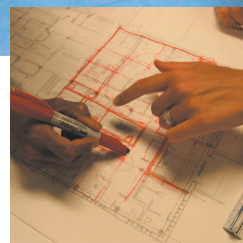




TexasArchitect

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

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Texas Tech's Green Future

University's sustainability task force mulls proposals, including a campus wind farm



THIS EDITION COVERS A BROAD SWEEP of variations on the “Design for Education” theme, from new facilities for private and public schools to an award-winning architecture course at UT Arlington that is now improving the everyday experiences of Arlington residents. There’s also a news article about a green roof on the campus of UT El Paso, an unlikely — but so far successful — attempt at sustainable design in a desert climate.

Recent events in Lubbock also offer heartening news to advocates of sustainable design. In particular, as campus leaders contemplate how to make Texas Tech a more environmentally progressive campus, they see great potential in one of most abundant resources on the High Plains—wind. In fact, they are urging the university’s administration to take advantage of the incessant airstream by erecting wind turbines to churn out electricity to power campus facilities. The idea is not farfetched in a place with a 200-year-long history of harnessing gusts and breezes to pump ground water for irrigating crops and making life bearable on the Llano Estacado.

The wind farm proposal emerged from a brainstorming session held on campus last April during a “Green Campus Action Plan” symposium. The meeting brought together faculty and students from several disciplines, including many from the College of Architecture. Part of a larger event called Spring Into Green that featured activities around the city over a two-week period in April, the open-invitation symposium was organized by the student chapter of the recently chartered West Texas branch of the U.S. Green Building Council. For most of two days, symposium attendees listened to presentations on various aspects of sustainable design, which culminated in a closed-door workshop for TTU administrators to discuss the many topics aired by the passionate participants.

Springing from the symposium’s collective brainstorm was the notion that Texas Tech President Guy Bailey appoint a task force to consider ways to “green” the campus. Bailey did just that, and the President’s Task Force for a Sustainable Campus held its inaugural meeting on Dec. 14 with David Driskill, AIA, the College of Architecture’s associate dean for external programs, presiding as chair. Among the task force’s members are Theresa Drewell, AIA, the university’s vice chancellor for facilities

and planning, and Robert Diaz, an architecture student and officer in the USGBC campus group. Driskill says the first order of business will be to formally assess current programs and conditions as a benchmark for measuring future success.

The prospects for a campus wind farm are real, says Brian Rex, the College of Architecture’s associate dean for academics, who produced a poster in connection with the symposium that imagines a line of 17 wind turbines arrayed in single file along Tech’s north-south central axis. In the poster’s text, Rex suggests such a permanent campus-scale installation as a “grand gesture that helps us define who we are in this place.”

[The “Wind Line” proposal coincides with the completion of the world’s largest wind farm located about 110 miles southeast of Lubbock. Named for the small town at its hub, the Roscoe Wind Farm went online in October and began producing electricity from 627 wind turbines arrayed across 100,000 acres of farmland.]

Spring Into Green channeled a number of grass-roots efforts into a single current with a surge that shocked many of its participants, who until then had been quietly working in isolation on their own initiatives. Now with more effective organization, the groundswell continues and plans are being made for a second Spring Into Green this year. According to Laura Bennett, AIA, who helped organize last year’s series of events, Lubbock and the surrounding region can lead a growing sustainable industry by leveraging its history and knowledge, as well as its ceaseless wind. “West Texas has the advantage of harnessing the existing natural resources to provide solutions to global environmental issues and to make the local economy more profitable,” she says. “If the residents of West Texas put their minds to it, they can come up with the solutions for issues such as water conservation. Not only that, but they are primed to be a testing ground for new strategies. In West Texas, the potential is great, the possibilities are endless, and the rewards are immeasurable.”

STEPHEN SHARPE

Edward Richardson



Fernando L. Brave, AIA



Justin Paul Howard, AIA



Kevin Sloan, ASLA



Scott Wilson, AIA



Val Glitsch, FAIA



Charlie Burris, AIA

FERNANDO L. BRAVE, AIA is a graduate of the University of Houston and the Universidad de Belgrano in Buenos Aires. The founder of Brave Architecture (pronounced *BRA vay*) in Houston, he is a key player in large master planning and development projects in both the U.S. and abroad. He enjoys traveling, cooking, contemporary art, sailing, and snow skiing. See his article on Rice University's Duncan and McMurtry colleges on page 38.

CHARLIE BURRIS, AIA has lived simply and close to nature for more than half his life due to Walden's early influence. Today he feels blessed to work in a resurrected old building in downtown Bryan and loves coming to work every day. It's the perfect blend of solitude and civilization. Burris writes about Texas A&M's Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building on page 48.

VAL GLITSCH, FAIA is celebrating her twenty-fifth year in Houston as an architect in private practice. Affordable housing (see page 26) has become her passion, although she still appreciates the occasional unaffordable house. Of her many favorite and challenging projects, she counts her son Eric, 25, and her daughter Skyler, 15, as the absolute top two. See her article on Dallas' Oak Hill Academy on page 44.

JUSTIN PAUL HOWARD, AIA practices in Conroe with Burditt Consultants. When he is not throwing the football in the parking lot, he's in the studio wreaking havoc on the landscape architects' site plans or invoking the

names of Christopher Alexander and O'Neil Ford while designing outdoor recreation projects. See page 58 for his profile of SFA's new student center.

EDWARD RICHARDSON is a native of New Orleans and resides in Austin. He has practiced architecture in Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and Texas. Richardson studied architecture at Yale University and the University of Virginia and has taught undergraduate and advanced studios at the University of Texas and University of New Mexico. See his article on Spencer and Tom Luckey's "perfect mess" on page 76.

KEVIN SLOAN, ASLA is an adjunct professor of architecture at the University of Texas at Arlington and founder of Kevin Sloan Studio in Dallas. His major projects include the Sprint World Headquarters, the South Campus Master Plan at Syracuse University, the Gettysburg Battlefield Visitors Center, and recently, the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts as a consultant. He reports on the opening of Dallas' Main Street Garden Park on page 28.

SCOTT WILSON, AIA moved to Fort Worth after graduating from the University of Michigan and has never looked back. From cartoons to buildings, his drawing career has spanned nearly his entire lifetime. His fun, exciting colleagues at Quorum Architects and his wonderfully loyal clients continue to inspire him. See page 54 for his insights on the design of Frisco ISD's Career & Technical Center.

Rice's Solar Decathlon Zerow House Advances Affordable Sustainability

The 20 solar-powered houses that lined the National Mall in October during the fourth Solar Decathlon made it clear that the sustainable design movement is becoming more self-assured and sophisticated. The projects, each designed and built by a team of students, used a wide variety of materials (stone, wood, steel, and plastic composite) and spatial organizations not seen in past decathlons. Also notable in this year's entries was how solar photovoltaic panels were better integrated into the designs, while the need for them has been effectively minimized by simple, passive sustainability design features.

Within this maturing and diffuse field of residential design, Rice University's Zerow House makes the case that net-zero energy homes can be made affordable for middle- to low-income Americans. Moreover, while Zerow House breaks formally with housing traditions, it offers important lessons on the barriers to widespread adoption of renewable energy houses nationwide.

Sponsored by the United States Department of Energy and cosponsored by the AIA, the Solar Decathlon pits multidisciplinary teams of college students (from architecture, engineering, interior design programs, and more) against each other in a 10-part competition to design and build a solar-powered house. The entries are judged on architecture, net-metering (the ability to sell solar power back to the grid), engineering, lighting, market viability, and other categories. Out of a total of 20 teams from four countries, Rice ranked eighth in the overall competition. Among the 10 categories, Rice achieved second place in both architecture and market viability.

With a \$140,000 price tag, Rice University's Zerow House was by far the least expensive in the entire competition (most cost three to five times as much). The school's entire participation in the program cost only \$250,000 "and that includes the pizzas we eat for lunch and our airplane tickets," says David Dewane, an architecture student and project leader. The engineering lead on the project was Roque Sanchez. Dozens of Rice students worked on the Zerow House. Faculty advisors were Danny Samuels, FAIA, and Nonya Grenader, FAIA, both professors in Rice's School of Architecture, and Brent Houchens, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science.



The house will be given to the Row House Community Development Corporation, a Houston nonprofit that will donate it to a low-income family. See ricesolardecathalon.org for more information about the project.

The Zerow House is a minimalist, abstracted interpretation of a Gulf Coast shotgun row house. And, at 520 square feet, it's one of the smallest entries. However, the perpendicular insertion of a recycled wood and plastic composite porch into the middle of the boxy, rectangular house makes the space seem larger and lighter, as glass walls and doors open to the outside around it, bringing in natural light

Rice University's 520-sf Zerow House was one of the smallest entries in the 2009 Solar Decathlon, but it was by far the least expensive. Its \$140,000 price tag set it apart from the competition, with most of the other 19 entries costing three to five times to build. The house will be donated to a low-income family in Houston.

and blurring the boundary between indoors and outdoors.

The porch, shaded by a cantilevering steel screen, is called the house's "light core" and is one of its primary organizing elements. "The reason it feels that big is because you're project-

ing yourself out into the light core, but I'm not counting that [square footage] because I'm not conditioning it," Dewane says.

Programmatically, the house is organized like a typical detached Gulf Coast shotgun house, with a narrow profile and a linear progression of spaces that gradually become less and less public. From the side entrance, visitors progress through the living room, dining room, porch and light core, kitchen with adjacent bathroom, and then the bedroom, separated with a sliding door. Though the Zerow House has stripped away many of the vernacular features that make it recognizable as a shotgun row house (like a gabled roof), its traditional circulation and spatial organization patterns are reinforced by a narrow strip of LED lights that run perpendicular to the light core.

The bathroom and kitchen comprise the "wet core" (the other primary organizing component of the house) and contain all water fixtures. Dewane and his team are investigating ways to base pre-fabrication techniques around the wet core to make the Zerow House even more afford-

able. "In the future, we'll be able to pre-cast a piece like that you could drop on site, and you could build a very inexpensive house around it," he says. Structurally, the house uses stick-built framing (another traditional vernacular reference), but it's clad in corrugated metal siding, a composite of recycled steel and aluminum. The front of the houses features a green screen that provides extra solar shading. Covered in flowering native Texas vines, the simple and succinct house gets extra mileage out of this rich change in texture and color.

The Zerow House's narrow profile and opening to the light core porch means that breezes travel across the house easily, requiring little artificial ventilation and climate control. (The house uses several small mini-split ductless systems for heating and cooling.) The green screen solar shade, high-efficiency insulation, and LED lighting fixtures make the house a pure passive sustainability machine. Thus, the solar panel array and solar hot water system on the house's flat roof can be as small and inexpensive

as possible. "A lot of what we're doing is not creating the need [for more power] so we don't have to generate more power," says Dewane.

Dewane says he never felt that he had to compromise the house's performance or aesthetics to meet his bottom-line budget goals. The judges of the architecture competition seemed to agree. The Zerow House won second place. In the market viability competition, Rice came in second to the University of Louisiana. In fact, with a more rigorous and modern structural system, Dewane says he could have built the Zerow House for less than \$100,000. "There are a lot of teams for [the 2011 competition] coming through right now, and I'm telling them, 'Do it for \$99k. You would be a rock star,'" he says.

ZACH MORTICE

This article was adapted from "Solar Decathlon Advances Affordable Sustainability" from the Oct. 30, 2009 edition of AIArchitect. Zach Mortice is the associate editor of the online newsletter published weekly by the AIA.

UTA Focuses on 'Property Repositioning'

ARLINGTON The Texas economy continues to reel from the deepest American recession since the Great Depression. As a result, customary methods of property development have been undermined, affecting the entire cast of players in the arena of commercial real estate, including developers, bankers, construction managers, and architects. With financing for projects being extremely limited, development at any scale has all but ground to a halt.

In the midst of this troubled economic climate, the University of Texas at Arlington School of Architecture has instituted a graduate-level program focused on best practices for the reuse of distressed properties. Students completing the course receive the Certificate in Property Repositioning and Turnaround Strategies. The certificate program, offered through a partnership with UT Arlington's College of Business, consists of 13 credit hours that may be completed in one or two semesters at a cost of \$4,500.

The character of the program is a direct result of its director, Michael P. Buckley, FAIA, the former director of Columbia University's Master of Science in Real Estate Development Program and founder of Columbia's Center for High Density Development. Through his development

advisory firm, Halcyon Ltd., Buckley has completed several significant international mixed-use retail projects. In addition, his service as a former trustee of the Urban Land Institute led to his working with key individuals in planning and real estate development around the nation.

The program's first offering in the 2009 fall semester attracted a wide range of students, from mid-career developers and architects to young professionals in law and real estate, as well as current UT Arlington Master of Architecture students who have yet to enter the workplace. Classes were held in a compressed schedule — Thursday evenings, all day on Fridays, and selected Saturday sessions — to allow students, many of whom are currently employed, to participate with minimal interference to their jobs.

The weekly class schedule starts on Thursday evening with a course on due diligence taught by Buckley and adjunct faculty drawn from area professionals. Friday classes, if taken consecutively, are nine-hour marathons beginning with a course on real estate development financial analysis and valuation taught by Fred A. Forgey, PhD, the executive director of the College of Business's Graduate Real Estate Program, and followed by courses coordinated and delivered by Buckley on property/asset repositioning and asset restructuring.

Students enrolled in the program must process an astounding amount of information covering many facets of real estate development — such as high-density, multi-use, adaptive re-use, sustainability, and asset management, to name a few — that may be referenced in a single lecture. At the same time, they are immersed in real-time, real-world challenges. As described by Donald Gatzke, AIA, dean of the School of Architecture, "This program has generated a lot of excitement because it is real-world oriented."

Although the certificate program is reaching a diverse student population, the knowledge gained has special significance for architects. Developers — whether fairly or not — have long been demonized by architects for sacrificing the design of a building or the urban quality of a space for the bottom line. Yet, at the same time, many architects, although knowledgeable about the construction cost of their buildings, often are marginalized in real estate development ventures because they may lack the financial expertise to understand the revenue potential of the projects. Through this new program, the UT Arlington School of Architecture is helping to empower architects to become a strategic partner throughout the development process.

REBECCA BOLES, AIA

UTEP's Green Roof Thrives in Desert; Modular System Monitored for Data

EL PASO As green roofs are increasingly explored and utilized, the range of their application is following suit. No longer only perceived as a technological option for regions with abundant rainfall (the Pacific Northwest, for example), they are making headway in hotter and drier climates, albeit with some tentativeness. Now, with a recent installation at the University of Texas at El Paso, the Lone Star State can claim significant green-roof forays on the institutional level from its east end (near Houston) to its western-most point.

Regardless of the wide array of benefits a green roof offers, the choice is neither obvious nor easy, especially given the bump in initial costs compared to conventional roofs. However, Ed Soltero, AIA, director of UTEP's Office of Planning and Construction, recognized its potential advantages for storm water retention, alleviating the urban heat island effect, and extending the life of the roof. After studying the technology, he began championing the alternative system as a forward-thinking and appropriate solution for UTEP's desert environment. He drove the process from initial proposal through research and establishing design parameters, then took his idea directly to the university's administration. The Biology Department building was an ideal candidate for a green roof, he asserted, because it provided a setting for active, roof-top research to take place amidst the biological activity of a living community of plant and wildlife. Moreover, he expected the project to become a high-profile showcase for high-performance design that demonstrated a concerted commitment to sustainability on the university campus.

Goals for the project also include monitoring its performance via several benchmarks, generating data for collection and analysis and making the roof a learning opportunity for future projects and other institutions. Although originally imagined as a "monolithic" system—a continuous and unbroken planted area capable of sharing moisture, thermal change, and biota across the soil matrix—project leads finally arrived at a modular system of gridded trays. The pre-planted trays—seen as a somewhat more conservative solution because individual units could be removed if needed—are filled

well-draining and relatively lightweight when fully saturated.

Installed in the spring of 2009, the green roof system covers 11,260 gross square feet. The system is split into two fields of contiguous trays, with a research plaza deck complete with monitoring equipment in between. Project expenditures included demolition of an existing built-up roof, adding lightweight concrete to provide a half-inch per foot slope, as well as the installation of a new roof (more than half the cost of the total roof project), the plaza deck, and the green roof tray system (green roof cost

coming in at less than \$18/s.f.). The plants, thriving in their first year of roof life, are irrigated using a drip system efficiently distributed by insulated lines aligned with the tray layout.

The roof has been a hit with students, faculty, and research staff, and while Soltero does not encourage heavy foot traffic on the plaza deck, he acknowledges that this is a measure of the project's success.

Soltero has seen his project stimulate enthusiasm about green roofs from people across El Paso and beyond. He says they are intrigued

to witness a sizable project in an environment thought to be hostile to such a technology. He and UTEP staff hope that the green roof induces the curiosity and conviction of others wanting to draw from its experience to embark on similar projects in challenging bioclimatic conditions across the country, adjusting their respective designs as needed. Lessons learned in this first, and bold, application of green roof technology will serve future projects well. To the extent that the UTEP Biology roof stands as a beautiful, functional, and finally successful element of the built environment in a desert climate, it stands in response to the "won't work here" skeptics.

LAUREN WOODWARD STANLEY, AIA,
WITH LARS STANLEY, AIA



The Biology Building was retrofitted last year with a modular green roof system of pre-planted trays and monitoring equipment to gather data on the building's energy performance. UTEP's director of campus planning and construction championed the project to convince wider application of green roofs across the Southwest.

with 7-8 inches of a specially formulated soil matrix. The selection of plants derived from a carefully considered palette based on recommendations from Wynn Anderson, botanical curator for the Chihuahuan Desert Gardens at UTEP's Centennial Museum, and Joni Gutierrez, a landscape architect in Mesilla, N.M. The plant varieties (red yucca, new gold lantana, South African bulbine, white evening primrose, and sun gold gazania—all proven to be hardy species adapted to the area) provide a colorful flowering spray across the seasons, offering aesthetic appeal and encouraging wildlife. The soil matrix was equally considered, with a final selection of a formula for the engineered growth media that met requirements to be

AIA El Paso Awards 7 Projects

EL PASO On Oct. 30, AIA El Paso recognized seven projects at its 2009 Design Award Banquet held at the historic Camino Real Hotel in downtown El Paso. Four projects received a Design Award and two projects received an Honorable Mention.

The jury, with panelists from Tuscon, was chaired by Janice Cervelli, FASLA, dean of the University of Arizona's College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. Other jurors were Beth Weinstein, assistant professor at the University of Arizona's School of Architecture; Frank Mascia, FAIA, of CDG Architects; Robin Schambach, AIA, of Burns Wald-Hopkins Schambach Architects; and Rob Paulus of Rob Paulus Architects.

The Honor Award went to **St. Stephen Deacon + Martyr Catholic Church** by Alvidrez Architecture. The architects master planned and implemented this community in three phases over a 10-year period, with each phase receiving a chapter Design Award. The latest phase to be awarded, the new sanctuary reinterprets the traditions of the church while infusing the project with all the materials, technology,

and aesthetic sensibility of contemporary vernacular architecture.

Merit Awards went to three projects:

Tom Lea Elementary School by Parkhill, Smith & Cooper was inspired by the surrounding natural environment. With the Franklin Mountains serving as a backdrop, the building massing, materials, and colors of the school creates a playful environment.



St. Stephen Deacon + Martyr Catholic Church

C. Ramirez Water Resource Learning Center (TECH2O) by Mijares Mora Architects is a 27,000-sf facility designed to provide education and training to promote total water management in the Chihuahuan Desert. The interactive experience starts at the exterior, which showcases educational landscape exhibits.

Healthy Greens by IDEA was built on three adjacent view lots at the Vista Hills Golf Course to house three separate private health facilities for three physicians sharing the idea of preventive health. Semi-public and public waiting areas face the parking lots while exam rooms and offices all face the golf course.

Two projects received Honorable Mention:

Westside Community Recreation Center by Parkhill, Smith & Cooper is set in the Three Hills Park in El Paso as an oasis at the edge of the desert acting as a center to community activities and a gateway to hiking trails.

The **Red Bluff Residence** by Wright & Dalbin Architects is the transformation of a 40-year-old structure into a new modern home. The architect created sensitive indoor/outdoor spaces for views and privacy in a contemporary vernacular Southwest aesthetic.

F R É D É R I C D A L B I N , A I A

AIA LRGV Announces Design Awards

M C A L L E N During its annual award banquet on Dec. 12, AIA Lower Rio Grande Valley announced the results of its 2009 Design Awards program. The selections were made by a jury that met in Houston during the TSA convention in October. In addition, a local jury of Honors/Awards committee members recognized another two projects with the Unbuilt Project Award and the 25-Year Award.

The Honor Award, the top-tier prize in the chapter's program, went to Kell Muñoz' **Edcouch-Elsa ISD Fine Arts Center**. Designed to serve neighboring schools, the Fine Arts Center provides a 6,000-sf civic venue for performances by students as well as by professional companies. The colorful building is sited on an elevated plot of land, making it visible from all directions.

The Merit Award was presented to the **Education Complex at the University of Texas-Pan American** in Edinburg. Designed by Kell Muñoz, the project included the renovation of two existing facilities and the construction of the new College of Education building. The

expanded complex consists of 80,000 square feet of classrooms, labs, lecture halls, office space, and research areas.

The Restoration Award went to another Kell Muñoz project, the **City of Roma Visitor's Complex and Plaza**, for its preservation of structures within the Roma National Historic Landmark



Edcouch-Elsa ISD Fine Arts Center

District. As well as other feats, the project succeeded in both removing non-historic materials as well as creating adequate drainage for the plaza.

An Honorable Mention was awarded to the **Judge Solomon Casseb Jr. Webb County Youth Village** by FQR Architects with Ausland Architects. The center, created for the rehabilitation of juveniles, consists of a probation area, a family-friendly lobby and waiting area, a courtroom, and a cluster of three detention pods equipped with educational and recreational facilities.

The Unbuilt Project Award went to the **Zapata County Advanced Technology Center** by ERO Architects. Slated to open in April 2010, the facility will act as primary source for instruction and training for high school students to access college credit courses and vocational/technology training.

The **Chapel of the Lord's Prayer at UT-Pan Am** received the 25-Year Award. Constructed in 1965 by Zeb Rike, AIA, the chapel remains the centerpiece of the campus, being as relevant today as when originally designed and built.

J A M E S R O D R I G U E Z , A S S O C . A I A



Linda Pace Foundation Offices



Armstrong Oil & Gas



Arizona State University Polytechnic Campus

Ten Projects Honored in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO AIA San Antonio announced the results of its 2009 Design Awards at a ceremony at Pearl Stable on Nov. 4. Eight projects from 49 entries were selected for Design Awards in three categories: Honor, Merit, and Citation. The Mayor's Choice Award and the 25-Year Award were also announced at the event.

Serving on the 2009 Design Awards jury were Randy Brown, FAIA, of Randy Brown Architects in Omaha, Neb.; Stephen Kanner, FAIA, of Kanner Architects in Santa Monica, Calif.; and Juan Miró, AIA, of Miró Rivera in Austin.

Three projects received Honor Awards, the highest awards given by AIA San Antonio:

Linda Pace Foundation Offices in San Antonio, designed by Poteet Architects, is a 1940s-era auto paint shop converted into offices for the Pace Foundation. The 2,500-square-foot building provides four private offices and a conference space surrounded by a perimeter gallery. An urban park and sculpture garden lead to the building's entrance.

Armstrong Oil & Gas in Denver, Colo., designed by Lake|Flato Architects, is an adaptive re-use of an early-twentieth-century machine shop organized around a new central courtyard, bringing natural light and ventilation to the building's interior.

Arizona State University Polytechnic Campus in Mesa, Ariz., designed by Lake|Flato Architects, is the integration of five new academic buildings with three existing buildings to create a cohesive complex. The new buildings are configured around three courtyards and linked by a series of open-air atriums, portals, and arcades.

Two projects received Merit Awards:

Full Goods Warehouse and Il Sogno in San Antonio, designed by Lake|Flato Architects, are two of several master-planned projects for the redevelopment of the former Pearl Brewery. Full Goods Warehouse is the renovation of a metal-clad structure into an L-shaped, mixed-use building, and Il Sogno is a restaurant occupying a newly built warehouse with interiors by Archon Architecture.

Wyatt Retreat in Sisterdale, designed by Lake|Flato Architects, is located near the Guadalupe River on the footprint of a pre-existing cabin. The new cabin is reminiscent of hay barns in the area and classic "dog trot" houses.

Three projects received Citation Awards:

CAMPstreet/CHRISpark in San Antonio, designed by Poteet Architects, is the transformation of an 88,000-square-foot 1920s-era factory near downtown into 20 loft residences and an urban park. The park was established by the Pace Foundation to commemorate the life of the art patron's late son. It features a sculpture garden and an informal path of rectangular Leuders limestone blocks that guide visitors to the foundation's entrance.

El Picoso in San Antonio, designed by Darryl Ohlenbusch, AIA, is the adaptive re-use of a 1,740-square-foot building that once housed a spiced peanut store into a contemporary live/work space. A designated historic structure, the neighborhood landmark had fallen into serious disrepair after decades of neglect.

Urban Segment of the Museum Reach of the River Walk, designed by Ford, Powell & Carson, is the northward expansion of the San Antonio River Walk, extending the walk by an additional 1.5 miles. The lead designer was firm partner Boone Powell, FAIA. The recently completed project flanks both sides of the river with walkways, new xeriscape planting, art installations, and improved lighting under bridges. The urban segment also accommodates the negotiation of a nine-foot change in elevation for tourist barge and water taxi traffic by means of a lock and dam system.

The Mayor's Choice Award was started in 2000 to recognize outstanding work on publicly funded architectural projects. The 2009 award went to the new **Urban Segment of the Museum Reach of the River Walk**, which officially opened in May. Mayor Julian Castro presented the award to Ford, Powell & Carson, calling the project a "spectacular incorporation of public art that invigorates the serene San Antonio River."

In 2005 AIA San Antonio created the 25-Year Award to recognize architectural projects of significant cultural importance that were completed at least 25 years before. The 2009 award went to the **Japanese Tea Garden at Brackenridge Park**, one of San Antonio's most famous and treasured landmarks. Since 1917, the Japanese Tea Garden has attracted generations of San Antonians and visitors from all over the world. The dramatic stone pavilion, landscaped walkways, graceful bridges, and peaceful ponds have been an oasis of calm and reflection in the midst of the rapidly growing city.

TA STAFF

Nine Awards Presented by AIA FW

F O R T W O R T H On Oct. 6, the jury for AIA Fort Worth's 2009 Design Awards program convened at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. They viewed 40 projects submitted by local architects before deciding on the nine they selected for distinction. That evening three Honor Awards and six Merit Awards were presented to chapter members in the museum's auditorium.

The jurors were Wellington Reiter, FAIA, president of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Steve Tillotson, AIA, of Kell Muñoz in San Antonio; and Chris Krager of KRDB in Austin.

The Honor Award, the chapter's highest level of recognition, was presented to Northpark YMCA, by Hahnfeld Hoffer Stanford; Sid W. Richardson Visual Arts Center by Gideon Toal; and Tarrant Regional Water District Annex by Gideon Toal.

Northpark YMCA was conceived as continuation of the neighboring park system. The front opens up toward the park inviting entry. The patterned facade enclosing the fitness area portrays the energy and movement of the space it encloses. Designers worked in cooperation with the Fort Worth Public Art commission to incorporate an art installation by a local artist, above the entry/control desk.

The **Sid W. Richardson Visual Arts Center** was inspired by the use of natural light, the need to form strong connections with the campus, and a desire to have art education on display. Spaces are organized around massive masonry walls which solidify volumes and strengthen the transition of spaces from exterior to interior.

Artists at work can view and gain inspiration from their exterior surroundings, while pedestrians on the walk below can gain inspiration by catching glimpses of the creative process within the studios.

The **Tarrant Regional Water District Annex** was designed to house the district's engineering and information technology staff. The building incorporates many sustainable practices and houses the largest array of solar panels in Texas which produce more than 65 percent of the yearly energy required by the building. Drawing inspiration from the technical nature of its users and the industrial quality of the buildings in the immediate area, the Annex was conceived as a clean, environmentally sensitive, utilitarian building.

Merit Awards were presented to Basswood Elementary School by Hahnfeld Hoffer Stanford; Comanche Springs and Prairie Vista Campus by VLK Architects; Berry Lake House by Gideon Toal; Trinity River Vision Authority Offices by Gideon Toal; Smith Residence by Norman Ward Architect; and Fermata by Norman Ward Architect.

The design of **Basswood Elementary** is dominated by sloped metal roofs, deep eaves, and window orientation that reduce east/west sun exposure. The clerestories along the ridge line give the building a unique character and illuminate the interior with natural light.

At the **Comanche Springs Elementary School** and **Prairie Vista Middle School Campus** the shared site minimizes the building's footprint impact. This allows for a single drop-off and pick-up location, making it convenient for parents with students at the two campuses and for buses circulation.

Designed as a series of gabled roof buildings along the shore of Eagle Mountain Lake, the **Berry Lake House** draws inspiration from the utilitarian sheds and native limestone walls of northern Texas.

The design of the **Trinity River Vision Authority (TRVA)** transformed a former bank lobby on a prominent corner in Downtown Fort Worth into a vitrine for large-scale displays within a more intimate space. Strong finishes with striking accents characterize the office space, while the storefront facing the public streets affords ample opportunity for TRVA to showcase current and future planning projects.

The **Smith Residence** is perched on the edge of a small hilltop with western views of the landscape. Steel beams and columns are integrated both structurally and aesthetically. Glass set between them yield an effortless transparency between the interior and the landscape.

Fermata is a house that borrows its shape from a musical notation. Though a mere 36 square inches, it is quite spacious for the Carolina Chickadee that calls it home.

The evening was concluded with a presentation by Reiter, who used Burnham's Plan of Chicago as a lens to analyze modern issues facing our cities. It was part of the Modern Art Museum's Tuesday Evenings Series that brings artists, scholars, and critics to discuss their work each week. Open to the public, the lecture series is produced through a partnership between the Modern Art Museum and AIA Fort Worth. Each year an influential architect is invited to speak and also serve on the AIA Fort Worth Design Awards jury.

BART SHAW, AIA



Northpark YMCA



Sid W. Richardson Visual Arts Center



Tarrant Regional Water District Annex

KRob Recognizes Drawing Excellence

DALLAS The results of the 35th Annual Ken Roberts Memorial Delineation Competition were announced on Nov. 19. Commonly known as “KRob,” the events was established by AIA Dallas in 1974 to recognize excellence in the art of architectural delineation (originally hand-rendered works but later expanded to include computer-assisted drawings).

After a full day of judging over 400 entries from over two dozen countries, the jury awarded the \$500 Best of Show prize to Nathan Freise for his digital/hybrid media submittal portraying a weathered structure in a landscape. This was the second Best of Show prize for Freise, who was working at Perkins + Will in Chicago when he won in 2006 with a pair of renderings produced in a similar technique using newsprint, crumpled paper, and digital media. This year, Freise also received the \$400 Laguarda Low Prize for Best Digital/Hybrid Media at the professional level.

In the hand delineation categories, Jacob Peel of the University of Florida won the \$400 Wiley award at the student level for his analytical site plan, while the tilted, yet meticulously detailed, section by Misael Rojas of Mitchell-Giurgola Architects in New York was judged best at the professional level.

In the international category, now in its second year, a perspective drawing by Sergiy Prokofyev of the Ukraine depicting what he calls an “architectural fantasy,” was awarded the \$400 prize. Kyung Jae Yu from the Harvard Graduate School of Design won the Laguarda Low Prize in the digital/hybrid media at the student level with



Nathan Freise's entry won 'Best of Show' in the 2009 KRob competition.

his perspective rendering featuring warm tones and a distinctive grainy texture.

New this year is a separate category for Best Physical Delineation, which was created for entries hand-delivered or sent by mail to AIA Dallas rather than submitted online. Since online submittals were initially accepted in 2006, an overwhelming majority of each year's entries have been uploaded, with those in electronic format judged side by side with physical drawings. This year the number of physical entries doubled, and Steve Quevedo of UT Arlington was the inaugural winner of the \$400 prize in this new category.

The jury — Bjorn Polzin of Foster + Partners of London, Aaron Plewke of Archinect.com,

and Dallas-based artist Michael O'Keefe — also awarded three juror citations. Going against his own high-tech sensibilities, Polzin chose an immaculate travel sketch of the Place des Vosges by University of Virginia student Simon David. Plewke cited Cornell University student Jerry Lai's expressive building section for the Alfred Hitchcock Foundation. Michael O'Keefe's pick was an analytical drawing of Bernard Tschumi's Park de la Villette by Moon Joo Lee of the University of Michigan that consisted of a multi-layered map incorporating pencil, CAD-lines, and digital imagery.

The 35 finalists will be exhibited at the Dallas Center for Architecture in late January.

JULIEN MEYRAT, AIA

Oliver Named UH Architecture Dean

HOUSTON Patricia Belton Oliver, FAIA, who served from 2001-2008 as senior vice president of educational planning and architecture at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif., has been named dean of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston. Oliver succeeds Joe Mashburn, AIA, who held the post for the last 11 years.

John Antel, provost and senior vice president of academic affairs at UH said, “Patricia Oliver will bring to the College of Architecture exceptional educational experience, vision,

leadership and administrative skills. She is an award-winning teacher with a remarkable record of achievement, particularly in environmental design.”

Oliver chaired the 2009 AIA Convention in San Francisco, is chair of the 2009 AIA Education Committee and is a director on the National Architectural Accrediting Board. Oliver received a Master's of Architecture in 1977 from the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California at Los Angeles, earning the Dean's Award for best thesis and for best overall student. She received a Bachelor of Arts with honors from UCLA in 1974.

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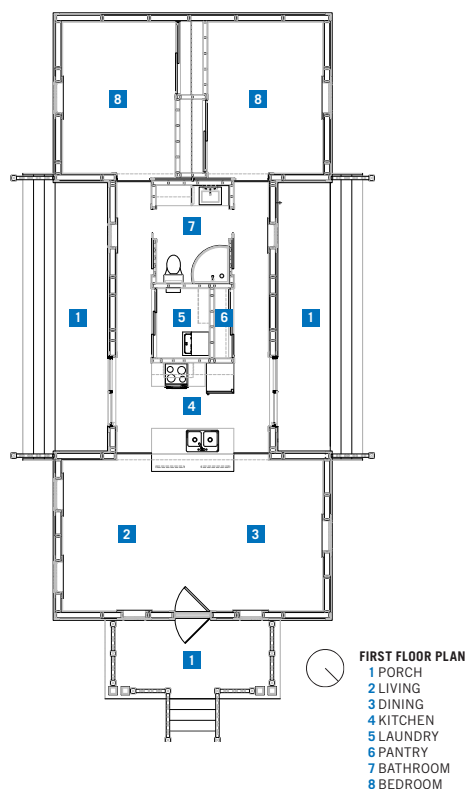


Post-Rita 'Grow Homes' Completed

P O R T A R T H U R Two years after a statewide design competition yielded affordable housing prototypes to benefit victims of Hurricane Rita, two have been built and a third is under construction. The two completed projects were unveiled in November, slightly four years after Rita devastated Gulf Coast communities at the Texas-Louisiana border.

Texas Grow Home Project, co-sponsored by the Texas Low Income Housing Information Service and the Texas Society of Architects/AIA, attracted 80 entries in one of the largest statewide architectural design competitions in Texas history. Four modular home designs were selected to be built as part of a charitable initiative to aid survivors of natural disasters. (See *TA* March/April 2008.)

The Texas Low Income Housing Information Service partnered with Houston-based Covenant Community Capital/Covenant Neighborhoods to build three 1,000-sf prototypes, consisting of a primary two-bedroom one-bath module and a secondary one-bedroom one-bath module. As outlined in the competition criteria, the Grow Home primary module will cost no more than \$54,000 on a zero-interest mortgage. The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs provided financing for the construction of the three prototypes, which will be given to three families recovering from Hurricane Rita to test the designs against the realities of real-world construction costs. The test findings will help refine the designs before they are produced in multiples.



The three prototypes — designed by Gleason Design Group, CamargoCopeland Architects (shown above), and James and Victoria Lee — will provide the basis for a large-scale, \$6 million demonstration program to be constructed in 2010 in partnership with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. For more information regarding the project, or to follow its progress, visit www.texasgrowhome.com.

TA STAFF

Evolution of Dallas Arts District

With the completion of the Dallas Center for the Performing Arts in October, the largest urban arts district in the U.S. now boasts the work of four Pritzker Prize-winning architects—Norman Foster, Rem Koolhaas, I.M. Pei, and Renzo Piano. On display at the Dallas Center for Architecture, the exhibit “The Architecture of the Arts District” — including models, original documents, and other artifacts — traces the Art District’s evolution and places its buildings into a larger context within the extraordinary architectural richness of the region. Access more information at dallasca.com. THRU Jan 8

‘Getty Sketches’ at FW Center for Architecture

When the Getty Villa Museum searched for an architect to renovate its buildings in the late 1990s, six finalists were each given an 11x14-inch sketchbook to record their ideas. The traveling exhibit, “The Getty Sketches,” showcases the drawings by Machado & Silvetti Architects, the firm that won the commission, along with the other participants, including the late Frank Israel and Portuguese native Alvaro Siza-Vieira. Presented at the Fort Worth Center for Architecture, the pages are formatted on large metal panels. THRU Jan 14

‘Elsewhere Texas’ Curator Speaks in Austin

An exhibit spotlighting 23 recent noteworthy (and mostly unpublished) buildings will be displayed at the Austin Center for Architecture during January. The exhibit’s curator, Fernando L. Brave, AIA, of Brave/Architecture in Houston, will present a lecture about his process for researching and selecting the projects. JAN 15

RDA Spotlights Mexico City’s Architecture

The Rice Design Alliance, with support from the Mexican Consulate General, has planned its annual lecture series around the title of “Mexico City Surg-ing: DF Architecture.” The lineup includes several young architects and urban planners who are helping to shape the burgeoning Mexico City landscape. The events take place at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. FEB 3–24

TEX-FAB Holds Digital Design Workshop

TEX-FAB, a group dedicated to innovative application of digital technology to the built environment, is sponsoring its “Parametric Modeling Workshop” at UT Arlington’s School of Architecture. Lectures include Intro to Rhino, Applied Parametric Design, and Principles of Architectural Geometry and Algorithmic Design. For more information visit: www.tex-fab.net. FEB 5

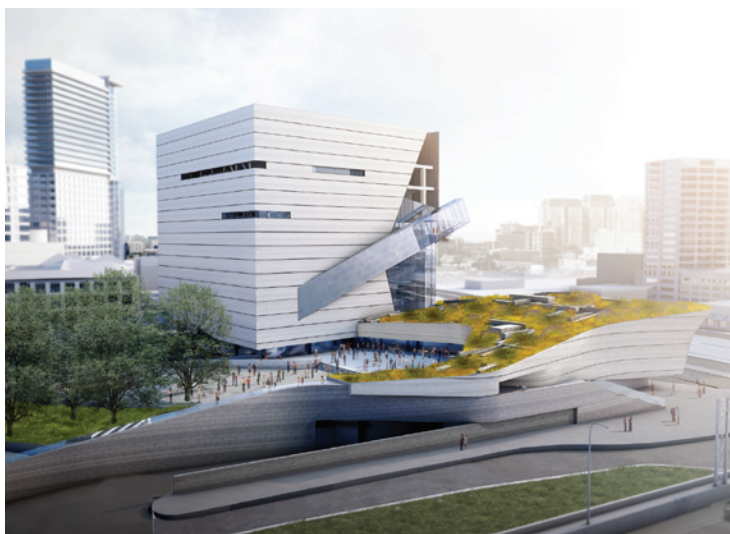
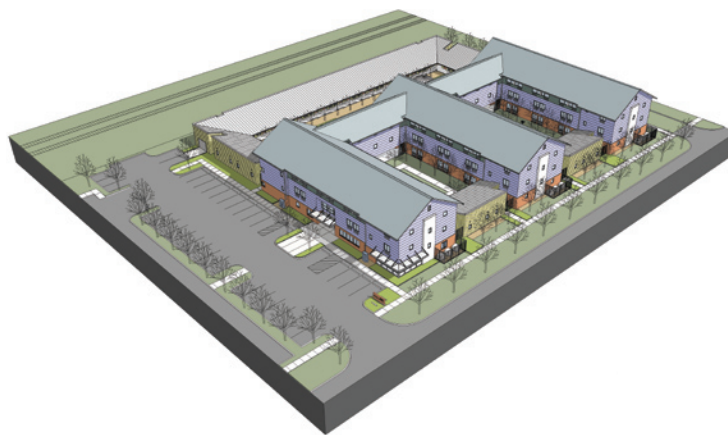


Arthouse at the Jones Center

Arthouse, the oldest statewide contemporary visual arts organization in Texas, is renovating and expanding its Jones Center space in downtown Austin. The two-story building, originally erected in 1920 as the Queen Theater, is located on Congress Avenue at Seventh Street. Following a nationwide search that focused on emerging talent, Arthouse commissioned New York-based Lewis Tsurumaki Lewis for the project that will almost triple the space to 20,830 square feet. Developed by LTL's Paul Lewis, along with the museum's leadership and staff, the expansion will add three new galleries, two studios, a 90-seat community/screening room, and a 5,500-sf roof deck featuring a 33 x 17-foot movie screen. The existing south and east facades will be perforated by more than 150 laminated glass blocks to illuminate interior spaces with natural light. The renovation also will wrap the entry lounge with floor-to-ceiling glass, maximizing sidewalk exposure and allowing glimpses beyond the reception desk into both levels of galleries. Arthouse is set to re-open in the fall.

Sakowitz Apartments

With its mission to build and operate high-quality affordable housing for more than 1,000 adults in Houston, the not-for-profit developer New Hope Housing will move closer to its goal late next year with completion of the Sakowitz Apartments. Located in the Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor area, the complex will encompass 166 single room occupancy (SRO) apartments for adults living alone on low incomes. Residents will live in fully furnished efficiencies and have access to communal areas that open to landscaped courtyards. Designed by Val Glitsch, FAIA, and constructed by Camden Builders, the project balances the need for security while also providing occupants with a shared sense of community. Planned to achieve LEED-for-Homes Gold certification, the project is expected to reduce energy and water use by 50 percent compared to a comparably scaled apartment complex through energy-efficient appliances, lighting, and water heaters, and rainwater harvesting for irrigation. Glitsch previously designed the Canal Street Apartments (featured in *TA* March/April 2007) for the same client.



Perot Museum of Nature and Science

Construction began in November on the Perot Museum of Nature and Science on a 4.7-acre site in the Victory development just north of downtown Dallas. Thom Mayne, FAIA, of Morphosis, designed the \$185 million project as a mammoth cube that appears to float over a landscaped plinth. Talley Associates of Dallas is working with Morphosis on a variety of landscape features, including an acre of roofscape intended to reflect the region's indigenous geology. Visitors approaching the entry will pass through the intersection of two Texas ecologies, forest and desert xeriscape. The museum's five interior levels will include three floors of exhibition galleries, a large lobby and adjacent outdoor terrace, an education area equipped with six labs, a large-format cinema for multi-media programs, an auditorium, café, retail store, exhibit workshops, and staff offices. Envisioned as a "living" example of high-performance design and cutting-edge technology, the 180,000-sf building is expected to open by 2013. Good Fulton & Farrell of Dallas is serving as associate architect as well as sustainability consultant.



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An Urban ‘Setting for People’

Main Street Garden Opens in Dallas

by KEVIN SLOAN, ASLA

(above, left and right) Pairs of simple shelters along the park's northern perimeter invite people outdoors to study or work. At the northwest corner, the restaurant pavilion offers shaded seating. (opposite page) In replacing an entire city block previously occupied by buildings with little architectural distinction, the 1.7-acre project also has opened views to two downtown landmarks—the recently renovated Municipal Building and the now-empty Statler Hilton.

WITH THE OPENING OF THE SPECTACULAR AT&T Performing Arts Center still ringing in the air, the City of Dallas dedicated an urban park in November that is equally bold for different reasons. Known as the Main Street Garden, the 1.7-acre park did not emanate from a Pritzker Prize-winning architect, nor does it flaunt any enthusiasms for Pritzker Prize-like experimentation. Designed by Thomas Balsley and Associates of New York City, the park is intended to be a richly active urban space for downtown residents—a “setting for people,” in the words of its landscape architect.

Main Street Garden is the first in a network of three park sites in the downtown Dallas core that were identified in a 2004 master plan by Carter & Burgess of Dallas, Chan/Krieger of Boston, and Hargreaves & Associates of New York. The site for the Main Street Garden required the demolition of an entire city block that was covered by nondescript, *ad hoc* buildings. Considering how urban projects often are insensitively imposed on existing fabric, it wasn't surprising that local preservationists tried to intervene with the city's plans and save three of the buildings, but their efforts failed. However, a gesture motivated to perpetuate aspects of the site history, elements and signage from the removed buildings will be incorporated as an artifact garden in the new park.

The master plan selected a block with outstanding urban characteristics, nesting the park into a rectangular urban “room,” a space defined by neighboring buildings that are mostly uniform both in height and in their obedience to the street wall. These include the 1914 Municipal Building (by C.D. Hill) at the narrow east end and high point of the site. Considered the state's finest Beaux-Arts edifice, its symmetrical colonnade establishes the primary orientation of the new park. Also, the 1956 Statler Hilton (by William Tabler), its inflected curtain wall and rooftop objects clearly originate from the great housing works of Le Corbusier, dramatically commands the entire southern edge of the space. With the buildings on the park block now demolished, the Statler's modernist facade opposes the 1929 Tiche-Goettinger building (by George Dahl) to the north. That neo-Florentine palazzo stretched by a 1950s addition — along with a former library, also by Dahl, and new mid-rise housing — complete the urban framework around the park.

Accomplishing a genuine public place is no small undertaking in these times. For decades, the public realm in American cities has been under assault, with private interests increasingly assuming, even replacing, the role of public agencies. Cultural pressures for diversity and political correctness, as well as the need for private and corporate underwriting, nervously

compel new designs to become scattershot with objects in need of many forms and many materials to identify the donors. As a demonstration that civic architecture is still possible, the newly opened Winspear Opera House (by Foster + Partners) and its monumental canopy offering shade is a clear and legible message, as is the building's vivid red color that distinguishes it from commercial neighbors.

With robust, diverse urban use as the goal, the design of Main Street Garden is direct and pragmatic. As an avid devotee of William "Holly" White, whose 1980 film *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* started a mini-revolution in urban thinking, lead designer Thomas Balsley, FASLA, remarked, "We walk through the space before it has form... Holly White posed the problems through his films, but few have embraced the problem of how to design a public place in those terms. One of the first questions we study is from where are the people coming?"

Balsley also seems to have taken cues from Edmund Bacon's "Principle of the Second Man" — a notion Bacon coined in describing how great works have the capacity to influence subsequent works, often in ways unconceived of by the original designer — by strategically locating elements in response to the surrounding buildings and their potential to draw foot traffic into the park. A restaurant pavilion is grouped with an inventive "river fountain" near the street

intersection opposing the Tiche-Goettinger expansion (now housing the UT Dallas School of Law). Here Balsley placed a series of "study shelters" — pairs of simple, cube-like structures — to attract students and professionals. Taken together, the furnishings and built elements are restrained and reference the architecture of the immediate context, mostly the sleek canopies and other components of the former Statler Hotel.

The program for the elements and activities seem more like the priorities of a retail project than a program for a public space. Ample lighting, a plan layout that maintains open sight lines, and the inclusion of a "tot lot" and paved dog park, contribute to the place while concealing their primary role for safety. "It has to feel safe," notes Dallas Park and Recreation Assistant Director Willis Winters, FAIA, "especially for women who visit the park by themselves."

In choosing materials for the park, Balsley favored classiness over regionalism, pairing cleaved limestone from India with Chinese granite for the palette of the groundplane. A tree program that was devised in collaboration with an urban arborist, intersperses chinquapin oak and lacebark elm with other species so that the overall canopy would be resilient to any species-driven blight.

Main Street Garden should spark a healthy discussion about the motivations of contem-

porary design, particularly because projects that proclaim to be "for people" often raise the ire and suspicion of individuals who see architecture as an elite activity. Conversely, projects done in the name of "High Architecture" sometimes arouse an equal amount of scorn from urbanists, given their proclivity to divide citizens into two groups—those who get it and those who don't. Each viewpoint is historically indefensible and ultimately pointless, as the great public spaces of the world are both superlative works as well as useful places that respond to the human condition.

Every new work of urban architecture either makes or unmakes the city around it. That fact is frequently overlooked as the current trend in architecture posits each new work as being mostly for the eyes or peer adulation, unfortunately resulting in a dulled consciousness about the public role and social purpose of all buildings. Main Street Garden, beyond its high-quality materials and savvy design, is important because from the project's beginning it was understood as a public place, and engendered through a process in which the priorities and problems of making a public space resisted the impulse to be edgy and self indulgent.

Kevin Sloan, ASLA, holds a Masters of Architecture. He leads the Kevin Sloan Studio in Dallas and is an adjunct instructor at UT-Arlington's School of Architecture.





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Arlington Re-Imagined

Educator adapts award-winning course to improve 'everyday' suburbia

by SUSAN APPLETON, AIA

ONE YEAR AFTER HER COURSE, THE EVERYDAY CITY, WAS RECOGNIZED with an AIA Education Honor Award, University of Texas at Arlington Assistant Professor Wanda Dye has tasked her architecture students with improving the everyday life of all Arlington residents. Through collaboration with City of Arlington staff, their work is a natural extension of the investigations they undertook for The Everyday City. In that class, Dye asked them to re-imagine the most mundane and banal aspects of the suburban environment.

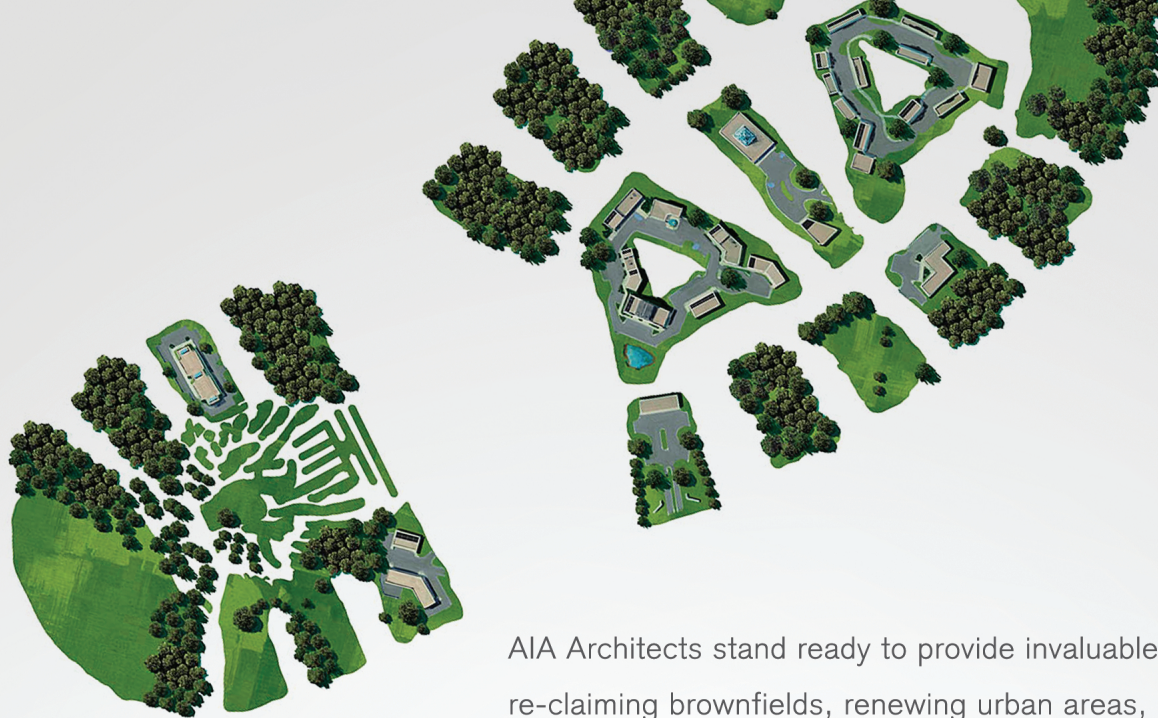
Her recent appointment as Head Design Consultant of the City of Arlington's Urban Design Center now offers Dye and her graduate students real-world opportunities to change the world around them. Established last year through a partnership between UT Arlington and the City of Arlington, the program is funded jointly by the university and the city. Projects will include envisioning infill redevelopment, storefront retrofitting/greening, housing densification, and improving the overall public realm through new streetscape and landscape proposals.

Dye has taught The Everyday City at UT Arlington since joining the School of Architecture faculty in 2007. The course has evolved since 2000 when she first began asking her students to *really* look at the everyday city around them. In one exercise, they photograph one image each day throughout the semester so they might begin to see potential in the utterly ordinary within urban/suburban cityscapes and landscapes—from derelict voids and oversized parking lots to “big box” retail and commonplace infrastructure. By their keen observation, the students realize what is lacking, such as density, good public spaces, and a sense of place. Critical, empirical observation afforded by the image-a-day exercise informs thoughtful alternatives for often-overlooked spaces and places. “This gets them really looking at the world around them in a subjective as well as objective manner,” Dye says, “to see the potential or non-potential in these spaces and places they are documenting.”

(above) The Urban Design Center proposes a new community center and garden at Stone Ridge Apartments. Wanda Dye, Renee Cain, and Jim Parajon comprise the design team. (at right) Two projects from The Everyday City course by Andrew Oxley and Carlos Sierra.



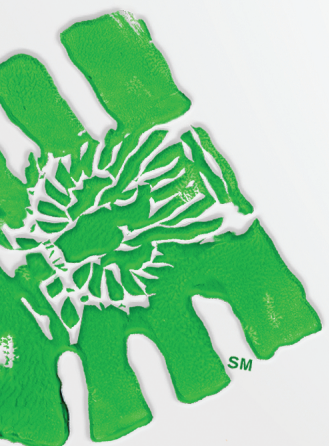
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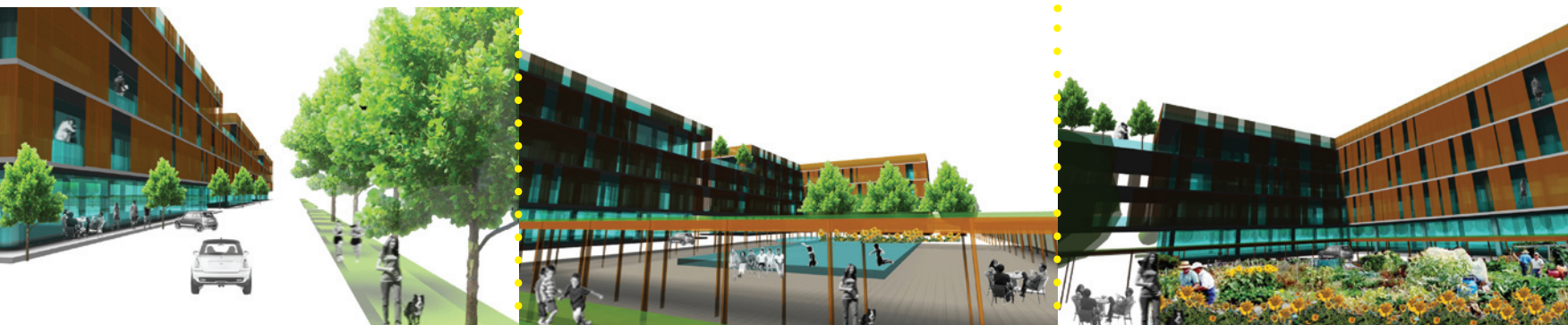
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Students then must take a critical position on their ideas for the potential of those derelict sites by re-programming them for various spatial/temporal conditions or by re-envisioning them with simple architectural/urban interventions. Through techniques used in the course – photography, video, mapping, interviews, photomontage/composite imaging—they begin to understand at a more visceral level the potential of the homogenous “everyday city.”

In bestowing its 2009 AIA Education Honor Award on The Everyday City, the national organization recognized Dye as an outstanding teacher who achieves excellence in architecture education through coursework that deals with broad issues that can benefit professional practice.

Now Dye is adapting those same methods for her work with the municipal Urban Design Center. From an office in City Hall, she is overseeing 20-30 project proposals and a half-time staff of six graduate students from the schools of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning. While the projects range widely in the skills required and the scope of the possible solutions, Dye insists that all will be approached from a combination of contemporary social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental perspectives.

In describing her attitude toward the mission of the Urban Design Center, Dye states: “It’s about common sense, as well as innovation; it is about creating a sense of community versus the gated and walled neighborhood syndrome, something that is pervasive, not just in Arlington, but in many cities and suburbs. Each design problem should be approached pluralistically, urbanistically, and environmentally. Some of the design strategies include denser more economic plan and site layouts, re-programming or greening urban voids, minimizing building footprints and optimizing orientation, addressing the sidewalk and street versus huge setbacks with no sidewalks, retrofitting or greening old buildings, as well as designing innovative double skin facade systems.” Above all, she hopes the Center’s collaborative design proposals will make a difference by serving as a catalyst for change that benefits everyone and ultimately creates a more urban and sustainable city.

Susan Appleton, AIA, is an assistant professor at UT Arlington’s School of Architecture.

(top of page) The Urban Design Center also recommends mixed-use redevelopment in the Parkwood neighborhood that adds a double-skin facade to an existing building and shared community spaces such as roof terrace and multi-use outdoor green space. Wanda Dye, Ken Pope, Renee Cain, Clayton Husband, and Jim Parajon made up the design team. (below) A city project for the Downtown Arlington Business Association adapted a garage into a farmers market. The design team was Wanda Dye, Renee Cain, Gincy Thoppil, and Jim Parajon.



Seamless Expansion

by FERNANDO L. BRAVE, AIA





PROJECT McMurtry + Duncan Residential Colleges, Houston

CLIENT Rice University

ARCHITECT Hopkins Architects with Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company

DESIGN TEAM Sir Michael Hopkins, Andrew Barnett; Laura Carrara-Cagni; Jane Cady Wright, FAIA; Jean Webster, AIA; Richard Rusinak, AIA

CONTRACTOR Linbeck

CONSULTANTS Haynes Whaley Associates (structural); Arup (structural concept); The Office of James Burnett (landscape); Worrell Design Group (foodservice); Walter P Moore (civil); The Sextant Group (acoustics/technology); CHP & Associates (MEPF); Gilbane Building Company (project management)

PHOTOGRAPHER Robert Benson Photography

WHILE OTHER PROMINENT UNIVERSITIES IN THE U.S. comprise a fusion of signature stylistic expressions, Rice University has focused on architecture that reinforces the well synchronized, harmonious feel of its campus. Aside from some unique buildings – such as Thomas Pfeiffer’s Brochstein Pavilion and the school’s off-site Data Center and the Library Service Center by Carlos Jimenez – that provide interesting drama to the otherwise prevailing architectural uniformity, Rice pursues an environment not accentuated by statements of individual achievement. The campus was originally designed in 1913 by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, but the master plan has been updated periodically over the years. The current master plan was created by Michael Graves in 2003 as “a living document [that] provides a framework for intelligent growth,” in the words of Barbara White Bryson, FAIA, associate vice president of facilities, engineering, and planning.

In the late 1970s, with the engagement of James Sterling and Michael Wilford for its architecture building, Rice opened a calculated campaign to develop its campus into a cohesive set of meticulously designed buildings. Under the leadership of university trustee Josephine E. Abercrombie, chair of Rice’s Buildings and Grounds Committee, the initiative delivered designs by such high-profile architects as Cesar Pelli, Ricardo Bofill, Cambridge Seven Associates, and Antoine Predock, among others. When Rice officials decided to build the latest two projects – Duncan and McMurtry residential

colleges — for a cost of \$132 million, they selected the office of Sir Michael Hopkins. Based in London, Hopkins Architects has designed buildings for North Arizona University and Yale and is currently at work on other projects for educational institutions in the U.S., including one at Princeton.

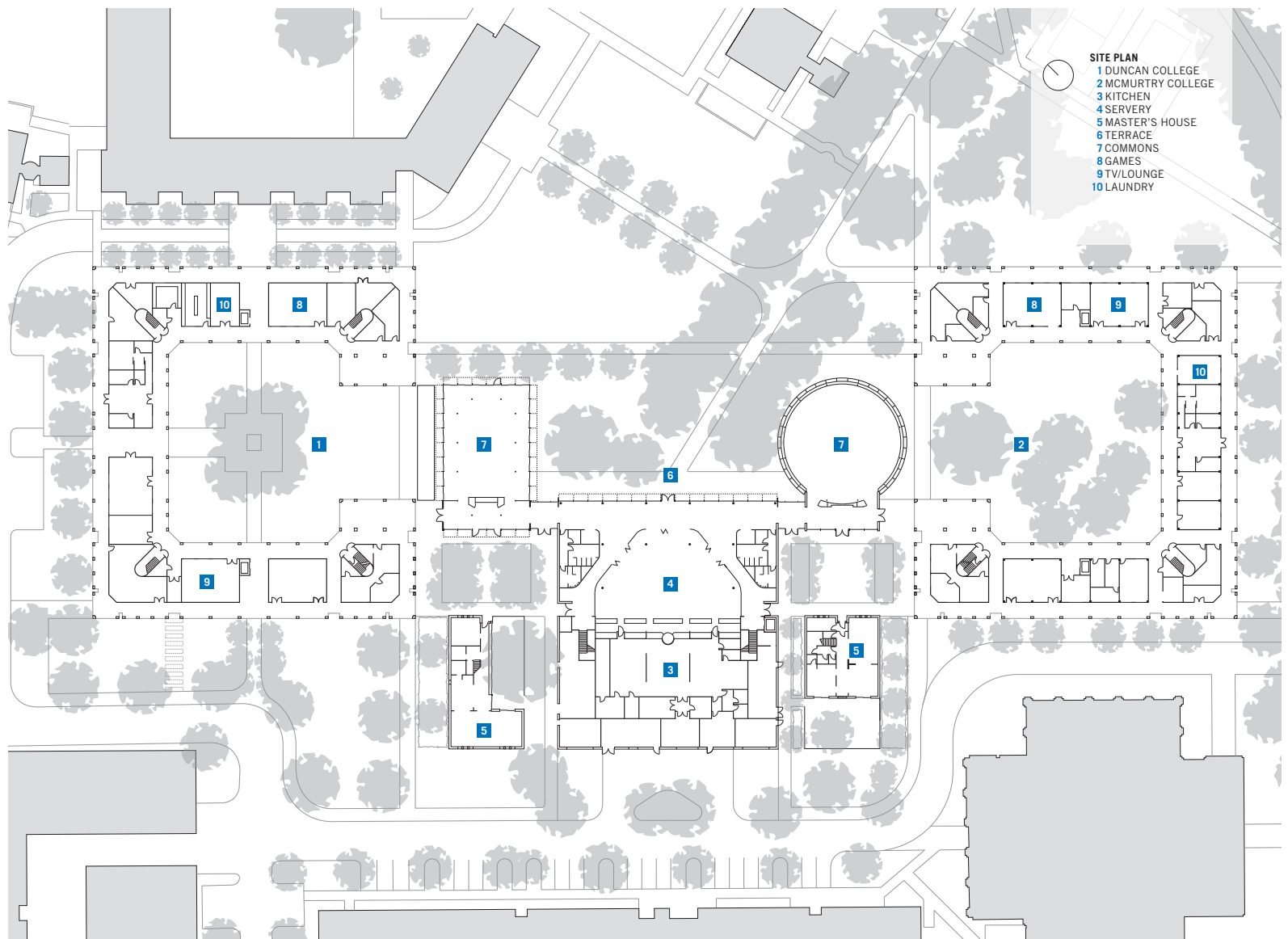
To strengthen the team, Rice also hired the architecture firm of Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company, a leading designer of university environments. The Norfolk, Va.-based firm previously completed a comprehensive study of Rice's campus life that provided crucial insight for future growth. Led by Jane Wright, FAIA, principal-in-charge for Hanbury, the study involved students, faculty, and staff. "Jane prepared a wonderful pre-programming document that led to a deep understanding of support spaces versus amenities within the colleges in a way that improved efficiencies, functionality, and appeal," says Bryson. Although five time zones apart, Hopkins and Hanbury are working together again at Rice, this time on renovations of Baker and Will Rice colleges. "The exceptionally seamless long-distance collaboration was possible due to a rigorously scheduled and well orchestrated communications protocol," says Wright.

While Hopkins felt all options were open, he knew that preserving the green space was important. Bryson points out that a sketch drawn by Hopkins during his initial walk through the woods — the designated site of the future project — illustrated the essence of his solution. "A major concern for the new buildings was to intrude into the green space with the minimum footprint and maintain green areas as much as possible," says Andrew Barnett, a director at Hopkins. The sketch evolved into a design for a complex of seven components—two five-story dormitories, each with a separate Commons (dining pavilion) and a small Master's House, and a shared kitchen/servery. In response to Houston's climate, the buildings are all linked by a series of projecting arcades and perimeter shading.

Keenly designed as residential, the buildings do not announce themselves in an imposing way. Apparent emphasis is placed on creating a sense of community, as well as delivering architecture of appropriate scale that gently integrates with the landscape. Duncan Hall, an adjacent postmodern confection by British architect John Outram, provided useful scale reference that resulted in the architects stepping back the fifth floor of both buildings to provide spaces for terraces and roof gardens. The buildings break from a Rice tradition of formal quadrangle layouts with large vistas, and instead achieve a balanced sense of backdrop to the academic aspect of the campus.

Where Duncan's quad is more formal, McMurtry's responds to the diagonally incoming pedestrian paths from the south. The energy of the new buildings seems to have shifted the "center of gravity" of the campus, with spontaneous walking paths on lawns surrounding the





(previous spread) With interior columns reminiscent of neighboring live oaks, the dining pavilion at Duncan College is part of a new seven-building residential complex at Rice University. (opposite page, top and bottom) As illustrated by the exterior composition of McMurtry College, the architect employed load-bearing brick facades that he stacked on arcades of cast-in-place concrete. The circular plan of McMurtry Common enhances the building's connection to its wooded site. (this page) While nestled within a lush natural landscape, the sophisticated layout of the buildings also evokes an urban feel.



(this page, clockwise from right) A shared kitchen/servery links the two residential colleges. Above the food service operations is a central library with spaces for quiet study. The prefabricated bathroom pods were manufactured in England and shipped to Houston for insertion as the dormitories were under construction. (opposite page, top and bottom) Students dine outdoors in front of the kitchen/servery, with the McMurtry Common in the background. A reflecting pool outside the Duncan Common adds visual interest to the dining experience.



new buildings that suggest increased traffic in the area. Landscaping of carefully selected and combined planting material in the quads, around the buildings, and on roof terraces was executed by The Office of James Burnett. A reflecting pool of similar character to others on campus completes the Duncan quad and provides for interesting light reflection into its Commons.

The Rice project provided Hopkins with an opportunity to employ his U.K. experience on an alternate approach to masonry facades in which a special mortar mix allows load-bearing brick walls to span across each building without expansion joints. The facades sit on poured-in-place concrete arcades. The exterior arcade circulation is of particular interest because a synergy occurs where the vertical and horizontal planes intersect.

In elevation, the arcade is expressed as a heavy plinth of cast-in-place concrete, while in section its interior side is lined with cypress paneling that offers a pleasing texture and connotes passage into the students' realm.

Student rooms are arrayed on the upper four floors. These floors are modular but offer different types of bedrooms and living environments. Ingenious prefabricated bathroom pods attached to bedrooms are the topic of student chatter, and according to them, easy to maintain. The fifth floor at the top of each building accommodates a landscaped terrace that offers an enhanced outdoor environment above the tree canopy. Fifth-floor living areas are reduced due to the addition of large, paved terraces and roof gardens, which pose some challenges to the residents; but the students say they are grateful for direct views to the landscaped areas at the edge of the roofs and the added privacy the stepped-back facade offers.

The communal heart of the new colleges is the Commons, a separate dining pavilion, each with its own particular form and character. Both are essentially

transparent and have a cottage look that integrates seamlessly to the surrounding greenery. The woodwork at the Duncan Common is a bit more elaborate, more sculptural and refined in contrast with the informal McMurtry Commons. The interior columns of the rectangular Duncan Common, a recurring theme in Hopkins' design work, recall the idiosyncratic work of Houston sculptor James Surls. Both pavilions have impeccably detailed wood ceilings and paneling, along with sealed concrete floors that are elegant and restrained.

Barnett points out that Europe's approach to architectural projects is better set up to cope with unique forms of construction than in the U.S. "Being in Europe," he adds, "the U.K. has the advantage of a different, and perhaps more advanced, approach to construction challenges." A clear example is the prefabricated bathroom pods. When Hopkins approached U.S. manufacturers of such pods, the firm found resistance to adapt off-the-shelf products to fit the Rice project. So the pod forms ultimately were designed and manufactured in England, then shipped to New Jersey for assembly, and then trucked to the job site for installation. Barnett says that working with Linbeck was a particularly positive experience, one reason being that the contractor was willing to learn different technology. "They were eager to understand these new techniques to make sure Rice got what Hopkins had promised," says Barnett.

Fernando L. Brave, AIA, is the founder of Brave/Architecture. He also serves as a board member of the Rice Design Alliance.

RESOURCES CONCRETE MATERIALS: Southern Star Concrete; MASONRY UNITS: St. Joe Brick Works; ARCHITECTURAL METAL WORK: Berger Iron Works; WATERPROOFING: BASF, Tremco (L.S. Decker); METAL ROOFING: Architectural Building Components (Marton Roofing Industries); METAL DOORS: CECO Door Products (Mullins Building Products); METAL WINDOWS AND GLAZED CURTAINWALL: TRACO; UNIT SKYLIGHTS: WASCO Skylights, PPG; STRUCTURAL GLASS CURTAINWALL: CDC Curtain Wall Design & Consulting; GYPSUM: Georgia Pacific; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Ecophon Certainteed; PAINTS: Sherwin Williams; DECORATIVE FINISHES: Pittsburgh Paints; HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS: DeVoe; SIGNAGE AND GRAPHICS: Ulrich Diederich Design; PREFABRICATED BATHROOM PODS: Kullman Buildings Corp.; METAL SHELVING: Intermetro Industries; DINING FURNITURE: OSI; STUDENT ROOM FURNITURE: Southwest Contract; DINING AND STUDY TABLES: Howe; UPHOLSTERED STOOLS: Allermuir; SOFT SEATING AND OCCASIONAL TABLES: Hitch Mylius; FURNITURE ADAPTATION: Conran Contract; EXTERIOR TERRACE: Extremis (Apartment Zero); ELEVATORS: ThyssenKrupp



Outside the Box

by VAL GLITSCH, FAIA





PROJECT T. Boone Pickens Science Center, Dallas

CLIENT Oak Hill Academy

ARCHITECT Shipley Architects

DESIGN TEAM Jay Smith, AIA; Dan Shipley, FAIA; Lou Simmons

CONTRACTOR ShipBuild Partners with Mark Huss

CONSULTANTS Hightower Engineering & Construction (structural)

PHOTOGRAPHER Charles Davis Smith, AIA

FOR OVER 23 YEARS, OAK HILL ACADEMY IN DALLAS has helped students with learning differences achieve success not commonly seen in ordinary schools. Oak Hill's unique approach to education integrates multi-disciplinary studies with individualized multi-sensory teaching, permitting children to experience lessons in a meaningful way. OHA Executive Director Pamela Quarterman, in collaboration with Dr. Cynthia Ledbetter, a professor of science and mathematics education at the University of Texas at Dallas, created a customized science curriculum now being implemented in Oak Hill's new T. Boone Pickens Science Center.

In 2002, the school purchased a four-acre/two-tract site on Midway Road in an upscale north Dallas neighborhood. The larger of the two lots held buildings (46,000 square feet originally built by a church for worship and Sunday School) configured around paved parking and play areas. The smaller tract, considered a bonus in the purchase, offered a beautiful green space. The aggregated property posed two significant challenges for use as a day school: first, the parking layout bisected cross-campus pedestrian circulation; and second, the green space was virtually inaccessible via existing buildings.

In 2007, Oak Hill hired Shipley Architects to design a master plan for the campus and to identify the location and character of a new science wing. Following a visioning session with parents, teachers, and board members, the architects focused on re-orienting all classroom entrances as facades and integrating the green space into the whole campus design. Dan Shipley, FAIA, and associate Jay Smith, AIA, resolved the campus' fractured center of gravity by inserting a new pedestrian path leading directly to the green space through the west wing. Joined visually as a continuation of the north wing's circulation and emerging through a new 1,500-sf open-air porch, the garden became the new science wing's front door and primary visual focus.

Programmatic demands on the architects were few: "Make it flexible. Make it durable. Make it affordable." Working within a \$430,000 construction budget, Shipley Architects, acting also as the contractor, maximized the integration of new into the old—not by beautifying the retained skeleton with cosmetic overlay but by cleaning it up and presenting it as part of the building's architec-

ture. The building is now an education in construction, as all layers are visible: patched-over roof framing from previous renovations, ground and polished concrete from floor leveling and plumbing additions, and the frank insertion of steel structure to stitch the gutted shell back to plumb.

Working along LEED guidelines, but unable to budget the certification, the architects incorporated many energy-efficiency measures into the 3,300-sf project; notably, geothermal mechanical systems, tankless water heating, and a customized rainwater harvesting system that allows students to visually trace the path of storm water from roof to cistern to hose bib. Exemplifying sustainability—a term that often refers to strategies for generating energy or reducing its demand—the renovation has re-energized an outdated structure with new life and use. Stripped back to the frame, the project includes many energy-reduction measures as well: large skylights and shaded glass to enhance daylighting and decrease electrical loads, spray-foam insulation and high-reflectance roofing materials to reduce heat transfer, and low-flow plumbing fixtures and drought-tolerant landscaping to minimize water usage.

Tools exist for quantifying the benefits of daylight, high air quality standards, and climatic comfort; but tools for measuring the direct results of design is more difficult. Can the architecture be too stimulating for some users? Probably. But, as Shipley asks, “How can the opposite be good for you?” Intentionally limiting the number of distractions and increasing the level of control for behavioral reasons has yielded decades of soul-less school building. Oak Hill students, whose distractions are mostly internal, are beginning life next to the garden as an experiment of real life proportions. The children’s anticipation of daily discoveries now has them running to science class where lessons typically start with research on the Internet before the class moves through the porch and into the garden for hands-on implementation. Annette Beadles, master gardener and OHA science director, takes students beyond the walls of the classroom to the larger laboratory of the outdoors, teaching cycle-of-life lessons in a visceral way.

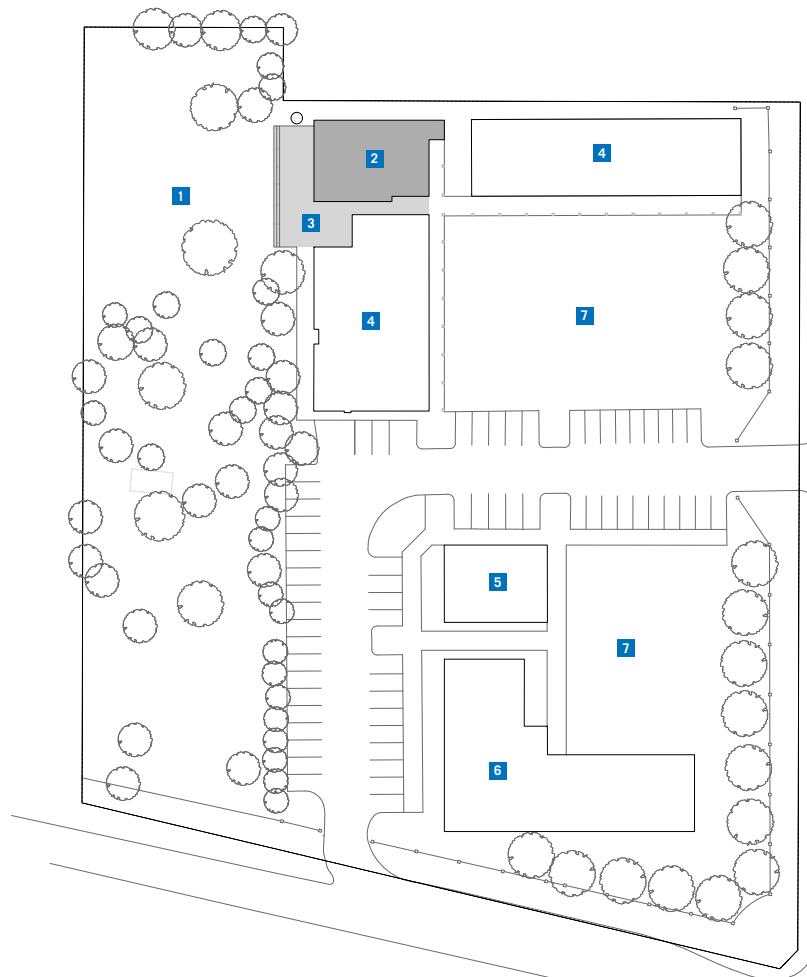
To fund the design, construction, teachers, and equipment for the new science program, the school received grant money totaling \$630,000 from the T. Boone Pickens Foundation, Hoblitzelle Foundation, Hillcrest Foundation, and George & Fay Young Foundation. Last October, Oak Hill dedicated the T. Boone Pickens Science Wing with acknowledgements from its primary benefactor, whose young friend Mackenzie Addudell attends the school. During the ceremony, Pickens praised the project, saying, “I like what I see, and I am proud of all of you.”

Val Glitsch, FAIA, practices in Houston. She has served on Oak Hill Academy’s Board of Directors for the past four years.





BEFORE



SITE PLAN

- 1 SCIENCE GARDEN
- 2 SCIENCE CENTER
- 3 BREEZEWAY & PORCH
- 4 EXISTING CLASSROOMS
- 5 EXISTING PRESCHOOL
- 6 EXISTING ADMINISTRATION AND LIBRARY
- 7 PLAYGROUND

RESOURCES METAL MATERIALS: Eagle Building Systems; CONCRETE RESTORATION: Specialty Hardwood & Maintenance; BUILDING INSULATION: Johns Manville; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: Demilec; SIDING: James Hardie; METAL ROOFING: Mueller; SPECIALTY DOORS: Metal-Craft Products; ENTRANCES AND STOREFRONTS: Crystal Glass; WOOD WINDOWS: Pella; SKYLIGHTS: Velux; MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: Millwork Solutions; LABORATORY CASEWORK: Prime Industries; CARPET TILE: InterfaceFLOR; GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMP: WaterFurnace (Geothermal Services); RAINWATER TANK: The Rain Well

(preceding spread) The new T. Boone Pickens Science Center is the centerpiece of Shipley Architects' renovation of Oak Hill Academy. (opposite page, top and bottom) Large skylights enhance the daylighting of classrooms while shaded glass decreases utility bills. The science center's tall and deep canopy accommodates outdoor learning activities. (this page, top left and bottom right) Prior to the renovation, the green space was hardly used due to its veritable inaccessibility. The architects' master plan seamlessly conjoined the buildings with the adjacent garden.



Science in a New Light

by CHARLIE BURRIS, AIA





PROJECT Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building, College Station

CLIENT Texas A&M University

ARCHITECT Perkins+Will

DESIGN TEAM Raymond Beets, FAIA; Edwin Cordes, AIA; Manuel Cadrecha, AIA; Dan Watch, AIA; Paul Chappell; Melissa Crispin, AIA

CONTRACTOR JE Dunn

CONSULTANTS Shah Smith & Associates (MEP); Walter P Moore (civil); Structures+Haynes Whaley (structural); DataCom Design Group (technology design); EDAW, AECOM (landscape); JEAcoustics (acoustics and vibration); Affiliated Engineers (commissioning); Kroll Security Group (security)

PHOTOGRAPHER Mark Trew Photography

OPENED LAST SEPTEMBER, THE \$100 MILLION Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building represents a major step toward Texas A&M University's goal of becoming one of the top 10 universities in the nation as set forth in its Vision 2020. The 230,000-sf ILSB, the largest single construction project in A&M's 133-year history, is also the first academic facility to be built with the \$1 billion earmarked by former TAMU President Robert Gates for improvements to the College Station campus.

This is a project of many "firsts" for TAMU, such as its first foray into sustainable design and the first project executed by a Construction Manager at Risk delivery approach. In addition, the ILSB is A&M's first building to respond to the new campus master plan and its first true interdisciplinary facility. The project strives to be both contextual and technological, celebrating the historic fabric of the A&M campus while providing a twenty-first-century research facility. Built to high standards of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, the architects expect the project to receive a LEED Gold designation.

The ILSB houses several core facilities critical to resident research programs, including the Microscopy and Imaging Center, the X-Ray Diffraction Laboratory, and the Laboratory for Biological Mass Spectrometry. It also contains 30 lab groups, outfitted with "plug and play" modular furnishings that can be easily reconfigured as needs arise, as well as a vivarium and limited wet teaching labs.

The architects of Perkins+Will were challenged to create a cutting-edge research facility that would foster cross-disciplinary interaction although the building's future occupants were not involved in the early stages of the decision-making process. Their solution was to work toward maximum flexibility while relying on the team's prior experience with similar facilities.

After a year of programming by university planning consultant Ira Fink and Associates, the architects slightly modified the program as they began their design process with multiple charrettes. The Perkins+Will team comprised designers from the firm's offices in Houston and Atlanta, including principal-in-charge Raymond Beets, FAIA; managing principal Edwin Cordes, AIA; and design principal Manuel Cadrecha, AIA. Both offices also collaborated on the interior design.

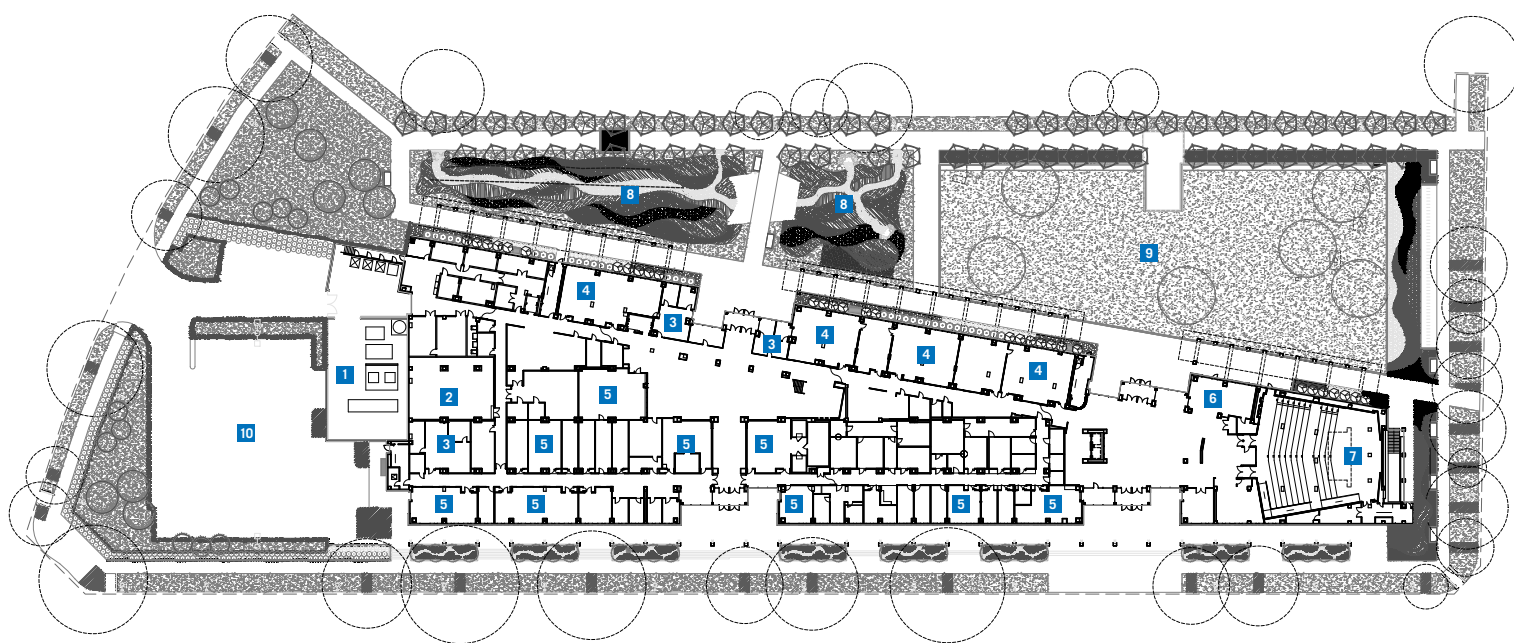
Located at the heart of the main campus, the ILSB emphasizes the fact that research occupies a permanent place at the center of Texas A&M University. The building also acts as a "bridge" between the research-oriented west campus and the undergraduate-dominated main campus. Its elongated plan parallels the historic Simpson Drill Field, a vantage point from which a distant view of the new building offers the best understanding of its immense size and scale. The south portico facing the drill field acts as a "porch or grandstand," explains Cordes, overlooking the expansive green area and vistas beyond. The north facade is also separated by a green space but sits in closer proximity to the low-scale neighboring buildings. As counterpoints, the Albritton Bell Tower punctuates the west while the historic YMCA Building is respected on the east.

To define outdoor space as directed by the campus master plan, the design team surrounded the building with courtyards and quadrangles. Along its north perimeter is a green space that orients toward the old campus center and is divided into a courtyard Rain Garden and a Memorial Quadrangle. The Rain Garden has a functional and instructional purpose as it deals with the hydrological cycle and is scaled to courtyard proportions. This separates it from the larger, more open lawn space that provides a setting for relaxation and studying outdoors. A water catchment system that includes an underground cistern eliminates the use of potable water sources for all irrigation needs. Low walls of the northeast quadrangle occupy the exact locations of the original dormitory walls of popular Law Hall and Puryear Hall and will eventually contain some of the architectural artifacts from those structures.

Another design challenge was to break up the mass of the building both horizontally and vertically. Part of the solution was to create two entry atria that divide the overall mass into three interconnected pavilions linked by porticos. Though perceived as an orthogonal layout, the building actually has a trapezoidal plan that narrows



- SITE PLAN**
- 1 SERVICE YARD
 - 2 MECHANICAL
 - 3 ADMINISTRATION
 - 4 TEACHING LAB
 - 5 RESEARCH
 - 6 CAFE
 - 7 AUDITORIUM
 - 8 RAIN GARDEN
 - 9 MEMORIAL QUAD
 - 10 PARKING



(preceding spread) Containing 230,000 square feet, the new Interdisciplinary Life Sciences Building is the largest single construction project on campus in Texas A&M's 133-year history.

(opposite page, top and bottom) Sunlight filters through the trellis along the south portico creating a constant play of light and shadow throughout the day. At the east end, sun-shading elements protect the public entrance to the auditorium.

(this page) Strategies to visually reduce the ILSB's mass helped to render a building that respects the scale and sensibility of existing campus structures, including the Albritton Bell Tower along tree-lined Old Main.



(this page, right and below) The modern monumental stair appears to levitate within the research atrium space amid a variety of textures and finishes. Late in the day, artificial light emphasizes the transparency of the spaces, where even A&M mascot Reveille feels at home. (opposite page, from top) Public interior spaces provide a variety of informal gathering areas for relaxation and sharing of ideas. Separate from the ILSB's secure research areas, a 300-seat auditorium at the east end accommodates public gatherings. The building contains 30 lab groups equipped with "plug and play" modular furnishings that can be easily reconfigured as needs arise.



and steps downward toward the smaller YMCA Building on its east end. A large exterior stair provides access to multi-level terraces and mirrors the front steps of the YMCA, while the more modern and simplified portico colonnades are a contemporary reflection of its classical columns. The colonnades serve as sun-control devices, but they also provide scale reduction and define pedestrian-friendly spaces.

The three-story, cast-in-place concrete structure has a limestone and masonry clad exterior. The lower floor of cut limestone acts as a water table that reflects the scale of neighboring buildings. A continuous two-story limestone arcade with a metal trellis along the entire length of the south facade provides a unifying element and shade for pedestrians. Punched window openings with limestone trim increase in size at the upper level to lighten the visual heft of the facade, while other window treatments add variety to the composition. Exterior detailing is simple and clean with an array of masonry materials and elegant layering of design elements. This building, while clearly modern, pays homage to the historic buildings and respects the scale and sensibility of existing campus structures. Cadrecha describes the ILSB as a "quiet building" that does not overpower its smaller neighbors.

Upon entering either of the two atria that traverse the building, one is immediately aware of the articulated detailing and rich interior treatments within the three-story volumes. The daylighting strategy – with angled ceilings, high interior windows with light shelves, and the upper-level clerestory – floods the building with natural light. Equally conspicuous is the interior transparency that Cordes says was intended to promote the ideas of "research on display" and the "experience of science." Interior appointments include terrazzo floors, carpet

tiles, wood panels, Venetian plaster surfaces, and finely crafted metallic accents.

The two atria entries are three-story window-walls on both major facades that contrast to the solid masonry walls with their punched openings. The east atrium is more public and acts as a gathering space outside the 300-seat auditorium. This space separates public access from secure research areas. Also adjacent to this space is the café intended to promote interaction between students, faculty, and researchers. The west atrium is more internal and intended to be the heart of the building's research realm, containing a monumental stair accessing all floors and surrounded by offices, meeting rooms, and "huddle" spaces. Offices are located in clusters adjacent to research spaces to promote communication and interconnectivity.

This facility evolved during a period when TAMU was focused on the idea of "interdisciplinary" research, but it remains to be seen if the university follows that model with its future buildings. Regardless, Cadrecha considers the ILSB his favorite accomplishment of the many academic facilities he has designed over his 30-year career. The design process, he says, worked exactly as intended, and he hopes to apply the many lessons learned on this project to future work of this type.

Charlie Burris, AIA, is a principal of The Arkitek Studio in Bryan.



RESOURCES UNIT PAVERS: Pavestone; SITE, STREET AND MALL FURNISHINGS: Landscape Forms; STONE: Lucia; STONE DRAFTING SERVICES: CDC Curtain Wall Design & Consulting; UNIT MASONRY WALL ASSEMBLIES: IPC Building Products; METAL MATERIALS: Milestone Metals; RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS, GLASS, GLAZED CURTAINWALL: Ranger Specialized Glass; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Wilsonart, MGC; BUILDING INSULATION: Owens Corning; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION: Bilco; EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEMS: Johns Manville, CertainTeed; METAL AND WOOD DOORS AND FRAMES: Hull Supply; ACCESS DOORS AND PANELS: Milcor; METAL WINDOWS: Viracon (Ranger Specialized Glass); ALUMINUM WINDOWS: EFCO, a Pella Co. (Texas Fenestration); GYPSUM BOARD: USG; TILE: Central Marble & Tile, Daltile, American Olean; TERRAZZO: National Terrazzo Tile & Marble; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: CertainTeed; LAMINATE FLOORING: Gerflor; INTERIOR INDIRECT LIGHTING: Precision Architectural Lighting; PAINTS: Sherwin Williams; OPERABLE PARTITIONS: TRW Modernfold; EXTERIOR SUN CONTROL DEVICES: Construction Specialties; LABORATORY CASEWORK: Kewaunee (Hallmark Casework); SHADES: Mechoshade Systems; PRECISION CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTS: MGC; METAL SHELVING: Intermetro Industries

Changing Course

by SCOTT WILSON, AIA





PROJECT Frisco ISD Career and Technical Education Center, Frisco

CLIENT Frisco ISD

ARCHITECT SHW Group

DESIGN TEAM Trey Laird, AIA; Konrad Judd, AIA; Marty Sims, AIA; Kent Leach, AIA; Ellis Heitzke-Kirkdorffer, Assoc. AIA; Bukky Akinsanmi, AIA

CONTRACTOR Cadence McShane Construction

CONSULTANTS IEG (MEP); RLK Engineering (civil); GWC Engineering (structural); Ramsey Landscape Architects (landscape); Daniel Brown Consulting (foodservice); BAi (acoustical)

PHOTOGRAPHERS Hester + Hardaway Photographers; Terry Wier Architectural Photography; Paul Bardagjy

AT FIRST SIGHT, APPROACHING THE SCHOOL FROM around a stand of mature trees, all preserved through careful planning, visitors immediately feel a dynamic presence. The mosaic of juxtaposed masonry, concrete, and cantilevered metal and glass elements hints at a complex collaboration lying within the two-story Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center in Frisco. In only its second academic year and under the continued, enthusiastic leadership of Dr. Wes Cunningham, the CTE Center appears to be setting the bar higher for the design of public schools.

The vision for the school revolved around attracting bright students and creating academic programs to suit the ever-evolving needs of the modern workforce. Laboratories and classrooms provide real-world experience that engages students and promotes self-paced, collaborative learning beyond their basic program of study.

To compile the list of complex needs for the CTE Center, Frisco ISD and the project's designer, SHW Group, invested an extensive amount of time reaching out to the business community, institutions of higher education, and the students. Juniors and seniors from the local high schools can apply to attend the CTE Center, and if accepted must push themselves to interact with others in small classroom settings. This collaborative concept is reflected in the layout of the facility and represents the dominant element in its architectural forms.

The CTE Center's welcoming main entry, protected by a horizontal canopy, is a bridge that leads pedestrians over a carefully preserved natural drainage feature. The bridge references the symbolic span that connects formal education to the future workforce. Visitors entering the two-story atrium – the energy center of the building where activities coalesce within an animated mosaic of forms and materials – are greeted with sparkling terrazzo floors, a colorfully illuminated elevator cylinder (with hues that randomly change), and stairways that appear to float gracefully along a curtain of glass and aluminum. Adding further vibrancy to the large interior space, transparent storefronts – delicatessen, retail shop, restaurant,

and bank—offer a glimpse into how the facility’s designers responded to the students’ training curriculum.

The various programs at the CTE Center include culinary arts, law and criminal justice, veterinary medicine, graphic design, nursing, architecture, and agriculture studies, to name a few. Each field of study is delineated, not with signage, but by colorful overhead banners hanging along the concourse. Departments are separate but integrated in a design strategy intended to blur boundaries within the building, enhancing and encouraging the process of working together. For example, when a marketing student needs to research copyright law, legal collaboration is a short walk away.

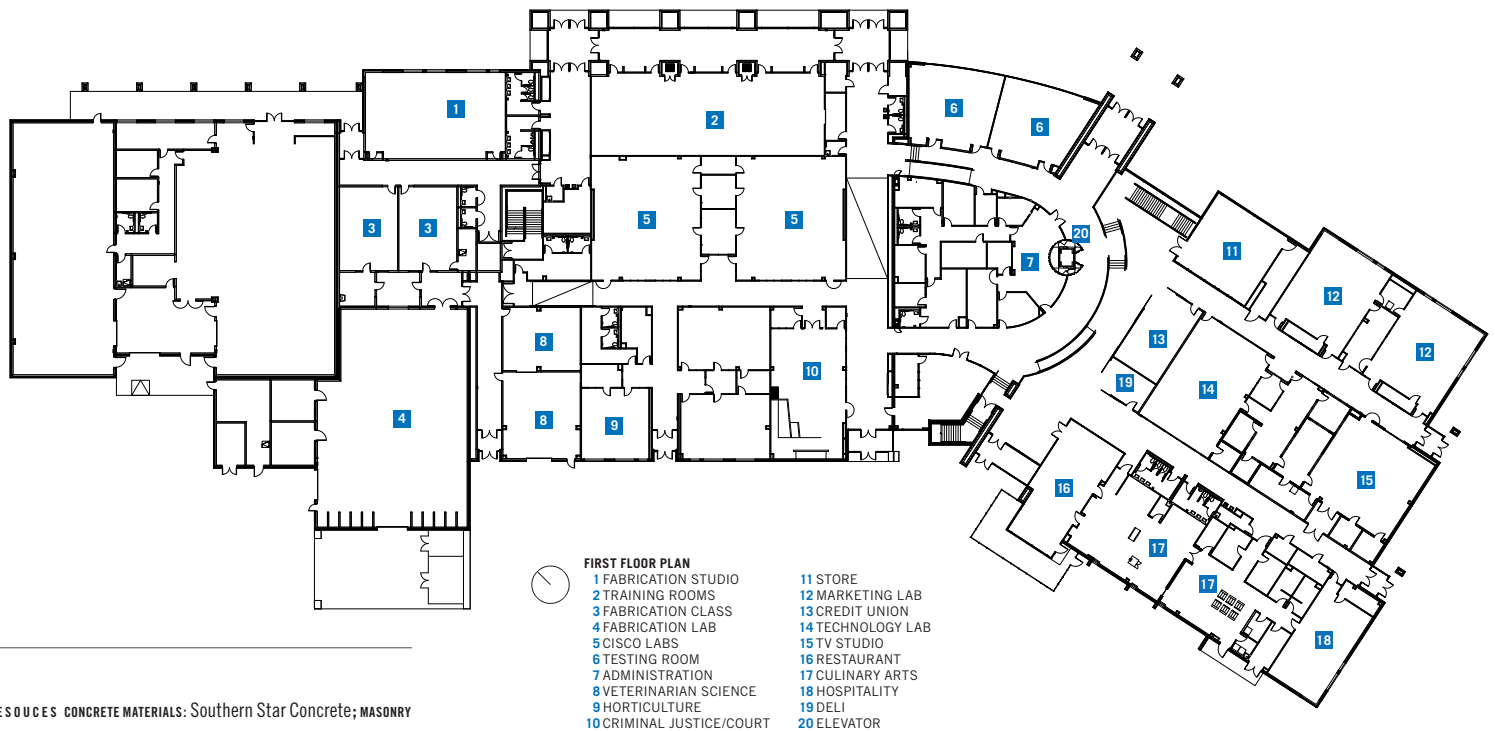
Furthering the programmatic goal of stimulating interconnectivity, all classroom spaces, teachers’ offices, and administration suites have interior windows to ensure transparency throughout the building. In addition, nodes set at the edges of lobbies and corridors provide places for students and staff to informally meet. These areas are furnished with comfortable, stylishly modern tables and chairs, along with small coffee stations. In the main lobby, numerous tables and chairs create additional dining and meeting spaces. Instead of overhead lighting in this two-story volume, shiny disks of burnished metal are mounted to the ceiling, reflecting and diffusing illumination from light fixtures installed in easily maintained perimeter locations. Instead of being a very loud acoustical environment, the space is pleasantly live, outfitted with wood ceilings backed by hidden acoustic treatment, all supported by large, clear-span wooden beams.

One of the challenges during the development of the architectural space as a cutting-edge learning environment was the need for a nimble building that could change with the needs of the community and society. Although certain portions of the building comprise solid, fixed geometries, the majority of its 126,000 square feet can be easily modified to fulfill future curricular demands. Interior partitions are constructed of recyclable metal studs and gypsum board, and the HVAC systems utilize geothermal air handling units, serviced from over 400 wells, offering maximum zoned flexibility and energy savings. In addition, carefully placed windows and folding partitions will allow conference and meeting rooms to be reconfigured without forfeiting abundant natural light or requiring a greater need for artificial light. As a result, students and staff will remain visually connected to the outside world while confined indoors to view presentations.

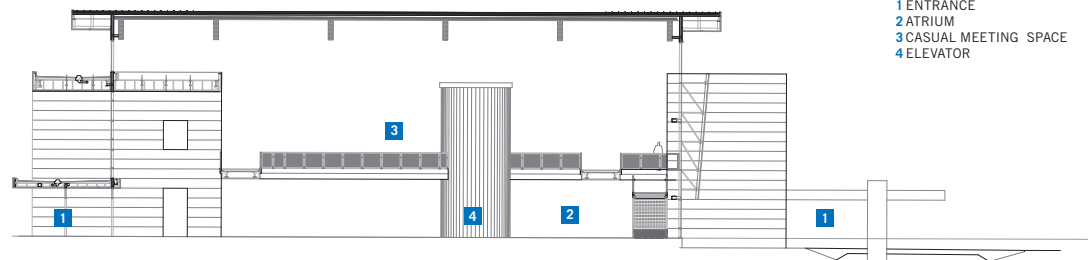
Thoughtful planning and execution over nearly 12 years have yielded a superlative facility for the students and the entire city of Frisco. Equal parts communal space and bold architectural statement, the CTE Center is changing the direction of student learning and setting them on paths toward a bright future.

Scott T. Wilson, AIA, is a principal of Quorum Architects in Fort Worth.





RESOURCES CONCRETE MATERIALS: Southern Star Concrete; MASONRY UNITS: Texas Building Products; UNIT MASONRY WALL ASSEMBLIES AND MASONRY VENEER ASSEMBLIES: Acme; METAL DECKING: Metal Dek Group; METAL BUILDING: Nucor; JOISTS: CMC; STEEL STUDS: Dietrich; PREFABRICATED STRUCTURAL WOOD: Structural Wood Systems; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK AND MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: Calmar Manufacturing; LAMINATES: Formica; PLASTIC FABRICATIONS: 3 Form; BUILDING INSULATION: Icynene; ROOF AND DECK INSULATION, MEMBRANE ROOFING: Johns Manville; ROOF PANELS, FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS: AEP Span; WALL PANELS: RheinZink, Alcoa; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: Piper-Weatherford; WOOD AND PLASTIC DOORS: Graham; SPECIALTY DOORS: Cornell, Won-Door (ABC Doors of Dallas); ENTRANCES AND GLAZED CURTAINWALL: Kawneer; UNIT SKYLIGHTS: Natural Light; DECORATIVE GLAZING: TGP Architectural; RATED GLASS: Firelite; OPERABLE WALLS: Moderco; TILE: Daltile; TERRAZZO: Enviroglass, American Terrazzo, Key Resin; ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS AND VTC: Armstrong; WOOD CEILINGS: Rulon Linear Ceilings; PAINT: Sherwin Williams; RUBBER BASE: Roppe; SUNSHADE: ASI Limited; TV STUDIO LIGHTING: Texas Scenic; POLYMER SHELVING: Intermetro Industries; GREENHOUSE: Stuppy



(previous spread) The design of Frisco ISD's new Career and Technical Education Center fosters a flexible environment for learning through collaboration in both informal and classroom settings. (opposite page, top and bottom) Terrazzo flooring, wood slats at the ceiling, and an illuminated, cylindrical elevator enrich the double-height atrium space. Cantled walls of glass invite northern light into a ground-floor corridor. (this page) At the entry, a bridge symbolizes the connection between the CTE Center and its student's future careers.



Campus Engagement

by JUSTIN PAUL HOWARD, AIA





PROJECT Baker Patillo Student Center, Nacogdoches

CLIENT Stephen F. Austin State University

ARCHITECT Prozign Architects; Sasaki Associates

DESIGN TEAM Alan Sadeghpour, AIA; Albert Wong, AIA; Carl Simon, AIA; Roxanne Sadeghpour; Norris Strawbridge, AIA

CONTRACTOR J.E. Kingham Construction Company

CONSULTANTS Scientech Engineers (structural); Friberg Associates (mechanical); Barwin Consultants (civil); Lauren Griffin Associates (landscape); Ricca Newmark Design (food service); Schweppe Lighting Design (lighting); HFP Acoustical Consultants (theater)

PHOTOGRAPHER Richard Payne, FAIA

ESTABLISHED IN THE HEART OF EAST TEXAS IN 1917 and nestled among the region's majestic pine forest, Stephen F. Austin University is quietly nurturing its student-focused campus life. The new Baker Patillo Student Center, completed in March 2007, has blossomed into a vibrant, 24-hour "town center" for the university and the town of Nacogdoches. The project, involving a 94,000-sf addition and partial renovation of an existing building, along with an adjacent parking garage, reflects the university's commitment to providing top-tier services for students and creating a community atmosphere.

Conceived through a series of open design "studios" and forums with students, faculty, administration, and the surrounding community, the expanded facility reveals the shared language of intentions fully realized in the constructed project. The process, led by Prozign Architects of Houston and bolstered by Boston-based planning specialists Sasaki Associates, centered on a commitment to dialogue and consensus-building among the diverse participants. Prozign principal-in-charge Alan Sadeghpour, AIA, credits the success of the project to the involvement of the many stakeholders who served as "conduits" through which the team could receive feedback and ensure that the completed project fully realized its potential. "It's a rare project," said Sadeghpour, "one where our goals as designers were fully aligned with the goals of our client and their users. They were a pleasure to work with."

Through the participatory planning process, the siting of the facility was changed from a wooded green space immediately in front of the administration building that faces the campus' main entrance drive. Instead, following discussions among the stakeholders, the decision was made to build the new facility as an addition to the existing student center located opposite the main library along the campus's central pedestrian spine. The 402-space parking garage was erected immediately to the south of the three-story addition.

From the preserved green space, the addition's main entrance along its east side and the parking garage present understated yet well-detailed facades. A new loggia seams

the existing building into the main entrance, the terminus of the campus' central pedestrian spine. This siting choice required the demolition of portions of the older building and the sensitive phasing of construction. The addition responds with pilasters and fenestration composition that ties the facade to existing campus architecture.

A clock tower signals the location of the main entry that leads into the heart of the facility, a three-story central commons organized by a pedestrian "street." The pathway is an extension of the campus' central pedestrian spine that runs eastward across the campus. Immediately outside the entry is a tree-lined outdoor plaza that functions as a large room, which replaced a driveway that had formally truncated the west end of the campus' central pedestrian spine. The plaza's location on the east side of the Student Center, and protection by existing buildings to the north, allows it to be comfortable year round. The figure-ground parti of the site plan results in a well used and well loved building reminiscent of the successful precedents in Italian piazzas.

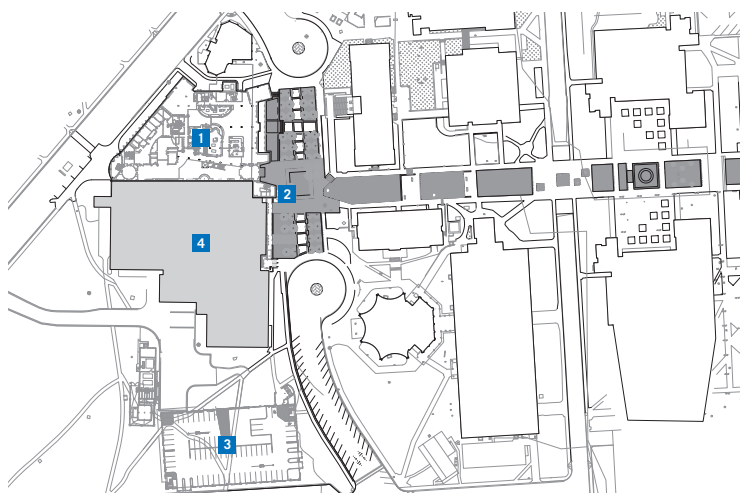
The vibrancy of the expanded facility can be traced to the success of the plan, with the three floors of the addition organized around the broad street-like commons. Filled with diffuse natural light, the commons is equipped with an array of study alcoves that provide students with varying degrees of privacy while also allowing views to adjacent public areas. The architect smartly treated the stairs as a series of interior terraces, where students can pause for an impromptu visit. Offering a number of variously scaled spaces to choose from, the addition affords flexibility to the staff and students for the full utilization of the facility.

The ground floor contains the main public spaces, including a food court, bookstore, student "involvement center," convenience store, and bank. The second floor houses a 383-seat multi-use theater, meeting rooms, and the first Starbucks in Nacogdoches. From this social center of coffee and student relaxation, the commons opens onto an east-facing second-floor balcony that overlooks the new plaza and down the campus' central pedestrian spine. It is these elevated refuges that characterize the experience of the entire building. This approach was extended into the renovation of the existing building, with the second-floor lobby of the existing ballrooms looking down into the first-floor entrance lobby facing the plaza.

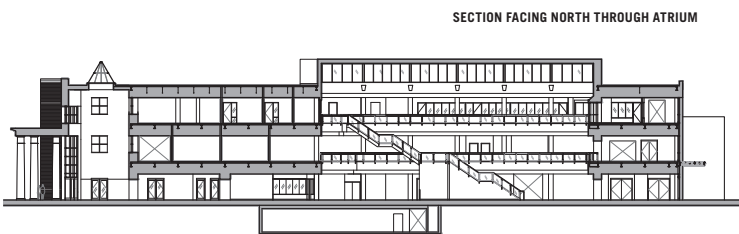
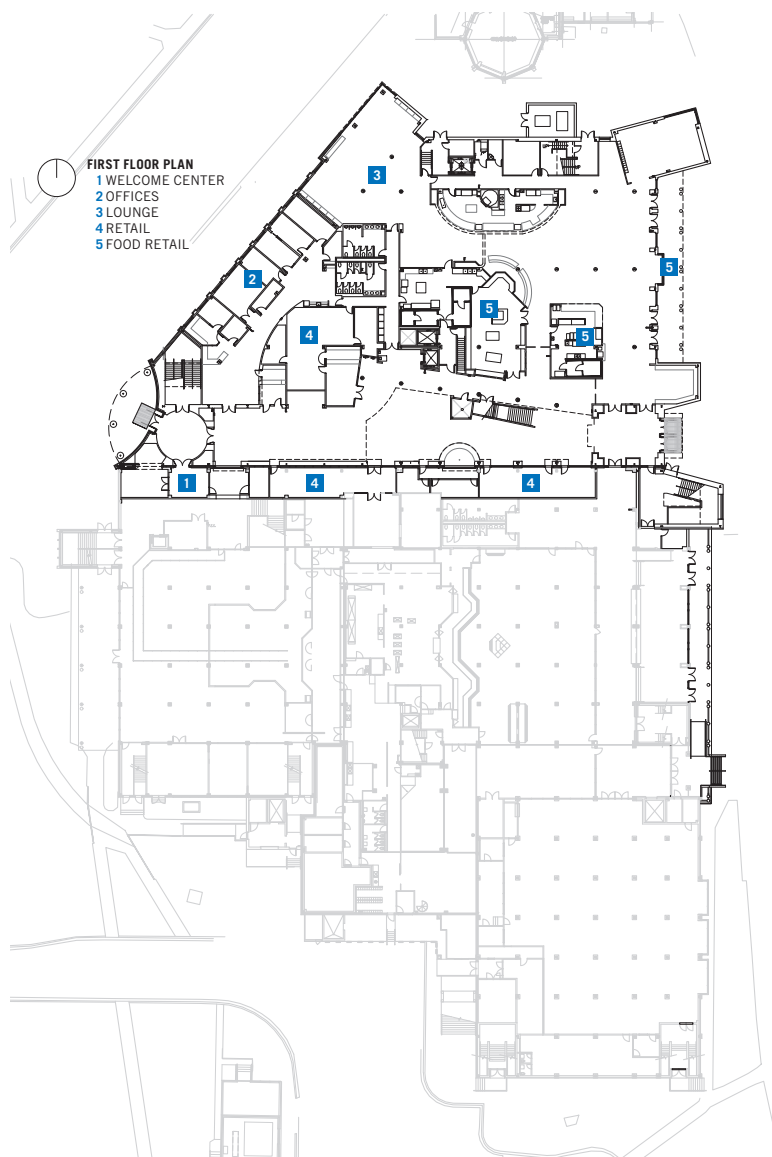
The total engagement of the new building with the site reveals immense potential along the campus' central pedestrian spine. With the commitment shown by SFA's administration, staff, and physical plant personnel, along with the strong precedent set by Prosign and its design team, Stephen F. Austin State University's prospects for the future appear unlimited.

Justin Paul Howard, AIA, practices with Burditt Consultants Land/Place Studio in Conroe.





SITE PLAN
 1 NEW ADDITION
 2 LANDSCAPED PLAZA
 3 NEW GARAGE
 4 EXISTING BUILDING



SECTION FACING NORTH THROUGH ATRIUM

RESOURCES UNIT PAVERS: LMS; CONSTRUCTION SITE WORK: Drewery Construction; MASONRY UNITS: Brazos Masonry; METAL MATERIALS: Henderson Fabrication; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: The Cabinet Shop; SPECIALTY DOORS: Overhead Door Company of Lufkin; GLASS AND GLAZING: Eastex Glass & Mirror; CARPET AND VINYL FLOORING: East Texas Carpets; SIGNAGE: Stanley Signature Products; STAGE EQUIPMENT: Texas Scenic Company; METAL SHELVING: Intermetro Industries; ELEVATORS: ThyssenKrupp; SOFTWARE: Autodesk

(preceding spread) A landscaped plaza and loggia help stitch together the eastern facades of the older structure, shown at left, and the new addition to SFA's Baker Patillo Student Center.

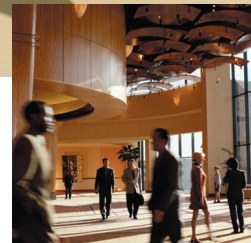
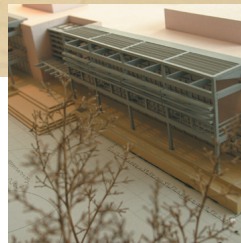
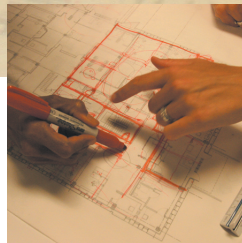
(opposite page, top and bottom) A pedestrian 'street' organizes the three-story commons within the addition. The architects met with stakeholders, including students and members of the surrounding community, to determine the program for amenities and services, including a food court on the ground floor.

(this page) Another component of the project, a five-story parking garage, stands immediately to the south of the student center.



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Component name | Phone number
Web address



PROJECT Boerne-Samuel V. Champion High School, Boerne

CLIENT Boerne ISD

ARCHITECT Pfluger Associates Architects with OCO Architects

DESIGN TEAM Kent Niemann, AIA; Mark Oppelt, AIA; Robyn Jimenez, AIA; Manuel Garza, Assoc. AIA; Ed Garza; Debbie Johnson; Florin Popa, AIA; Braden Haley

CONTRACTOR Joeris General Contractors

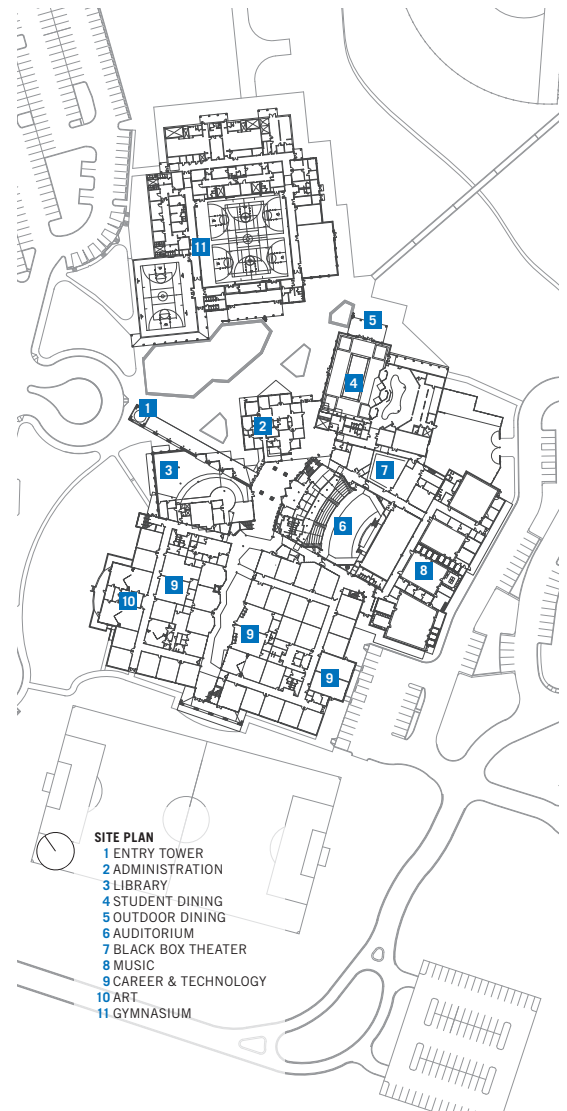
CONSULTANTS Moy Civil Engineers (civil); Danysh & Associates (structural); HMG & Associates (MEP); Combs Consulting Group IT Design & Consulting (technology); Robert Simpson & Associates (foodservice); Dickensheets Design Associates (acoustics)

PHOTOGRAPHER Chris Cooper Photography

RESOURCES ATHLETIC AND RECREATIONAL SURFACING: Plexipave; LANDSCAPING: Maldonado Nursery & Landscaping; CONCRETE MATERIALS: Ingram Readymix, Shepler's Performance Products; MASONRY UNITS: Featherlite, Acme; METAL MATERIALS: Vulcraft; METAL DECKING: Epic Metals; EXPANSION JOINT COVERS: Architectural Arts Mfg. (T.H. Willis Building Specialties); ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK: Baring Enterprises; LAMINATES: Wilsonart; WATERPROOFING: Sonneborn; WATER REPELLANTS: Chemprobe; INSULATION: Owens Corning; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Siplast; METAL ROOFING, FASCIA AND SOFFIT PANELS: MBCI; FIREPROOFING: W.R. Grace & Co.; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: Curries Essex; WOOD DOORS: Haley Bros.; SPECIALTY DOORS: Cloday; ENTRANCES, STOREFRONTS AND GLAZED CURTAINWALL: United States Aluminum (Champion Glass); GYPSUM BOARD: Dietrich Metal Framing; TILE: American Olean (Travis Tile); ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Armstrong; PAINTS AND HIGH PERFORMANCE COATINGS: Sherwin Williams; SIGNAGE: Sign Resource Mgmt.; WALL AND CORNER GUARDS: C/S Group (T.H. Willis Building Specialties); FLAGPOLES: Pole Tech; METAL LOCKERS: List Industries (Rocky Duron & Associates); EYEBROW CANOPIES: Epic Metals; THEATRE EQUIPMENT: Texas Scenic Co.; MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: Timber Casework; LABORATORY CASEWORK: Sheldon Lab Systems (Worthington Contract Furniture); WATER STORAGE TANKS: Spec-all Products; SOUND EQUIPMENT: Southwest Sound & Electronics; DESIGN SOFTWARE: DC CADD

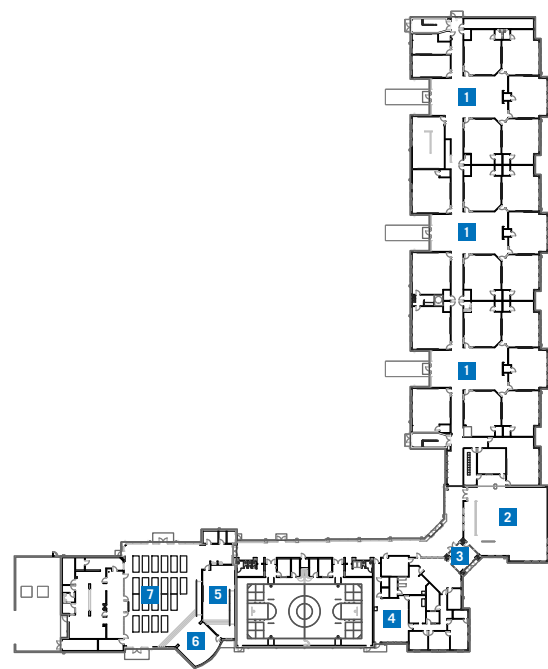
Built to inform and inspire the students and the local community about conservation, Boerne-Samuel V. Champion High School in Boerne ISD is designed with a focus on the intelligent use of natural resources and protection of the natural environment. Designed by Pfluger Associates Architects and OCO Architects, the 299,400-sf complex promotes sustainable practices through both its architecture and its function. One prominent example is the large metal cistern installed at the school's entrance to collect water from roof runoff and HVAC condensate. The harvested rainwater is used for landscape irrigation, saving the school district an estimated 10.7 million gallons of water annually, which may reduce dependency on municipal water by 80 percent. Conservation strategies also influenced the placement of the buildings within natural voids and between existing live oaks to minimize environmental impact on the site. Also, orientation of the buildings optimize prevailing breezes and daylighting within classrooms. Built at a total cost of just under \$48.1 million, the new school was completed in December 2007. Champion High School was recognized as the 2009 Caudill Winner, the highest award given in the annual Exhibit of School Architecture co-sponsored by the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards.

SUSAN BUTLER





Binion Elementary



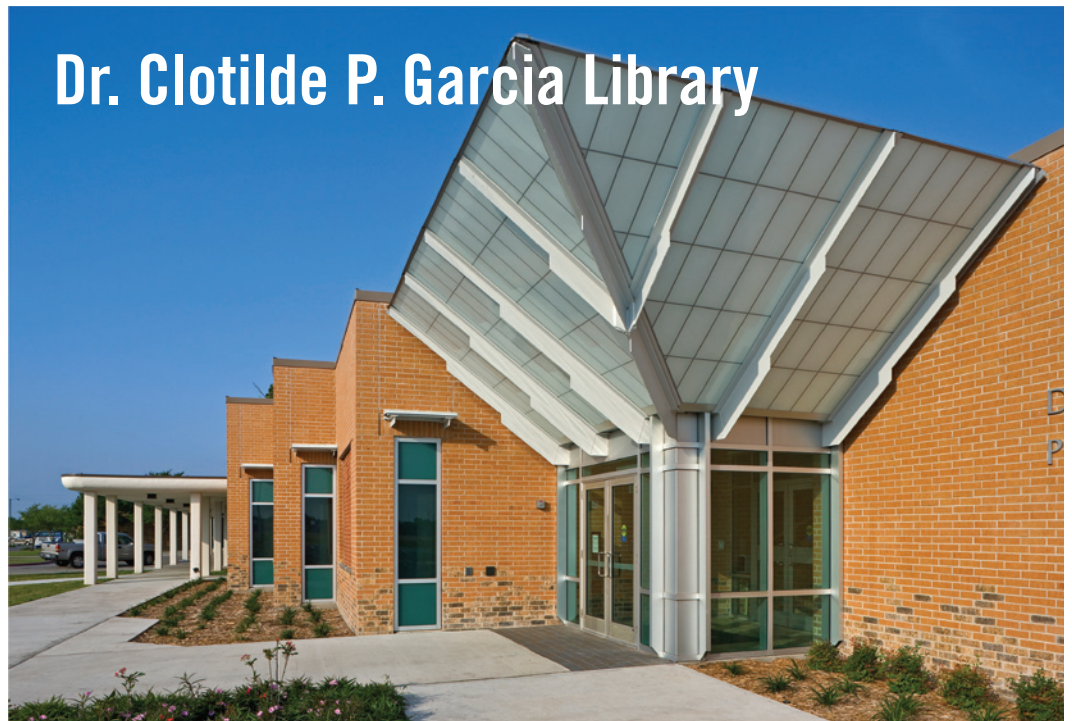
- FIRST FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 TEAMING AREA
 - 2 LIBRARY
 - 3 MAIN ENTRY
 - 4 ADMINISTRATION
 - 5 MUSIC
 - 6 STAGE
 - 7 CAFETERIUM

The new 88,000-sf Jack C. Binion Elementary School in Richland Hills near Fort Worth solved Birdville ISD's severe lack of space. Prior to the August 2008 completion of the \$11 million project, 21 portable classrooms had been in use. HKS designed Binion Elementary to initially accommodate 700 students but also to be flexible for future growth in enrollment. The firm's principal-in-charge, Mark VanderVoort, AIA, said the design also allows educators to customize classrooms according to activities or curriculum, adding, "Open, studio-like areas serve every grade level. These spaces are intended for various group sizes and learning activities." Built in an L-shape immediately adjacent to the original campus, the new school's modern design pays homage to its mid-century predecessor. Construction was phased so classes could continue as the replacement school was being built, then the old school was razed to allow a park-like playground to face the neighboring community. With emphasis on horizontal lines and cantilevering roof forms, along with the use of similar brick colors, the new building is a blend of old and new. The school's design also looks to the future with sustainable strategies such as transparency and daylighting. The new Binion Elementary School received Special Recognition in the Outstanding Primary category in the 2009 Exhibit of School Architecture co-sponsored by the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards.

SUSAN BUTLER

PROJECT Jack C. Binion Elementary School, Richland Hills
CLIENT Birdville ISD
ARCHITECT HKS
DESIGN TEAM Mark VanderVoort, AIA; Greg Frnka, AIA; Jessica Mabry; Dean Mobley
CONTRACTOR Key Construction
CONSULTANTS Structural Engenuity (structural); IEG (MEP); Schrickel Rollins & Associates (civil, landscape); JMK Food Service Consulting & Design (foodservice)
PHOTOGRAPHER Blake Marvin

RESOURCES CONCRETE PAVEMENT: Consys Concrete; FENCES: Acme Fence; ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK AND MANUFACTURED CASEWORK: Contractor Millwork Services; METAL AND WOOD DOORS, HARDWARE: Dallas Door & Supply; TILE: R&E Floor Designs; SIGNAGE: Sign & Awning; PROTECTIVE COVERS: AVADEK; OPERABLE PARTITIONS: Modernfold Door & Specialties; FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT: Kirby Restaurant Supply; BLINDS, ROLLER SHADES, STAGE CURTAINS, CUBICLE CURTAINS: Kite's Draperies



Dr. Clotilde P. Garcia Library

PROJECT Dr. Clotilde P. Garcia Library, Corpus Christi

CLIENT City of Corpus Christi and Corpus Christi ISD

ARCHITECT WKMC Architects

DESIGN TEAM Bill Wilson, FAIA; Margaret Brown; Aleisha Kolb, Assoc. AIA; Alva Pulido, Assoc. AIA; Bob Otto

CONTRACTOR The DLP Group

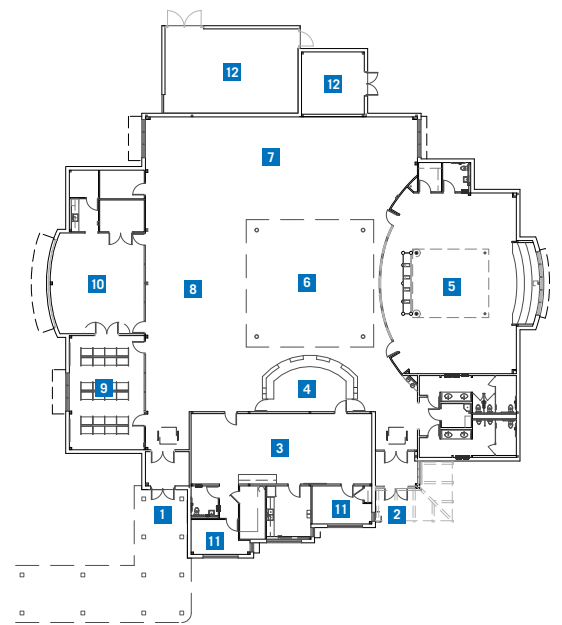
CONSULTANTS Bass & Welch (civil); Jaster-Quintanilla Austin (structural); Stridde, Callins & Associates (MEP); Gignac Landscape Architecture (landscape)

PHOTOGRAPHER Jud Haggard Photography

RESOURCES **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Alamo Concrete Products; **MASONRY UNITS:** Acme; **UNIT MASONRY WALL ASSEMBLIES:** Headwaters Construction Materials; **GLASS BLOCK:** Pittsburgh Corning; **CARVED BRICK:** Acme; **BRICK ARTIST:** Molly Merkel; **METAL MATERIALS:** Nucor-Vulcraft; **STRUCTURAL STEEL:** Modern Machine Shop; **COLD FORMED METAL:** Dietrich Metal Framing; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK:** Imperial Mill & Fixtures; **LAMINATES:** Neva-mar; **WATER REPELLANTS:** The Euclid Chemical Co.; **BUILDING INSULATION:** Icynene (Enersave Systems); **ROOF AND DECK INSULATION:** Atlas Roofing; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Soprema; **METAL ROOFING:** MBCI; **JOINT SEALANTS:** BASF; **FIBERGLASS DOORS AND FRAMES:** Chem-Pruf Door Co.; **EXTERIOR ENTRANCES AND GLAZED CURTAINWALL:** Vistawall; **PLASTIC GLAZING:** Kalwall (Griesenbeck Architectural Products); **AUTOMATIC DOOR OPENERS:** Horton Automatics; **TILE:** Earthwerks; **ACOUSTICAL AND METAL CEILINGS:** Armstrong; **LAMINATE FLOORING:** Alloc Commercial; **PAINT:** ICI; **SPECIAL COATINGS:** Zolatone; **VINYL COMPOSITION TILE:** Mannington; **CARPET:** Shaw, Interface; **LETTERS AND PLAQUES:** The Southwell Co.; **INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SIGNAGE:** Corpus Christi Stamp Works; **TOILET ACCESSORIES:** American Specialties; **FIRE EXTINGUISHER CABINETS:** Larsen's; **BOOK DROP:** American Book Return (Crossroad Specialties); **BOOK SECURITY SYSTEM:** 3M; **BOOK STACKS:** Montel; **SHADES:** Draper (Service Shade Shop)

Designed by WKMC Architects in Corpus Christi, the Dr. Clotilde P. Garcia Library was built through a partnership between Corpus Christi ISD and the City of Corpus Christi to engage both students and the general public. The main concepts behind the design are conservation of the natural environment and education about ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico. Those messages are conveyed in artworks such as an interactive marine life mural donated by the Harte Research Institute and etched glass donated by the Wallace Family that depicts sea life. The 12,000-sf library was built next to an existing middle school, using similar materials and brick colors. Inside, an abundance of natural light creates a warm and welcoming environment, with separate entrances for students and the public. The stacks accommodate up to 70,000 volumes. The student section includes a computer room for the neighboring Kaffie Middle School. On the opposite side of the building is the children's area with tiered seating for story time and tables for arts and crafts. The adult lounge/reading areas are tucked into corners and away from student/children activities. A community room with an attached coffee bar was included, available to the public for holding meetings after hours. Built for approximately \$2.9 million, the library opened on Jan. 11, 2009. The project was recognized for excellence in all six criteria of the 2009 Exhibit of School Architecture co-sponsored by the Texas Association of School Administrators and the Texas Association of School Boards.

SUSAN BUTLER



- FIRST FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 STUDENT ENTRANCE
 - 2 PUBLIC ENTRANCE
 - 3 WORK ROOM
 - 4 CIRCULATION DESK
 - 5 CHILDREN'S LIBRARY
 - 6 ADULT STUDY
 - 7 ADULT STACKS
 - 8 YOUNG ADULT STACKS
 - 9 YOUNG ADULT STUDY
 - 10 MEETING ROOM
 - 11 OFFICE
 - 12 MECHANICAL

Attaining A/E/C Market Prominence

Research reveals successful strategies for long-term competitive edge

By JOE M. POWELL

ACHIEVING A POSITION OF MARKET PROMINENCE is undoubtedly the holy grail of business performance. It's actually a more powerful experience than managing to dominate a market for a period of time. Market dominance is typically an exciting, albeit brief, experience usually demanding a hefty modicum of chance. Market prominence, on the other hand, connotes an imposing position that endures. It isn't luck. It can't be achieved by commercializing the latest fad. You don't get there by simply being in the right place at the right time. It belongs solely to those companies that consistently and repetitively do the right things, and it can be made to last for generations.

I share this conclusion having researched A/E/C market competitiveness at the Rice University Building Institute, an interdisciplinary collaboration of academic, industry, and community leaders. Here, we have been looking at the critical issues facing the industries responsible for designing, constructing, and managing the built environment. We have been interested in the observable fact of market prominence in the A/E/C industry for quite some time, and over the past four years, we have translated our general interest into a specific learning opportunity.

THE CHARACTERISTICS WE MEASURED TO IDENTIFY MARKET LEADERS:

NAME RECOGNITION – Ask the major participants in any market segment and they tend to repetitively mention the same names.

EXPERTISE RECOGNITION – Market leaders are invariably successful at attaching, in the minds of major repetitive buyers, qualities associated with advanced expertise and performance, whether or not the expertise actually exists.

PREMIUM PRICING – Buyers honestly believe they're going to get more value from market leaders and are typically willing to pay for it.

PREFERENTIAL COMPETITIVE TREATMENT – In a competitive sales arena, clients often allow market leaders to skip the qualifications stage of the competition and go directly to the short list.

PRESTIGE AMONG EMPLOYEES – Survey professionals in any defined market and ask them about the best places to work. You will find a high correlation between market prominence and desirable work environments.

As a result of this research, we have developed a dozen strategies A/E/C firms can look to for increasing their competitiveness now and into the future. (See sidebar: "12 Strategies for Increased Competitiveness"). Of these 12 tactics, we'll take a closer look at three—establishing customer intimacy, using persistent branding, and capturing category ownership.



Customer Intimacy

The issue here is pretty simple. The path to higher value, more prestige, and more revenue for any company goes right through the practice of increased customer intimacy. The key is asking better questions of the right people and being willing to reshape a firm's offerings to respond to the articulated and, even more to the point, the unarticulated needs of major repetitive buyers.

In a highly competitive environment, the object is to differentiate. This simply cannot be done if a competitive strategy is based on the same information used by one's competitors. The last thing we are looking for is a fair fight. We must base our competitive behavior on information no one else has. So how do we get it?

We began our research of this issue by asking a collection of corporate facility owners in upper management a pointed question: "When considering a new facility, we know that you describe to your design team what your company is about and what your goals are for the new building. But do you discuss the details of your most basic corporate strategies with your architects, engineers, or builders?"

We got a resounding no.

WHY? THREE REASONS WERE MOST OFTEN PROVIDED:

1. They don't understand what I'm talking about.
2. They don't care because it's not necessary for them to understand the intricacies of our various strategies in order to design and build a new building.
3. This information is proprietary and there is no advantage to shar-

12 Strategies for Increased Competitiveness

Predicting the future, no matter how much data you have, is a dicey proposition. Nonetheless, Rice University Building Institute's work in this area would be largely useless if we couldn't provide insight into how future market leaders are likely to acquire prominence.

Conventional wisdom tells us that yesterday's leading A/E/C firms achieved their positions by consistently applying three practices:

Aggressive personal networking

Effective competitive sales

Consistently performing as promised

Today's game is more complex. We believe there are 12 performance characteristics, each requiring its own executable strategy, that will be essential to consistently outperforming the competition.

1 INSPIRE WITH VISION. Vision-driven companies attract better employees, function with greater purpose, and are more adept at holding the attention of high-value clients.

2 LEAD WITH VALUES. Companies that genuinely nurture a culture of well-developed values are more effective in the marketplace.

3 FOCUS COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS. Distractions are everywhere. We find that the fourth leading cause of failure among ventures less than five years old is a lack of competitiveness focus.

4 CAPTURE CATEGORY OWNERSHIP. Dominating a market category, even temporarily, can be handsomely profitable. Tomorrow's market leaders will know how to shape new categories and declare ownership.

5 USE PERSISTENT BRANDING. Branding has been studied for years and yet few companies in the A/E/C industry regularly exploit its power.

6 CREATE MARKETING BREAKTHROUGHS. Tomorrow's market leaders will develop the capacity to repeatedly win projects for which they are not the most qualified competitor.

continued on page 69

ing it with people who can't materially help us execute it.

Let's recap. When the topic is business strategies that motivate building strategies, many major repetitive buyers feel that individuals in the A/E/C industry don't understand, don't care, and can't help.

HOW WILL THE NEXT GENERATION OF MARKET LEADERS OVERCOME THESE THREE OBJECTIONS?

LEARN — For each category in which they compete, we must learn the industry, their vocabulary, and its culture.

ACCESS — In-depth discussions with the wrong people are useless. We must gain access to senior decision makers by communicating the ability to materially advance a specific set of high-value goals. This won't be possible if the client thinks we simply want to sell them services. Access to busy decision makers will only occur when they believe we understand their critical issues and can help them get where they want to be.

ENGAGE — Using the prospective client's language and culture, future market leaders must engage them in conversations about the detailed business conundrums in which they currently function. In order to do this, we demonstrate dexterity with the issues the client finds most compelling.

INTERPRET — These conversations, when carefully dissected, will contain seedling ideas that have the capacity to grow into more valuable services. Practically all explorations of business strategy disclose impacts on the built environment.

RETHINK — Armed with a new and deeper perception of our best clients' struggles, we should be able to design approaches that describe how our knowledge of design and building can actually be part of their strategic business solutions.

PROPOSE — It is now time to make our case. It should begin with a clear restatement of the strategic business issues that we understand the client to be facing, explained in their jargon. Next, we describe how the built environment is one of the weapons that senior management can use to attack their strategic business opportunities.

DEMONSTRATE — Sooner or later, someone is going to give us the chance to perform. And when that happens, we must not only document our process and relevant outcomes but supply objective metrics to support our value proposition.

BRAND — When successful new service extensions occur and market category definitions are effectively redefined, we must immediately brand our victories. That means creating a name for the new approach, perhaps with a registered trademark, and making certain everyone in our targeted audience knows about it. What could possibly be more fun than reshaping an existing market segment, declaring ownership, and using the process to create a new national or international presence?

Persistent Branding

Whether you like it or not, your company has a brand. It has created a complex amalgam of impressions on the constituencies with which it deals:

past clients, current clients, current employees, potential employees, industry leaders, community leaders, etc. The branding phenomenon, therefore, is guaranteed to occur, so the only question is whether to let it occur haphazardly or manage the process purposefully.

If we were teaching a class on the persuasive influence of branding, we wouldn't use many examples from the A/E/C community. Research and experience show that only the largest and most sophisticated firms produce any sort of serious attempt at branding their services. This means that many competent, well-regarded companies are leaving a powerful competitive weapon sitting around unused.

The good news is that if you have a bright, energetic venture and want to slam it into fast forward, your competitors seem perfectly willing to step aside and give you unfettered access to branding, a competitive implement shown to work handsomely in other industries.

In architecture, engineering, and construction, the problem is not that we don't deliver on the promises inherent in our brands; the problem is that we don't have well-developed brands to begin with.

For the past 20 years we have spent a great deal of energy thinking about how firms can best create and maintain effective brands. Recently, however, we see the game changing. Two factors have greatly impacted our views:

1. **MARKET SEGMENT SPECIALIZATION** — We are all aware that major buyers no longer search for good, well-regarded architects, engineers, and builders. They want specialists—companies that have amassed substantial expertise in precisely the kind of project the client is trying to create.
2. **GLOBALIZATION** — Today, many firms are required to perform on two stages at the same time: They must present themselves as extensive in reach, with access to global resources, and at the same time demonstrate dexterity with local knowledge, contacts, customs, and regulations.

These realities give rise to the necessity of two separate but equally important branding programs: company-level branding and service-level branding.

Company-level branding concerns issues such as public image, reputation, stature, and market prominence. Your message here is meant to be targeted at the business community in general, not only the firms you specifically target but all other firms with whom they do business. Service-level branding, on the other hand, should comprise a series of messages that differentiate your offerings in each market category in which you compete. Obviously, buyers in different categories have different concerns, and you must speak directly to those concerns with clear, repetitive messages designed to distinguish your processes and products. In service-level branding, generalized messages are a waste of time. It is imperative to pinpoint the ideas that will powerfully grab the attention of specific major repetitive buyers.

SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF A BRANDING EFFORT ARE BRAND ESSENCE, BRAND MEANING, AND DELIVERING THE BRAND MESSAGE.

- “Brand essence” applies to the simplest expression of a brand's promise. Humans don't process complexity very well and can't be expected to respond to any message that isn't clear, simply stated, and emotionally appealing. When considering the essence of your brand, forget the intellectual stuff and focus on emotion.

- What's the difference between a brand that actually possesses a relevant essence and one that simply contains a clever but hollow slogan? Meaning. The test is simple. Write the essence of your brand on a piece of paper and show it, without explanation, to audiences you care about. Ask them what it means. If they can't answer or if everyone offers a different response, you don't have a brand. You have a slogan.
- When it comes to delivering the brand message, the least expensive and most powerful technique for promulgating a brand in the A/E/C industry is through your employees. They are the ones, after all, responsible for delivering the customer experience you want. Train them, evaluate them, and publically reward them.

Category Ownership

The A/E/C industry worldwide functions within a complex tangle of market segments. The object of the game is to own one or more of these segments. But most companies compete within existing categories that are already populated by prominent firms. This is like choosing to play another company's game, by their rules, on their home field, in front of their fans. You're going to do a lot of losing.

The fix is simple: Modify the categories in a way that emphasizes the strengths of your company and diminishes those of your competitors. This means shrinking some, stretching some, reconfiguring some, and shortly thereafter, planting your company flag squarely in the center and declaring ownership.

I won't bore you with conclusions of which you are already aware, so here's an overview of what is considered conventional wisdom about the process of reconfiguring market segments:

- Market segments exist because they make sense in the minds of most buyers. You must deal with them.
- Competing in established project categories against entrenched, established firms is a bad idea.
- Small, more energetic companies are typically better at ferreting out and defining new categories and approaches.
- Once new categories are illuminated, larger firms are typically better at scaling up and commercializing the new idea.
- Attempting to invent entire new industries is an incredibly difficult task. In my opinion, it's better left to others. The more effective approach is to work within existing market segments and modify them to your advantage. (Successful modification strategies may include applying an existing service in a new sphere; defining process as a category; identifying an underserved market segment; creating a joint venture between an innovator and a scaler; researching and publishing; specializing one level deeper.)

Beyond Buildings

I believe that next generation of A/E/C companies to achieve market prominence will do so by repositioning themselves in the hearts and minds of major repetitive buyers. Currently, most clients often see us as being interested only in designing and building buildings. This is unfortunate.

Tomorrow's single most powerful differentiator will be the ability to be perceived as a firm with people who use their knowledge of the built environment to address and improve business and cultural problems. It's

7 EXPLOIT COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE. The next generation of market leaders will operate with more accurate information about the competitive landscape.

8 LAUNCH A COMPETITIVE CULTURE. The responsibility for tracking the competition, searching for new opportunities, and nurturing a competitive advantage must become the quest of every key employee.

9 ESTABLISH CUSTOMER INTIMACY. In a highly competitive environment, new market leaders must create techniques that will illuminate the unarticulated needs of high-value customers.

10 ACQUIRE AND NURTURE HIGH-IMPACT PEOPLE. Aspiring market leaders must create programs to identify, recruit, and manage people who are worth more than their pay.

11 DEVELOP A CULTURE OF OBSESSIVE IMPROVEMENT. Self-congratulatory ventures don't long survive. The most successful competitors institutionalize the process of constant evaluation and growth.

12 FORMULATE NEW STRATEGIC ALLIANCES. In the next several years, differentiation will be hard to achieve within the boundaries of any individual discipline. The next generation will create more efficient project delivery methods by exploiting the power of interdisciplinary collaboration.

not just about the buildings. It's about the impact those buildings have on the people and process that take place within them.

How many principals of architectural, engineering, or construction firms can sit down across a conference table from a corporate client's CFO or CEO and have an intelligent conversation about the corporation's diverse collection of business strategies? And next, explain how the built environment can positively impact the chance of successfully executing those strategies? Today, not many. Tomorrow, hopefully all of them.

Joe M. Powell is the executive director of the Rice University Building Institute (www.ricebuildinginstitute.org). He has 30 years of experience combining architecture, corporate strategic planning, and organizational behavior. A registered architect, Powell earned his undergraduate degree in environmental design and his master's degree in architecture from Texas A&M University.

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Vertical Challenge

A 'perfect mess' at Children's Museum of Houston

by EDWARD RICHARDSON

MY FOUR-YEAR-OLD NIECE, JOCELYN, compares them to “those pads that frogs jump on” and likes to imagine herself as some sort of energized amphibian as she climbs, leaps, and hops her way to the top. Her description is in reference to the new climbing installation or “climber” at the Children's Museum of Houston's recently completed expansion (by Jackson & Ryan Architects). The climber, designed and constructed by Spencer Luckey, frames an almost constant ingress of squealing, gleeful adventurers as they navigate the varied vertical pathways rising from the basement level of the addition. Boasting more than 70,000 linear feet of cable, 120,000 ring connectors, and 130 levels, the intricate assemblage plays a central role in the new exhibition space at the museum.

Experientially, the installation supports two contrasting modes of vertical circulation for children and adult observers. The children's sequence spirals up 30 feet through a web of curved plywood disks, leaning steel columns, and steel cable netting. The climbing disks, conceived by Luckey as a series of abstract silver dollars suspended in mid-air, are clad with an underbelly of mill-finish aluminum. The metal surfaces reflect natural light down to the basement from the large exterior windows, as well as assume, in a chameleon-like fashion, the purples and blues of the surrounding ambient lighting. A parallel sequence for adults allows parents to visually track their child's progress through an integrated switchback stair. Toward the center of each run, the stair layout swells to offer more space for parents to stand and observe while not creating traffic jams.

This successful balance of fun, function, and beauty epitomizes much of the unorthodox design work of Spencer Luckey and his father, Tom Luckey. Based in New Haven, Conn., the Luckeys are both trained as architects and over the past 20 years have developed their own unique niche market providing innovative climbing sculptures to children's museums across the nation. From design to engineering and fabrication, the structures represent both the challenges and rewards of designing what Spencer Luckey refers to as “a perfect mess.”

Edward Richardson lives in Austin where he works with Miró Rivera Architects.



PHOTOS BY PAUL FINKEL OF PISTON DESIGN