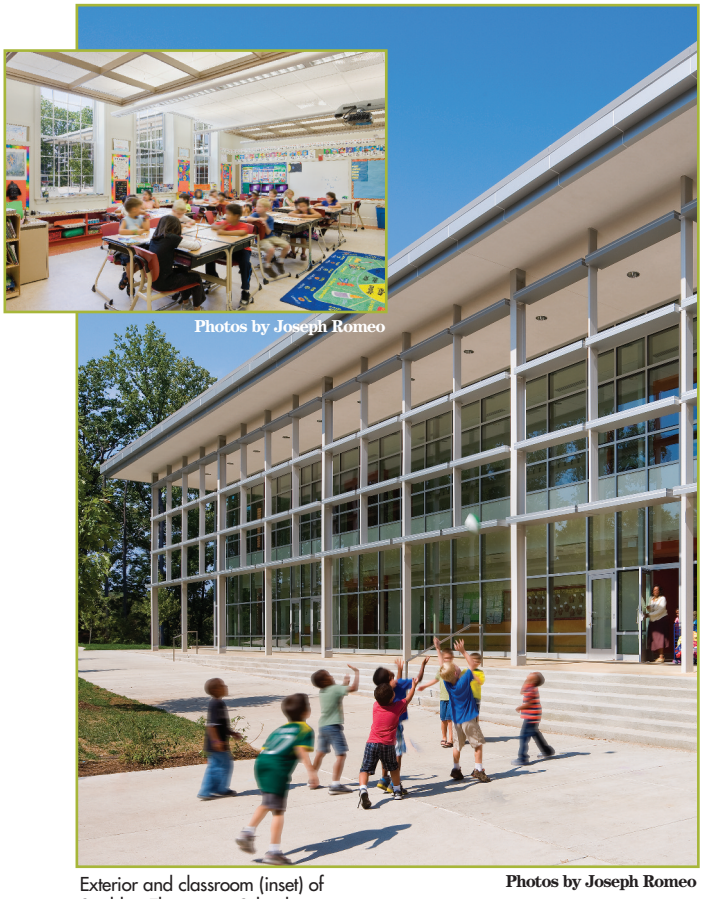
Collectively, the rooftop gardens cover one-third of the building's footprint. The main garden on the eighth floor is accessible to all patients, staff, and visitors. On the ninth floor is a private garden immediately adjacent to the waiting room of the Intensive Care Unit. The tenth-floor garden primarily serves to soften the view from the patient rooms above.

The tiered rooftop gardens reduce the apparent height of the building and establishes a direct visual link to Preston Gardens, an



The Mary Catherine Bunting Center at Mercy.

Photo © 2010 Patrick Ross Photography



Exterior and classroom (inset) of Stoddert Elementary School.

Photos by Joseph Romeo

adjacent swath of green space designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. The use of red brick on the lower levels of the building and portions of the tower relates the hospital to the brick row houses and other low-rise structures nearby.

Presidential Citation for Sustainability

Stoddert Elementary School and Community Center

Washington, DC

EE&K a Perkins Eastman Company

Interior Designers: EE&K a Perkins Eastman Company
Historic Preservation: R. McGhee & Associates
Structural Engineers: KTLH Engineers
MEP Engineers: Setty & Associates International
Civil Engineers: A. Morton Thomas & Associates
Geotechnical Engineers: ECS Mid-Atlantic
Sustainability Consultants: Sustainable Design Consulting
Environmental Consultants: Applied Environmental
Landscape Architects: Peter Liu Associates
Food Service Consultants: Cini-Little
AV/Acoustical/Telecommunications Consultants: Shen Milsom Wilke
Specifications Consultants: Heller & Metzger
Cost Estimators: Project Cost
Contractor: The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

Stoddert Elementary occupies two city blocks in the Glover Park neighborhood of Northwest, Washington. The recently-finished renovation/ expansion project, by **Perkins Eastman,** was awarded a Presidential Citation for Sustainability. It is expected to receive Gold certification under the LEED for Schools rating system.

The criteria for LEED for Schools, which was launched in 2007, are not significantly different from those for the original LEED—efficient use of energy and water, material choice, and the like are still of central importance. But aspects considered especially important for K-12 schools receive greater emphasis, such as indoor air quality (as every parent knows, schools can be communicable disease factories), mold prevention, acoustic controls, and the potential for the building itself to interest and educate the students about sustainability. Another distinctive LEED for Schools point comes from designing spaces for joint use by groups from outside the school, as a means of better integrating the school with the surrounding community and reducing the down time of spaces.

Stoddert is the first school in the city to employ a geothermal heating and cooling system, with 72 wells located under the athletic field. Near-real-time monitoring of the building's performance data is available on interactive "green screens" in each classroom, plus one in the lobby for the community's information. These show the school's performance in energy and water use and carbon dioxide levels benchmarked against a more conventionally designed school. One remarkable aspect of this interactive feature is that the display can be in English, Russian, Spanish, or French, reflecting the multinational character of Stoddert's student body.



Lounge area and lobby (inset) of the USGBC Headquarters.

Photos © Eric Laignel

Presidential Citation for Sustainability

U.S. Green Building Council Headquarters

Washington, DC

Envision Design

MEP Engineers: GHT Limited
Contractor: James G. Davis Construction

Sustainable design and construction require a committed client. One can hardly imagine a more committed client than the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)—the entity that created and administers the LEED system—whose new headquarters reflects the organization's core principles.

The USGBC was an active participant in the design process, working closely with **Envision Design** to create one of the greenest office spaces anywhere. The space received Platinum certification under the LEED for Interiors rating system—the first space to be rated under the latest version of the guidelines, earning 94 out of a potential total of 110 points.

The comfort zone for office spaces is set at 70-74 degrees Fahrenheit, but circulation spaces, because they are occupied only intermittently, are set for a broader range of 65-79 degrees. Taking advantage of this greater flexibility, in the USGBC offices, the architects placed major circulation corridors along the perimeter window wall, where the temperature is more difficult to control, thus reducing the heating and cooling loads for the overall space. The architects note that, in the summer, for every degree that the perimeter zone exceeds the set point of the workstation area, there is approximately a 5% reduction in energy use.

Another aspect of the perimeter circulation zone is the light-colored flooring, which bounces daylight back up to the ceilings and deep into the space, increasing light levels by as much as 200% up to 30 feet from the windows. This is one element of the electric lighting reduction strategy, which also includes sensors that dim or brighten light fixtures as needed. Other sensors automatically lower shades to prevent low sun angles from penetrating into work areas, which happens on the east and west sides all year and on the south side in the winter.

The USGBC offices occupy two floors in a multi-tenant downtown office building. Using as a baseline the energy costs of tenants on adjacent floors, the USGBC's annual energy costs are reduced by 63.3%, or some $106,000.

The USGBC Headquarters was also featured in the Fall 2009 issue of ARCHITECTUREDC.

Presidential Citation for Sustainable Design

Hazel River Cabin

Woodville, VA

Bonstra | Haresign Architects

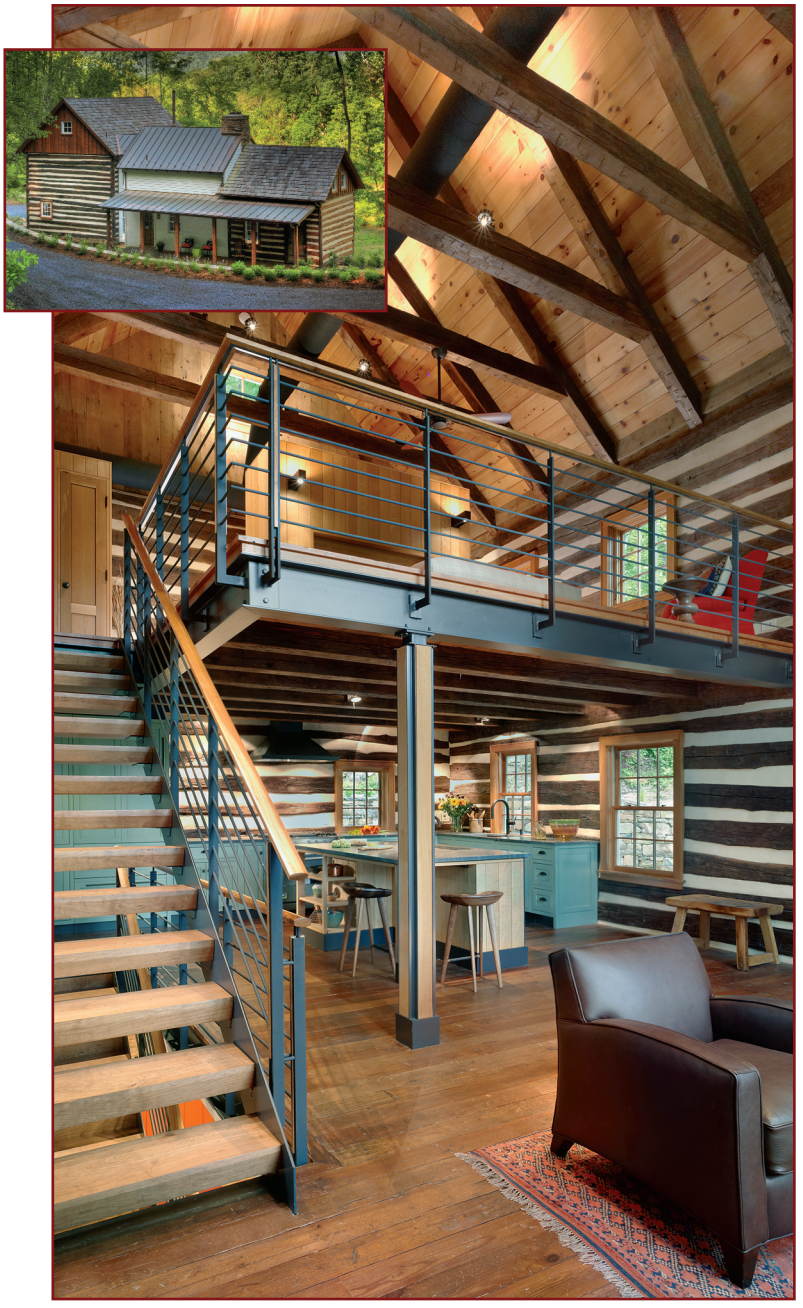
Contractor: Timber Built Construction

Sustainable design can take many forms. There are standards—LEED being the most common—which seek to codify and rank various specific strategies for making buildings more sustainable. Sustainable design can rely heavily on technology and complex operations strategies, but it can also be very simple.

In the case of the Hazel River Cabin, by **Bonstra | Haresign Architects,** the central sustainable strategy involved recycling—not just of specific materials, but of entire buildings. Existing buildings have an enormous amount of embodied energy, which is wasted if the building is demolished. Reuse requires a certain amount of new energy, of course, but most of the time the net energy expenditure is greatly reduced when existing buildings are retained.

The Hazel River Cabin is composed of two historic log cabins, both neglected for decades, almost to the point of self-demolition. One, built in 1794 for a toll-keeper for the adjacent Old Sperryville Pike, remained in situ, in Rappahannock County, Virginia. The other was relocated from Mount Joy Farm in Howard County, Maryland, and was originally a slave quarters. This second log cabin, dating from 1856, is made of American chestnut, a wood no longer available due to a blight that wiped out the former "king of the American forest." This cabin was carefully dismantled, with each part catalogued.

In total, over 70% of the wood in the Hazel River project was reclaimed, either from the two cabins or from other sources, such as the floorboards which came from the Madison County (Virginia) Courthouse. The sustainable features don't stop with recycled materials. The house is modern, and therefore has heating and air conditioning, for which high-efficiency systems, including in-floor radiant heating, were chosen. Exposure of the log walls inside and out limited opportunities to increase insulation or reduce air infiltration, but the roofs and foundations are super-insulated. Wood, stone, hardware, and steel fabrication elements were locally sourced, reducing the energy spent in transportation.



The Hazel River Cabin. **Photos © Hoachlander Davis Photography**

Presidential Citation for Sustainable Design

PNC Place

Washington, DC

Gensler

PNC Place, a new office building in downtown Washington, received a Presidential Citation for Sustainable Design in addition to an Award for Excellence in Architecture. For a full report on this project, see the article on page 10 of this issue.



Lobby of PNC Place. **Photo © Prakash Patel**

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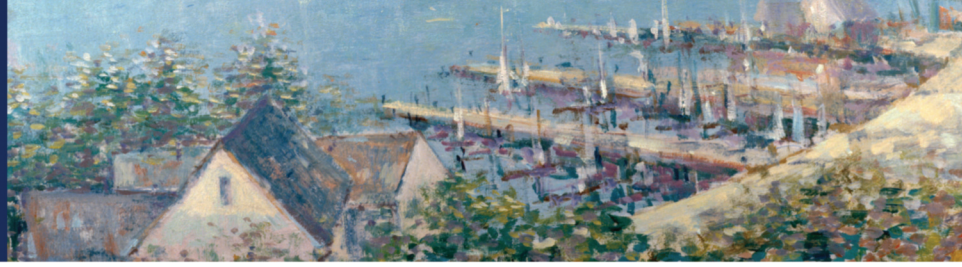





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