

DART CENTRAL STATION: STUNNING AND SUSTAINABLE **ISU: IMPRESSIVE NEW COMPLEXES** **WELLNESS CENTER GOES UP**
C.Y. STEPHENS: CURTAIN RISES AGAIN **CEDAR RAPIDS LIBRARY RE-EMERGES** **ART THAT WORKS WITH ARCHITECTURE**
SPRING 2014

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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AIA IOWA



Bodies in Motion

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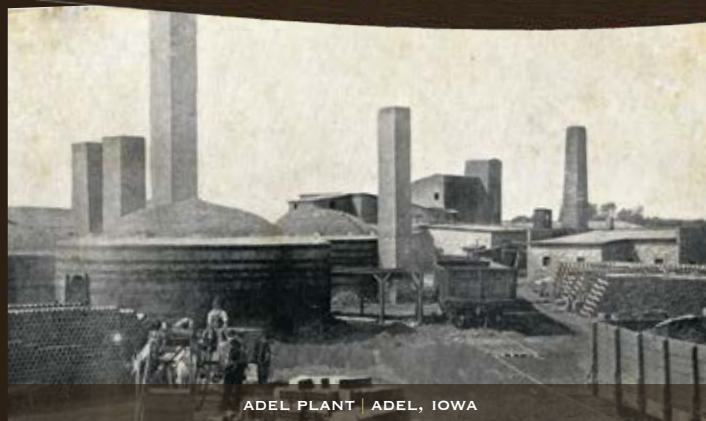
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editor's letter



Welcome!

Buildings by their very nature are static things designed to resist motion caused by the earth, wind, and elements. Yet the most important “things” a building contains—the people who use it—often require a freedom of motion, movement, and expression that is in complete contrast to the rigidity of construction.

Crafted by skillful architects, the best buildings manage to embrace this contrast of internal motion and static envelope and create spaces that are vibrant, dynamic, and harmonious with the movement within. In this issue of *Iowa Architect*, we look at these bodies in motion as an expression of successful architectural design.

The best buildings manage to embrace this contrast of internal motion and static envelope.

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Editor, *Iowa Architect*

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this space cooks

WORDS: TOM PERRY
IMAGES: ELLE LACHER PHOTOGRAPHY

As someone who loves to cook, Alessandra Meschini would wish for a larger cooktop or a bread-baking oven were she designing a kitchen for herself. But the appliances and space are ideally functional for her Des Moines business, Cooking With Alessandra, which shares the secrets of Italian cuisine with customers at least four times a week.

"I think it is better for the classes to have a standard kitchen because people can see that if I can do it on this, they can

do it too," Meschini says, noting that her only add-on might have been an above-the-sink dish-drying rack, or scolapiatti, as it is called in her native Italy.

An open stairway leading to a loft living area cuts into the space between her kitchen and her teaching area, where classes of six to 12 guests meet around a long table for hands-on lessons. It is this area of roughly 300 square feet that Meschini sought to modify after she opened in 2011, taking aim at the drab walls and high ceilings.

The room was brightened with spotlights and new pendant light fixtures.

To add warmth, the walls were painted an ivory white. A false ceiling was lowered over the doorway from the sidewalk to mitigate some of the cavernous feeling of a room with 22-foot-high ceilings.

"This space is really about people coming together to take pleasure in the food and the company," Meschini says. "It should be efficient but still feel cozy."

For more information on Alessandra's classes, go to cookingwithalessandra.com.

Tom Perry is a food and restaurant writer based in Des Moines.

Curtain Rises on New Era at Iowa's Building of the Century

WORDS: TAMARA ROOD **IMAGES:** WYETH LYNCH, COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY MUSEUMS

C.Y. Stephens Auditorium at Iowa State University, named Iowa's Building of the Century by AIA Iowa, is soon to debut the results of an ambitious textile conservation project: the cleaning, repairing, and re-rigging of the auditorium's iconic main theater curtain, a unique work of art designed for C.Y. Stephens Auditorium by artist and sculptor Mukai Ryokichi.

Weighing more than 2,500 pounds and measuring 80 by 35 feet, the curtain has been the perfect complement to the building's Brutalist architecture ever since it was installed in 1969, after being woven in Japan at what was then one of the world's largest looms. But after 45 years and more than 3,500 curtain calls—with each raising and lowering of the curtain done by stagehands using a counterweight system—it was also in urgent need of attention.

"Just like the human body, regardless of the care taken, there are negative impacts resulting from age, gravity, and usage," says Mark North, general manager of the Iowa State Center.

"The curtain backing, webbing, and grommets that provide the structural strength to suspend the 2,500-pound curtain from the fly system have deteriorated. Replacing these items will ensure the curtain remains in the air for another 50 years for audiences to appreciate," says North.

Named Giniro-no-kigou, translated as Silver Code, the artwork was donated by J.W. "Bill" and Dorothy Fisher, after Bill Fisher was inspired by seeing another curtain from the same artist and mill during business travel in Japan. Now it's being reborn during an intensive months-long conservation process funded by a partnership between the Iowa State Center; the Iowa State University Office of the Senior Vice President for Business and Finance; University Museums, Iowa State University; and private donors.

University Museums textile conservation fellow Kate Greder has been working on the project since August 2013 under the oversight of Lynette Pohlman, University Museums director, and Beth McLaughlin, senior conservator from the Midwest Art



Above Left: Stephens Auditorium curtain *Silver Code* establishes an atmosphere of anticipation, reaching the farthest seats of the auditorium. The 80-by-35-foot curtain, woven in Kyoto, Japan, utilized seven weavers working side by side for four months. **Above Right:** Kate Greder, textile conservation fellow, carefully recaptures *Silver Code*'s original shine, one fiber at a time.

Conservation Center in Minneapolis. Greder also has assistance from two ISU students. By May 2014, the tapestry should be restored to its original glory.

Working from a scaffold with a brush and small vacuum, Greder has been painstakingly brushing and removing decades of dust and debris from the curtain's face. She is also researching the artist, the Kawashima Textile Mill in Kyoto where it was loomed, and the Fishers, formerly of Marshalltown, Iowa.

Asked what it's like to work on the same tapestry for months, Greder lights up. "It's a really magnificent feeling to see it come back to life. It's such a great work of art, and I get to stare at it every day as it's transforming." One recent electrifying moment:



discovering the artist's signature woven into the curtain.

In addition to cleaning and repairing the curtain, the conservation will include the installation of an automated lift system. The existing counterweight fly system requires stagehands and takes about 13 seconds to raise or lower the curtain, which is too long for many productions to use it before and after shows. The new system will cut that time in half, allowing many more guests to view this signature work of art in action.

"We're excited that not only will the curtain be restored to its original glory, it will be accessible to a greater number of people who visit Stephens," says North.

For more information, visit museums.iastate.edu. And beginning in May 2014, be sure to look for *Silver Code* the next time you're settling into your seat for a performance at Iowa's Building of the Century.

Tamara Rood is an independent editing and writing professional in Des Moines.

| collected

BIKE HELMET

Breakthrough design drives bicycle airbag helmet.

WORDS: HANNAH GILMAN
IMAGES COURTESY OF HOVDING.COM

You've seen the ads: "This person is wearing a bike helmet." Except they're not—at least not in the traditional sense. Swedish designers Anna Haupt and Terese Alstin dreamed up Hovding, the airbag for cyclists that's drumming up chatter across the world, in an effort to create a helmet that was functional first and fashionable second. The result is a battery-powered collar that deploys entirely around the head and neck like an airbag just milliseconds after the Hovding sensors detect trouble. The groundbreaking helmet, which comes in an array of on-trend designs, is available on hovding.com, and retails for about \$600.



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Airstream Studio

WORDS: HANNAH GILMAN IMAGE: CAROLYN BATES

Big wheels keep on turnin'—and so do big ideas. AIA Vermont's 2012 annual retreat gave way to an innovative proposal when executive director Carol Miklos prompted her members to do a little brainstorming for the Repositioning the AIA initiative. Enter Archistream: A Mobile Design Gallery and Education Center—a fancy name for an Airstream trailer that's set to travel throughout Vermont while promoting programs that advocate local architecture, design, and planning.

AIA Vermont received a \$42,750 grant for the Airstream studio, which allowed them to purchase a 1969 Globe Trotter model that traveled from Castleton to Norwich University in Northfield to be brought to life by a dozen undergraduate architecture students under the watch of assistant professor Tolya Stonorov. Members of AIA Vermont will take the trailer to the streets in the summer of 2014, visiting schools, fairs, and community events to build Vermont-centric design awareness. To learn more, visit aiavt.org.



Left to right: Carol Miklos; Diantha Korzun, AIA; Tom Bachman, AIA; Lisa Rovner, AIA; Diane Gayer, AIA; Cam Featherstonhaugh, Assoc. AIA; Larry Dean, Assoc. AIA; Katie Hill; Maura Wygmans, AIA; Kevin Racek, AIA; and Steve Clark, AIA.



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Jamie Pollard

Architecture and athletics work together to build strong programs.

WORDS: HANNAH GILMAN **IMAGE COURTESY OF** KENDRA PLATHE, IOWA STATE DAILY

Student athletes first, fan experience second—that’s Jamie Pollard’s mantra. Pollard is rapidly approaching the mark of nine wildly successful seasons as Iowa State University’s director of athletics.

“Driven, organized, purposeful, ethical,” says Chris Jorgensen, senior associate athletic director for facilities, planning, and management. That’s how he describes Pollard. “I think he has a very good idea of who he is. He knows what his values are and makes sure those are reflected in the decisions he makes.”

Pollard, who was raised in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, credits his Midwestern upbringing for his values and success at Iowa State—as do his family and coworkers. “Midwesterners take great pride in working hard and making sure the job gets done right and on time,” says Pollard. “One of the things I learned at an early age and have tried to pass on to my family and the staff at Iowa State is to always do what you say you are going to do. Too many people over-promise and under-deliver. We really try to do the opposite.”

No under-delivering here. The hiring of Coach Fred “The Mayor” Hoiberg brought Hilton Magic back to life and earned the Cyclones a coveted invitation to the Big Dance—twice in three years, no less, with a good look

at a third. Even a less-than-stellar 2013 football season saw record-setting attendance—a whopping 55,000 fans came out for the last home game of the year to watch Iowa State beat Kansas under beloved Coach Paul Rhoads.

They are accomplishments worth gloating about, though Pollard’s wife Ellen says he never would. “He’s extremely hard-working and down to earth,” she says. “He is honest and doesn’t take his position for granted. I think he has done well, given his professional success, staying true to who he is. He has commented to me that many athletic directors wear a coat and tie to football games, but he chooses not to because ‘that’s not who I am.’”

Humility is key, especially in Pollard’s position. In an 18-sport program, Pollard is responsible for the well-being of more than 450 student athletes. One could argue that Pollard—who has four children—really has more like 450 children. His goal is to be as involved as possible with each of Iowa State’s teams. “I think it’s important that our student athletes know the leaders of the department care about them and are knowledgeable about their respective sport,” says Pollard.

“Jamie’s relationship with the student athletes and coaches may be his favorite part of the job,” says Ellen. “When you meet [the student athletes], help recruit them to Iowa State, and continue to get to know them, it makes it that much sweeter to see them succeed in competition and in the classroom.”

That said, his role behind the scenes requires that he spend more time on the business end of things than

facilities—most notably the Cyclone Sports Complex, which serves the track and field, soccer, and softball programs, and the Bergstrom Football Training Facility, which acts as a one-stop shop for the football team. They are two of many projects that wouldn’t have been possible without Pollard and his staff, and perhaps not as successful without a few graduates from Iowa State’s prestigious architecture program. They like to keep things local, after all.

“The architecture program at Iowa State has produced many outstanding professionals who work in the sports industry,” says Pollard. “Whenever we have a project, almost every team that bids on the work is able to do so with Iowa State alums on their team.”

“It’s important to us that they have a feel for our culture, both athletically and the campus as a whole. We love working with alums and believe they bring a unique passion to the project,” says Jorgensen. “It’s important from an athletics perspective, too, that the passion is reflected in the architecture.”

The result is an on-campus energy felt by Cyclones of the past, present, and future.

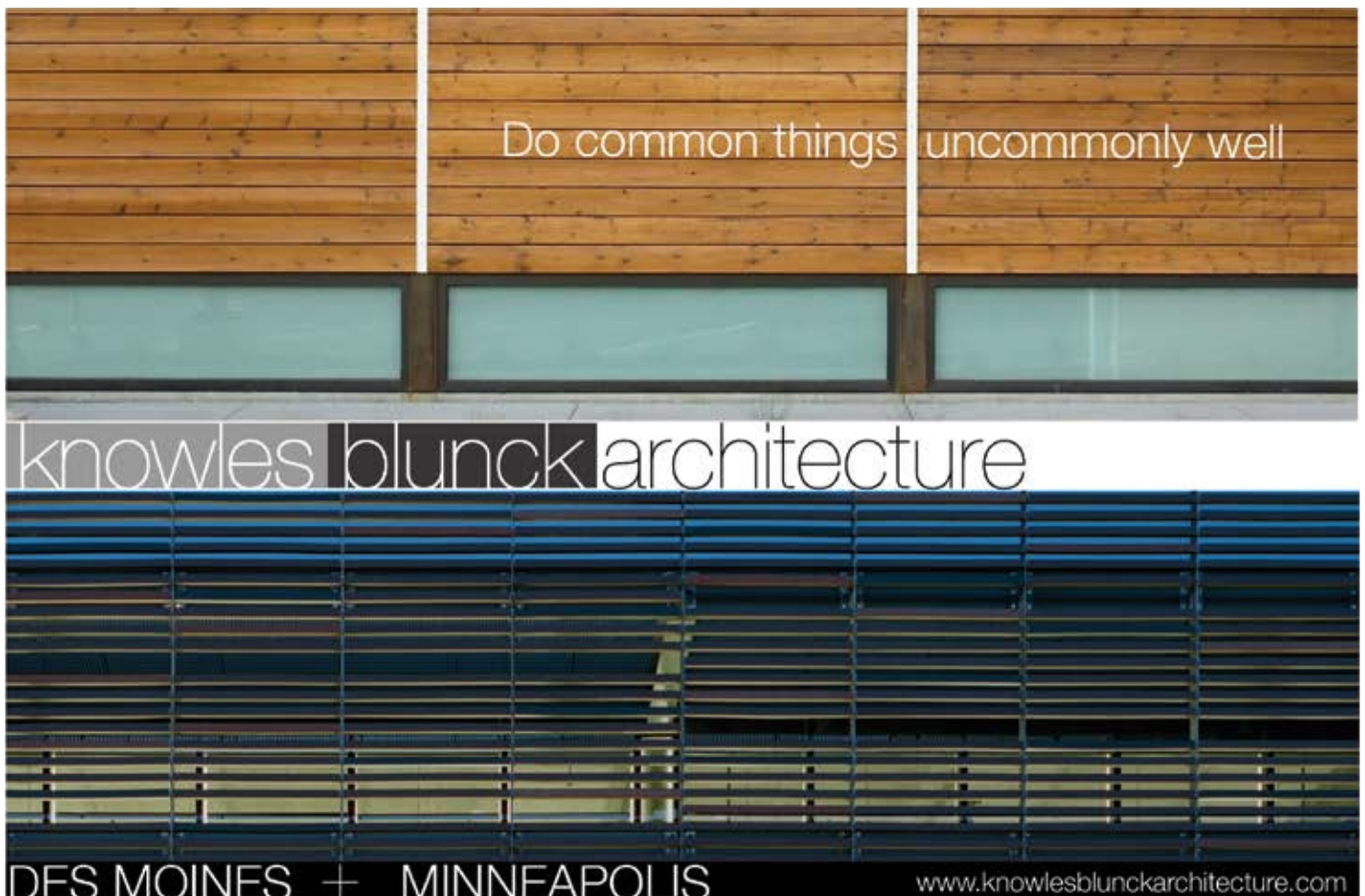
Hannah Gilman is a graduate of Iowa State University and works as a freelance writer and graphic designer in Seattle.

The architecture program at Iowa State has produced many outstanding professionals who work in the sports industry.

JAMIE POLLARD, IOWA STATE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

with the student athletes, leading the program by “setting goals and inspiring everyone to work together to achieve those goals.” Goals such as brand new facilities that make being a student and an athlete as easy as possible.

In the near-decade Pollard has been at Iowa State, the program has invested more than \$100 million in



on the boards

Projects
In Progress



Des Moines Social Club



Des Moines / Slingshot Architecture

Since 2007, the Des Moines Social Club (DMSC) has been providing a much needed and unique service to the greater Des Moines area. Its mission is to use the arts as a catalyst to create community engagement and build art institutions that foster social change and revitalize cities. The 7-by-10-foot rented office space was no longer adequate to accomplish those ambitious goals. So for the past year, Slingshot has been working with the DMSC building committee to design the conversion of the historical downtown fire station headquarters and shop building into their new home. The rejuvenated facility will have classrooms, office space, art galleries, a culinary school, a black-box theater, a restaurant, a bar, and a rooftop patio. The final product is the complex combination of flexibility, art integration, practicality, energy efficiency, and historical appreciation.



South Dakota State University Visual Arts Facility



Brookings, South Dakota / BNIM Architects and Koch Hazard

The visual arts department at South Dakota State University is a growing curriculum in need of a new home. Development of space to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration in a new facility that serves as a warehouse for creating art was the primary goal. The proposed layout incorporates a transparent link, connecting two existing brick buildings and creating a strong juxtaposition between new and old. These existing buildings will be transformed into a raw environment for the production of sculpture, ceramics, and print. The link will house linearly organized studio spaces for drawing, painting, graphic design, and computer animation. This layout minimizes corridors and allows the work of the college to be revealed to the public.

Formal galleries and informal critique space will be distributed throughout the facility, acting as collaboration nodes for students and faculty. Outdoor work yards and an exterior gallery space for large-scale works of art will be framed by the buildings.



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WORDS: ROB WHITEHEAD, AIA, LEED AP
IMAGES: DIMENSION IMAGES
ARCHITECT: RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

reforming recreation

Iowa State's new student recreation building is centered on campus quality of life.

A college campus is always in motion, and its students are rarely still. In this surrogate village, certain buildings have only a particular set of uses and users, so students are constantly moving around to find the various places, spaces, and faces that offer them the knowledge, rest, sustenance, and entertainment they need—ideally a little bit of each, conveniently offered in various locations, throughout their day.

Supportive campus designers seek to enhance student quality of life by giving an architectural expression to these needs, and sometimes, when the program, location, and experiential qualities are right, a building becomes more than just the sum of its requisite parts and evolves into a central component of the student experience and campus identity.

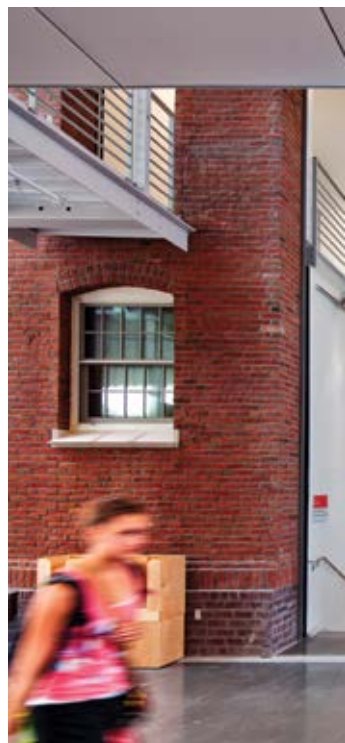
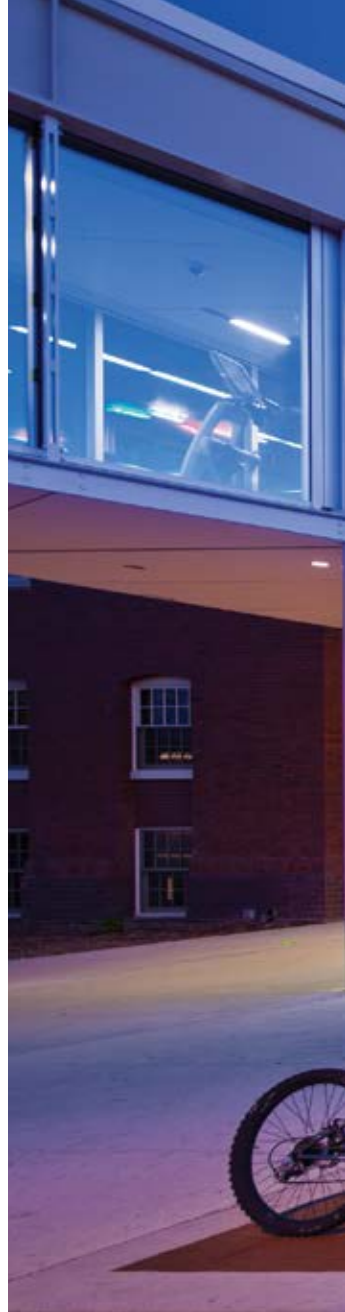
Traditionally, student unions have been the main places on campus to find such a diversity of activities and participants, but over the last 30 years, recreational centers have emerged as an important alternative gathering space—albeit one that now literally encourages students to stay moving. These facilities are more than just places for play—they help inspire and educate students in an

effort to instill important lessons about healthy living habits and wellness.

According to Jeff Schaub, AIA, project architect for RDG, “An active and thriving student recreation center is the very life blood in any contemporary college setting. It is a predominant building of importance and is frequently the first stop on prospective student tours. We believe that it is, in fact, one of the most important quality-of-life facilities on a campus.”

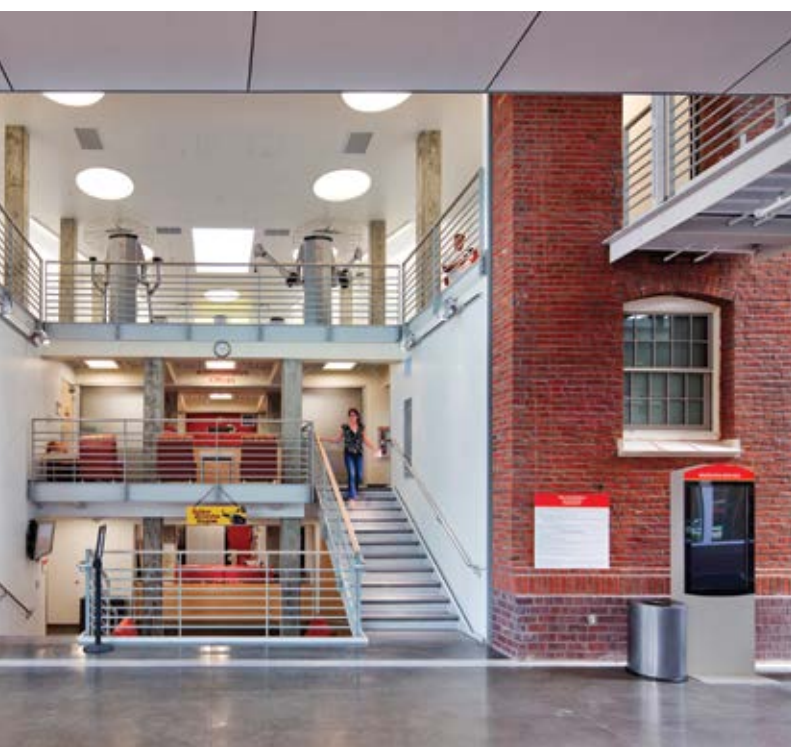
The rising importance of recreation centers on collegiate campuses mirrors many larger societal interests in healthy lifestyles and active entertainment options. Additionally, as a result of the coinciding climbs in both tuitions and enrollments, the perception of students as both participants in, and consumers of, their learning and living environments now influences the design and use of many campus buildings. Simply put, students want a great rec center.

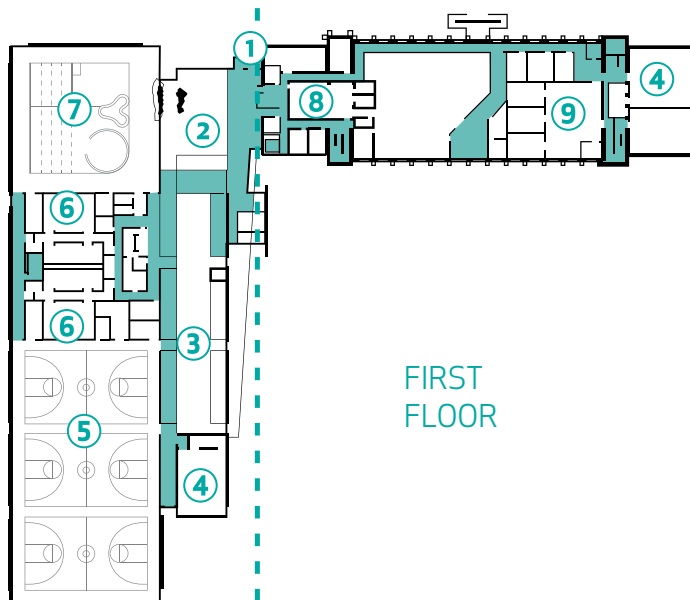
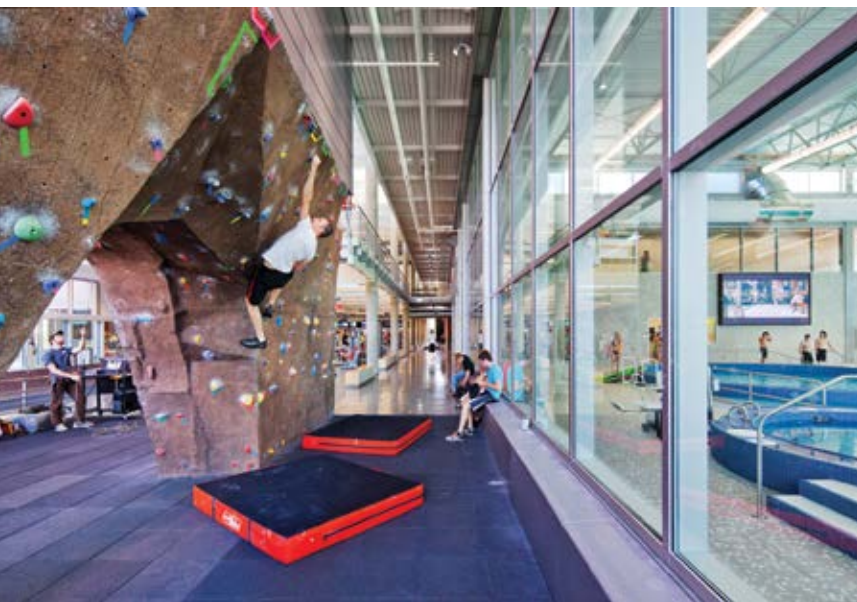
Not having a contemporary recreation center adjacent to Friley Hall, Iowa State's largest dormitory housing complex, had not been ideal. While still functional, the nearby historical State Gym and outdated Beyer Hall paled in size, usage, and amenities compared to the east campus's



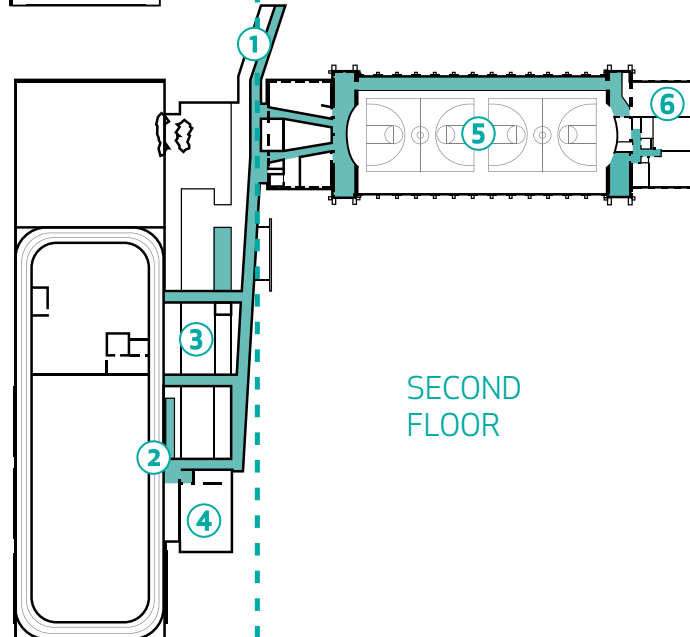


The building massing and material choices help make the entry sequence into the building, inviting, exciting, and easily understood. **Bottom Left:** A portion of the old State Gym facade is opened up to the main entry location, serving as a symbolic and functional connection between the new and old buildings. **Bottom Right:** This light-filled skywalk space is used for more than just a connection between buildings; it is a consistently active exercise space where students can see out, and in turn, also be seen.





FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

ADDITION

RENOVATION

The floor plans show the clear arrangement of spaces. Large-volume recreational spaces (both new and old) are placed on either side of the central atrium circulation space.

First Floor 1. Main Entry 2. Climbing Wall 3. Cardio/Weight Area 4. Multipurpose Activity Area 5. Gymnasium 6. Locker Rooms 7. Recreational Pool 8. Outdoor Recreation 9. Club Sports
Second Floor 1. Skywalk to Beyer Hall 2. Jogging Track 3. Cardio/Weight Area 4. Multipurpose Activity Area 5. Gymnasium 6. Fitness Suite

Upper Left: A variety of recreational options are opened up to each other in the large, light-filled atrium. **Above:** The interior of natatorium space shows how large-scale recreational activities can occur alongside the more casual and social facility users.



Lied Recreation Center. Happily for Iowa State University, this problem fueled a student-led and sponsored referendum to improve and consolidate the recreational facilities on the western side of campus.

As one might expect from one of the nation's most experienced campus recreational facility design specialists, RDG's proposed design scheme was organizationally effective: The three project components (the original 1913 State Gym, Beyer Hall, and the new addition to State Gym) would all be connected to act as one recreation facility.

The building's large-scale gymnasium and natatorium spaces were aligned and arranged along the western portion of the site, leaving an experientially interesting and spatially complex series of open workout rooms running along the eastern portion of the building. These new open spaces become the "connective tissue" that ties all of the buildings together through a multistory glass atrium and an enclosed glass skywalk that extends outside the building, across a busy campus street, over to Beyer Hall. Importantly, this scheme consolidates a single point

of entry for all three buildings, linking them internally, and creating a clearly articulated architectural identity for the recreational complex.

One result of student involvement in newer recreation buildings is the seemingly paradoxical desire to have stringently dimensioned and proportioned workout spaces (e.g., a basketball court, a running track, etc.) alongside much more open and flexible spaces. To help cultivate healthy lifestyle wellness and exercise choices, ISU Recreation Services wanted to provide students with plenty of choices.

Interestingly, however, these choices still needed to be desirable and functional, so finding ways to better connect the body in space, both as a physical act of interaction and as a means of perception and enjoyment, was a profound challenge. “Creating a spatially dynamic interior allows students to visually ‘shop’ the recreation programs and stimulates their participation. The building needs to evoke a sense of student-centered ambiance that is very different than an academic hall,” says Schaub.

RDG looked for ways to enhance the qualities of the architectural spaces beyond their bare essentials—the qualities of light, material, and color provided throughout the building are nearly as varied as the activities they contain. In fact, although the new addition looks simple in plan, it becomes complex with several open interactive spaces that offer a variety of choices for recreational activities.

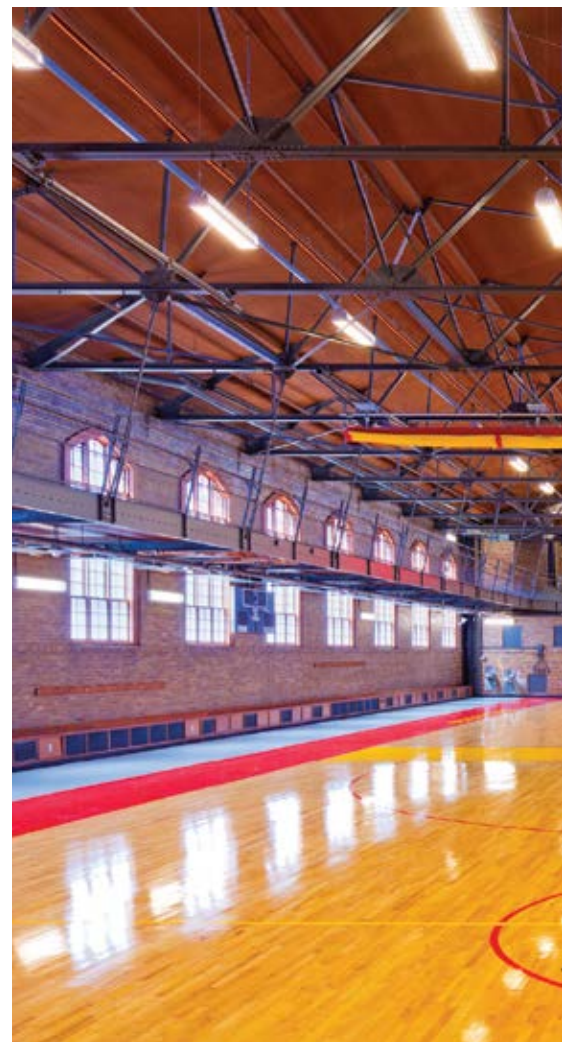
Although the overall project is massive in scale, covering more than 163,000 gross square feet of new and remodeled area, the building is easily navigated and understood. This may be a result of the memorable iconic features such as the elevated running track, the undulating climbing walls in the atrium, or the gigantic video scoreboard television in the pool. Perhaps it is also in thanks to the large-scale windows throughout the building that look out to the rest of campus. This relative transparency of the building allows for a high degree of

natural daylighting to occur throughout the building. This not only helps to stimulate the users in exercising, but it makes recreation a highly social event by allowing students to see and be seen by their peers. Importantly, daylighting also helps to reduce energy usage and supports the larger sustainability goals of the campus and student body.

This well-designed recreation center has dramatically reinforced the mission of the ISU Recreation Services while creating an epicenter for student involvement in social and physical activity. It has brought new life to two older facilities and inspired a massive new influx of student activity. Remarkably, ISU Rec Services estimates that nearly 80% of the total ISU population has used the building between 2012 and 2013.

Ultimately, educational environments should provide opportunities for students to grow as individuals while nurturing an awareness of their importance to a larger collective society—architectural design certainly has a role in encouraging these opportunities. Currently we look for recreation centers to provide opportunities for students to practice teaming, leadership, and collaboration skills while pushing themselves to be motivated, disciplined, and healthy. Sometimes on campus, it’s just fun to keep moving.

Rob Whitehead, AIA, is an assistant professor at Iowa State University Department of Architecture and frequent contributor to Iowa Architect magazine.





Left: The distinctly contemporary expression of the facades for new recreation spaces combines a diverse set of architectural expressions and materials in an attempt to respond to environmental and contextual cues. **Lower Left:** The clear arrangement of structure, light, and volume of the beautifully renovated interior of the original 1913 State Gym. **Lower Right:** An up-close view of the new guardrails shows how basic considerations of code compliance and structural support can be combined to create aesthetically interesting and carefully detailed railing designs.



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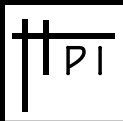
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GREEN MEANS GO

Substance Architecture rises to the challenge, creating a safe, sustainable, stunning addition to Des Moines' southern gateway in DART Central Station.





WORDS: HANNAH GILMAN **IMAGES:** PAUL CROSBY **ARCHITECT:** SUBSTANCE

The idea of mass transit is inherently sustainable, but the efforts of Substance Architecture don't stop there. With a shiny new LEED Platinum certification, Des Moines' DART Central Station is both a beautiful welcome to a burgeoning city and a clean, safe, easily accessible station eagerly serving more than 16,000 daily riders across 19 cities in the Polk County area.

Des Moines is coming to life, and rapidly. It's a city that's received a great deal of attention from national press recently, including the *Today Show*, which dubbed the Iowa capital the "wealthiest city," and *Forbes*, which declared Des Moines the best place for business.

"We have a farmers' market, an arts festival, a music festival—all these things happening downtown, and [the buses] help provide better access to the 19 communities that are served," says Substance's DART Central Station project architect Matt Rodekamp, AIA. "It's really become the central hub for supporting the Des Moines metropolitan area." At 6th and Cherry, the new station, which opened to the public in November 2012, is within walking distance of Court Avenue, Principal Park, and the rest of downtown.

DART, which moved its operations from a dingy bus barn south of downtown and its transit hub from the decaying Walnut Street mall, had a series of charges for Substance. It asked for "a safe, secure, durable, environmentally conscious facility that would be more convenient, more accessible, and more recognizable to the community," says Rodekamp.

With its limited budget, Substance was challenged to create a fashionable and functional building that would house an administrative facility, an indoor waiting area, and room for 15 buses. The end result? A swooping glass structure with a zinc metal wrapper that acts as both the roof of the building and protection for its users.

"We needed materials that were going to last a long time and that required little maintenance, and the zinc metal panels really fit the bill," says Rodekamp. Substance used two different tones of zinc to bring some depth and texture to the design, and let the panels pave the rest of the way.

But not without a little help from the community. The publicly funded project was also, in part, publicly designed. "We had a series of meetings initially, just to get input," says Rodekamp of the public's involvement. "Then we took those ideas, turned them into concepts, and eventually vetted those to the public."

Substance eventually had the citizens of Polk County—including the Des Moines Access Advisory Board, which assists with handicap access—vote on three different concepts, noting which elements were most successful. Substance then took the results, combined the feedback into one main idea, and continued to work toward the final structure that's standing today, keeping sustainability at the forefront of the design process.

Their thoughtful work paid off: DART Central Station was recently certified LEED Platinum, the highest honor of the LEED



Previous Page: The body of DART Central Station slopes upward to blend in with Des Moines' growing skyline and serves as a stunning addition to the city's southern gateway. **Top Left:** A public waiting room equipped with ample seating provides a safe and comfortable area for riders to wait. **Top Right:** Two tones of zinc metal panels bring depth and dimension to the north façade. **Bottom Left:** A reception area serves as a resource for riders to ask questions and gain information about schedules and routes. **Bottom Middle:** Canopies highlight pedestrian walkways while keeping riders safe from elements such as snow, rain, and sun. **Bottom Right:** Substance Architecture's sloping, zinc, and glass transit station helps define Des Moines' skyline while giving riders a clean, safe, easily accessible place to wait.



Rating System given by the U.S. Green Building Council, which serves as a benchmark for leadership in energy efficiency and environmental design, says Rodekamp. Of the 80 points needed to achieve a LEED Platinum rating, DART Central Station received 85, thanks to some noteworthy numbers.

Twenty-eight percent of the materials used to build the station were manufactured regionally—within a 500-mile radius—while 70 geothermal wells that take 55-degree water from the earth help with heating and cooling. More than one million gallons of collected rainwater have been used for tasks such as hosing down bus platforms. The green list goes on and on.

Perhaps more paramount than sustainability, however, was safety. The old Walnut Street Transit Mall, where the buses used to meet for transfer function, had hosted a number of pedestrian

accidents and lacked a general sense of comfort. There wasn't a lot of protection, there were no easily accessible restrooms for bus drivers or riders, and there were challenges with security. That all changed with DART Central Station.

"There have been numerous stories of parents who previously would not have sent their kids on a public transit system in downtown Des Moines because of the lack of safety and security at the Walnut Street Transit Mall," says Rodekamp. "Now they're doing that. There are people watching over that facility, so when students at the end of the school day are transferring to come home, they're in a place where there are actually people watching them rather than on Walnut Street, where there was none of that."

The old Walnut Street Transit Mall—which Rodekamp refers to as "unkempt and tired"—prevented people from wanting to use



public transit. “Now that there’s a known transit facility downtown that can help support both the weekday business and school commuter and the weekend commuter, it’s a different story.”

The new facility features an indoor waiting area complete with a Java Joe’s Coffee House, which makes waiting for the bus a far safer and relaxing experience. Not to mention, it’s far more aesthetically pleasing.

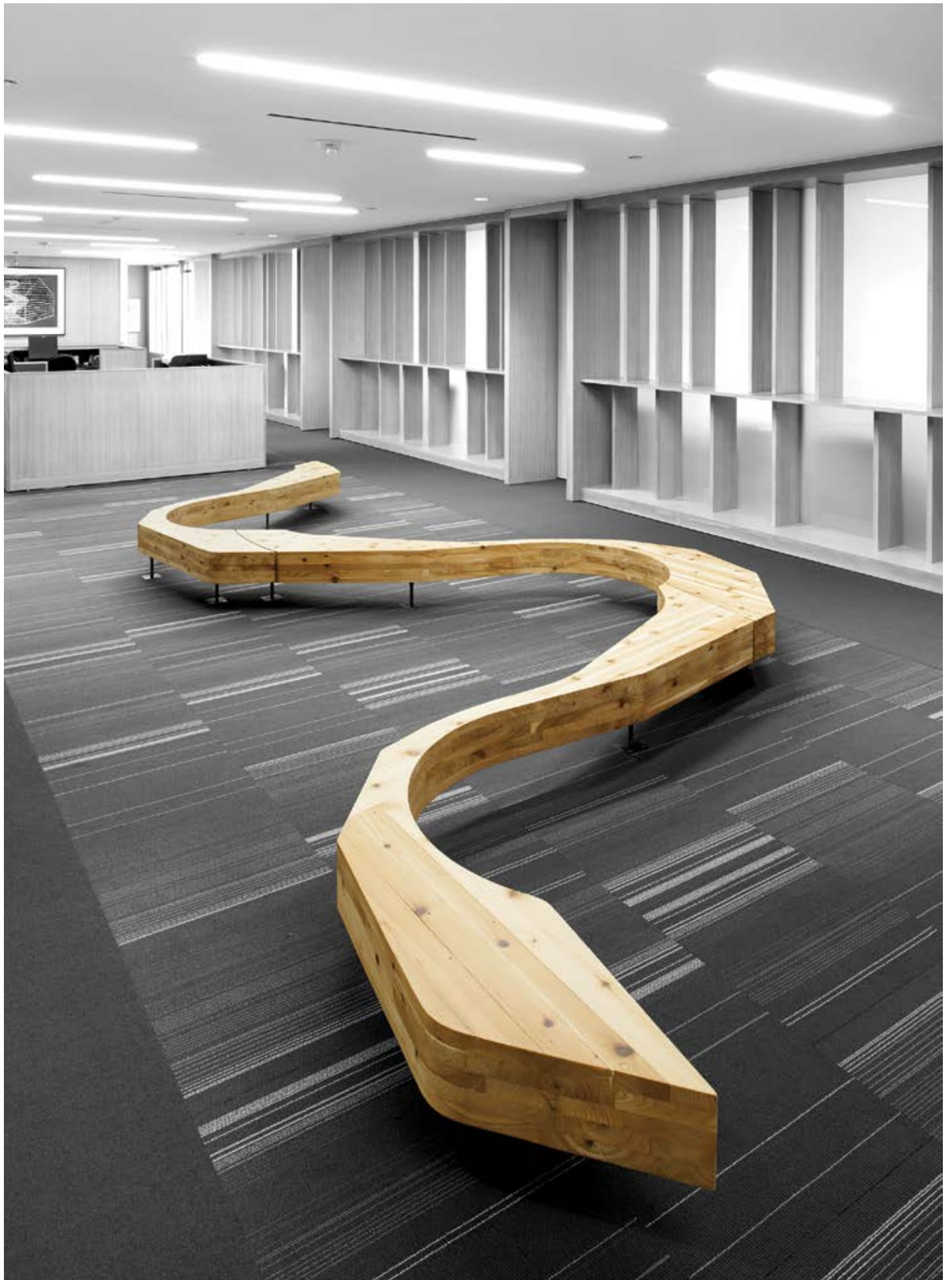
The long-ignored southern gateway to downtown Des Moines is now highlighted by the structure, which makes an effort to mirror the growing skyline. Rodekamp calls it a “visual transition”—one that makes a statement as it mirrors the low-to-high-rise buildings.

DART was looking to create an iconic structure to help define Des Moines, and Rodekamp says he believes they did just that. “In addition to a lot of the other great buildings done in the last

five to 10 years, I think DART Central Station gives Des Moines another recognizable building,” says Rodekamp.

“It tries to look like a transit hub and not something different, but also be respectful of the buildings around it,” says Rodekamp. “We were able to combine strategies for safety as well as sustainability, and how that impacted the bigger picture is something worth telling. I think it paints a pretty positive picture for transit.”

Hannah Gilman is a graduate of Iowa State University and works as a freelance writer and graphic designer in Seattle.



FUNCTIONAL BEAUTY



WORDS: LIZ LIDGETT

IMAGES: CAMERON CAMPBELL, AIA

“I’m interested in the ways people occupy space,” says Peter Goché, AIA, artist and architect. His work, *Water Hutch*, had been viewed as a part of exhibitions at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art in Omaha and the Soap Factory in Minneapolis before settling into its final resting place in the lobby of Faegre Baker Daniels, a law firm in Des Moines.

In addition to artist and architect, Goché is an instructor at Iowa State University, and recipient of 2013 AIA Iowa Educator Award. The work is a part of Goché’s ongoing inquiry focusing on the production of ethno-specific research assemblies. Used as the seating area in the lobby, *Water Hutch* allows for many types of interactions depending on where one sits along the piece.

“The location we chose for the piece is right at the intersection of two major pathways through the office. It is very natural for people to interact with it—they can touch it, walk along it, sit on it. It also provides a place to pause and have a conversation,” says Jessica Terrill, AIA, who led the architectural design team.

Reminiscent of rivers that meander through Iowa and the Midwest, the work consists of a sinuous line made up of three oxbows. Goché says *Water Hutch* “was derived from a series of sketches and models that have no direct relationship to and are not necessarily inspired by waterways, but happens to behave in such a way when

considering the ways people tend to behave when around the work. In this way, the title refers to a similar line of navigation.”

When approaching *Water Hutch*, visitors are struck by how such a massive, sturdy artwork can also feel so delicate. Cloaked in an array of end grain and surface grain, the wooden structure sits along several thin, metal poles fixed into the ground. The supports are so subtle that the waterway-like seating looks as if it is floating.

“Guests are often intrigued by it and are curious if it is fragile or not, which gives an opportunity to discuss it and tie it back with the rest of the space,” says Christine McDermott, office manager at Faegre Baker Daniels.

Seamlessly fitting into the space designed by Terrill, Paul Mankins, FAIA, and Anna Jones, Assoc. AIA, at Substance Architecture, the work looks as though it were designed for the space from the start. “The *Water Hutch* works with the architecture. It punctuates the space and provides a layer of richness to moving through the office,” says Terrill. Complementing the space as well as the existing art collection in the building, Goché’s work is a clear example of how perfectly a piece of artwork can complete a beautiful design.

Liz Lidgett is an art advisor in Des Moines and works with corporate art collections throughout the state.

*Goché’s *Water Hutch* was the winner of the AIA Iowa Excellence in Craft Award in 2011.*

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DETERMINED DESIGN

WORDS: MARK BLUNCK, HON. AIA IOWA

IMAGES: WAYNE JOHNSON, MAIN STREET STUDIO

ARCHITECT: OPN ARCHITECTS, INC.

After the flood, library re-emerges as community hub.

In a mere 15 years after the 100-Year Flood of 1993 that swept through the Midwest, another equally devastating flood wreaked havoc in 2008. Particularly hard hit was the small city of Cedar Rapids, with thousands of private and public buildings destroyed beyond repair. The damage to the main public library was of epic proportions. Entire book collections were lost, along with furniture, computers, and other items.

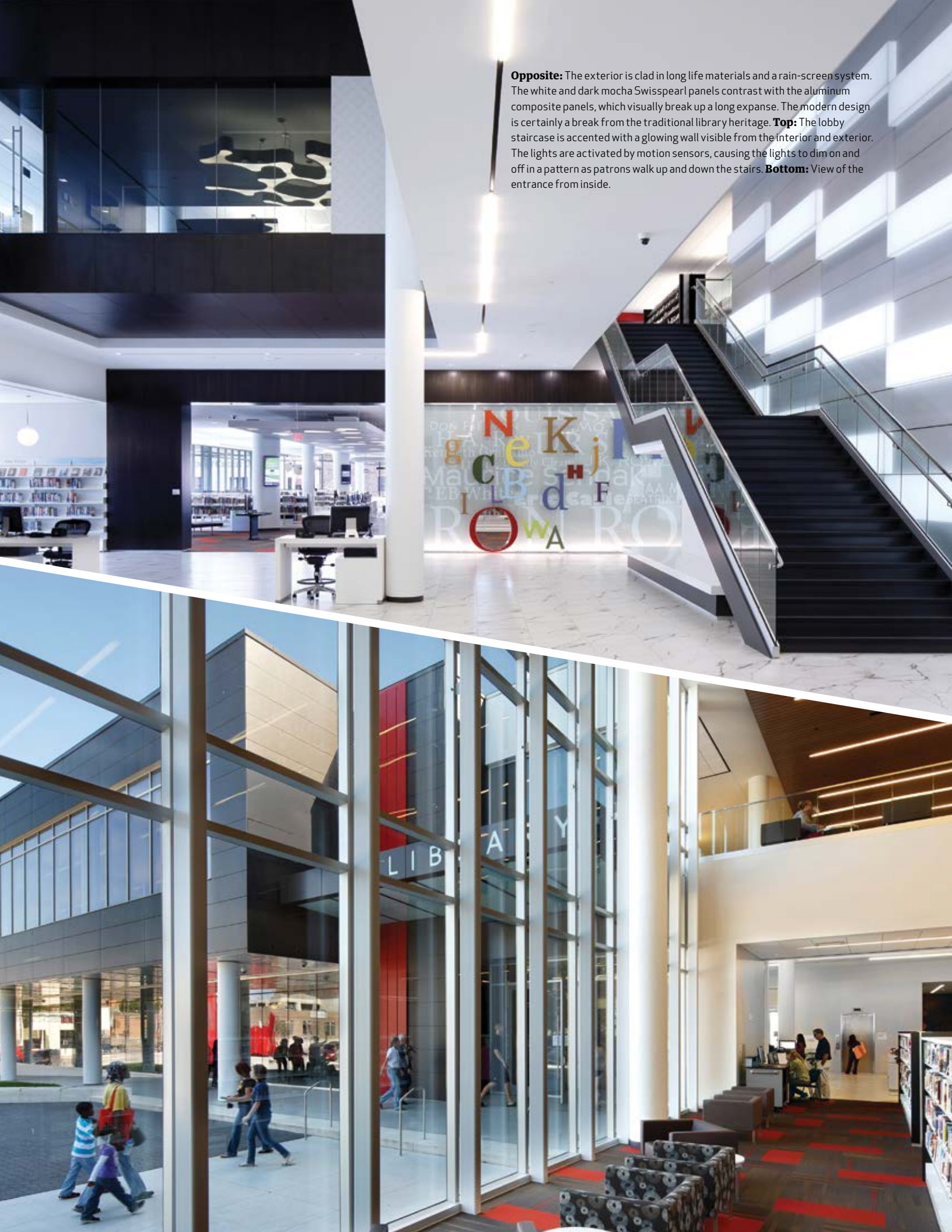
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) calculated that the

building sustained damage equaling more than 50 percent of its assessed value. This determination enabled the community and library trustees to begin considering new sites outside of the flood zone. The selected site was adjacent to Greene Square, a highly visible green space in the downtown district.

OPN project architect Bradd Brown, AIA, a veteran of some 30 library projects, set about consulting with library director Bob Pasicznyuk and his knowledgeable design staff on the design

and re-envisioning of a new structure for the 21st century. The two fully embraced the future direction of this important civic building and, working with the Ryan Companies, designed and built a remarkable facility encompassing predicted technological needs.

The configuration of the T-shaped building belies the conventional practice of a single public entrance. “Quite early in the design process, we recognized this building would have three public entrances because of the context. There



Opposite: The exterior is clad in long life materials and a rain-screen system. The white and dark mocha Swisspearl panels contrast with the aluminum composite panels, which visually break up a long expanse. The modern design is certainly a break from the traditional library heritage. **Top:** The lobby staircase is accented with a glowing wall visible from the interior and exterior. The lights are activated by motion sensors, causing the lights to dim on and off in a pattern as patrons walk up and down the stairs. **Bottom:** View of the entrance from inside.



This Photo: The Children's Collection occupies the east side of the first floor and includes a circular program room. **Below:** The library's café and coffee shop are accessible from the lobby. **Opposite:** The tiered, 200-seat auditorium is reflected in the architecture with a wood ceiling following the slope of the seating above.



The library of the future will be less about what it has and more about what it does. It should be less like the Department of Motor Vehicles—and more like an Apple Store.

BOB PASICZNYUK, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

would be two on-grade entrances and an entrance on the second level that accesses a large city parking garage and the skywalk system running throughout downtown,” says Brown.

The manner in which these entry points coalesce creates a striking, bright two-story lobby with functional spaces radiating from this point in a hub-and-spoke system. “The library is organized with the more active spaces, including the children’s collection, young adult collection, fiction, and coffee shop on the main level, and less active spaces of non-fiction, study spaces, and computer access on the second level,” he says.

Pasicznyuk says that the modernist design has actually been a positive factor in citizen participation. “The unusual use

of civic spaces, performance auditoriums, large flexible meeting rooms, and a casual conference room floating above the main floor is a design quality that has elicited rather favorable reactions from everyone. There is a certain cool factor emanating from the library.”

A major factor in design and engineering was the desirability of utilizing building systems and materials to minimize energy and resource consumption. One such approach was to build a 24,000-square-foot green roof with a cistern system to recapture 97 percent of rainfall. The roof is also the largest publicly accessible green roof in the Upper Midwest. Around 20 weddings have been conducted, entertaining guests with the surrounding cityscape. The potential

future aspects of technology have been designed with raised access floors for rerouting infrastructure. The architects are pursuing LEED Platinum designation.

The ultimate arbiter of a successfully designed civic building is the impact on the community. The library has revitalized the downtown district with new patrons and more than 600 organizations hosting events. This is much more than a bookish research facility. It’s a place where diverse groups in all fields can gather to examine with themselves, and others, the potential of the human spirit.

Mark Blunck, Hon. AIA Iowa, is a freelance writer based in San Francisco and is a frequent contributor to Iowa Architect.





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Clockwise from Top Left: Regular partitions break up the all-glass facade of the facility. Recreational additions, including a fun swimming pool section, add amenities to attract as many students as possible. Glass windows inside the facility lessen the need for additional security and allow students to see from one area to another. The architects stacked similar sections of the building—workout stations, for example—on top of one another to maximize space and orient views. Many student rec facilities in the 21st century include fun additions such as climbing walls.



RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

WORDS: KELLY ROBERSON

IMAGES: KUN ZHANG, DIMENSION IMAGES

ARCHITECT: RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

Just a couple of decades ago, college and university rec buildings were nondescript places. No more: There's been a veritable explosion in the size and swag of athletic facilities. Buildings that once catered exclusively to the needs of student athletes now focus on physical fitness amenities for all. They've become showpieces and selling points for college kids—and their parents—looking to pick from an a la carte menu of higher ed options.

Institutions in Iowa haven't escaped the laser-sharp lens of that national trend. By the turn of the 21st century, the University of Iowa realized that replacing the much-beloved but sorely dilapidated Fieldhouse was high on the list of must-do campus projects. They turned to an empty city block bounded by Madison, Burlington, Front, and Court streets as a location for a new facility.

The project would be awarded to RDG Planning & Design in 2004 and eventually named the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center (CRWC). The firm's tasks—and the CRWC budget—were enormous. They were charged with creating a building of more than 200,000 square feet, costing around \$50 million, that would serve the needs of three “tenants”: student fitness and recreation, aquatics athletics and recreation, and university wellness, says Paul Klein, AIA, project manager with RDG.

Early on, the architects realized that making the best out of the tight 90,000-square-foot site would push the building not out, but up into three stories. Vertical orientation presented several advantages, including lots of open space and views in and around the building. That, in turn, would emphasize safety and minimize supervision. Those multiple levels would then enable the architects to group similar spaces—such as fitness/weight areas—in stacks.

In addition to multiple floors, the access areas of the building helped the architects organize the spaces. “In the free zone, students or other people can come in the door and use designated wellness areas, but they can't get into other spaces such as the gym or aquatic areas,” says Klein. “To do that, they have to go to a control point and show an ID. The free and control zones are separated by corridors.”

The small site presented some challenges, including parking—or lack thereof. The original program included a lot on the south end, which would have limited the aquatic options. In the end, the university opted for a separate dive tank and swimming pool, called a “dotted I” design, says Klein.

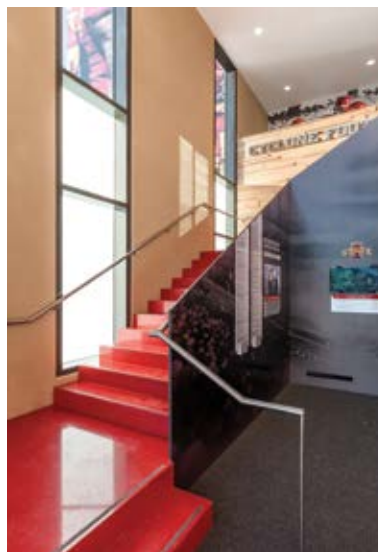
Future planning figured into the design, too. A large parking lot across the street may serve as a spot for a future garage. There may also be a skywalk connected to enable access over a street, so RDG increased the normal floor-to-floor height to allow for that.

It's been more than three years since the CRWC opened, and it has proven so popular that the university had to expand hours a month into operation. “The reaction has been very positive,” says Klein. “The University of Iowa was the last major university in the state that got a new facility, and we were happy for students and faculty.”

Kelly Roberson writes about shelter, gardening, and other topics from Des Moines.



A *strong* IMPRESSION



Above: Office and training spaces overlook the practice field, allowing recruits to take in multiple facets of ISU football at once. **Left:** The strength training facility is laid out to maximize both student-athlete training and recruitment potential. **Right:** With space to meet and review game tape, as well as physiotherapy and recovery centers, the complex caters to all of ISU's football needs.



WORDS: CHAD TAYLOR **IMAGES:** PAUL CROSBY **ARCHITECT:** SUBSTANCE

Few things exemplify “bodies in motion” like collegiate sports facilities. And when Iowa State University needed to help the bodies in its football program stay in motion, Des Moines-based Substance Architecture got the call. But in a program where delays can mean lost recruiting potential, time was of the essence.

“We started planning for the project in February 2010,” says Substance lead Paul Mankins, FAIA. “So it was a highly expedited process, to get the project open for the 2012 football season. The building was designed and completed in 20 months, which is incredibly fast for a Board of Regents project.”

When designing the Bergstrom Sports Complex, Substance faced a specific set of challenges. First, the building needed to fit into the space allowed by the existing practice facility and Jack Trice Stadium. Additionally—and most important—it needed to cater to the specific demands of a major college sports team. While Substance had some liberty addressing the former, the latter was less forgiving.

“The building is very prescriptive, functionally,” Mankins explains. “Collegiate football is like science now. The facility obviously has locker rooms, strength training areas, and a weight room. But it also has a sports medicine clinic with a hydrotherapy facility. Football players have to be able to move from the wet part of the locker room to the hydrotherapy area without going into public spaces. So there’s a relationship between the locker room and that equipment.”

There were additional factors to consider as well. “Then there’s another area of the complex that’s really almost more like a classroom,” Mankins says. “There are faculty offices—which in this case are coaches—then there are meeting rooms for those coaches. There are small classrooms for the different positions, and there’s a larger classroom for the team. So it’s kind of interesting

in that on one level, it’s dedicated to a series of functions devoted to the player with his equipment on, and then there’s a level that’s dedicated to learning.”

And, of course, it all has to look cool.

“It’s the front door for the football program,” Mankins explains, “so it needed to have a presence for people visiting. The strength training room is actually quite impressive. There was a lot of collaboration with a graphic design firm, and the way that all comes together

It's the front door for the football program, so it needed to have a presence.

PAUL MANKINS, FAIA

is a pretty effective thing. If you’re an 18-year-old kid, walking into that room is incredibly impressive. It’s not the largest in the United States by any stretch, but it’s an extremely effective recruiting tool.”

It’s a recruiting tool that Coach Rhoads and the ISU football program can be proud of. And for Substance architects—most of whom are ISU grads—the project was also personally rewarding.

“We’ve worked on a lot of fun things,” says Mankins, a 1985 ISU alum, “but I think most of the people who worked on that project will tell you it was the highlight of their career.”

Chad Taylor is a freelance writer from Des Moines and music critic for Cityview Magazine.



project credits

Reforming Recreation 16

Project: Iowa State University Gym Renovation and Expansion

Location: Ames

Architect: RDG Planning & Design

Contractor: Shaw-Lundquist Associates, Inc.

Structural Engineer: Charles Saul Engineering

Mechanical and Electrical

Engineer: Henneman Engineering

Aquatic Consultant:

Counsilman-Hunsaker

Photographer: Kun Zhang, Dimension Images

Green Means Go 24

Project: DART Central Station

Location: Des Moines

Architect: Substance

Contractor: The Weitz Company

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Landscape Consultant:

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Project: Water Hutch

Location: Des Moines

Artist / Architect: Peter Goché,

AIA

Photographer: Cameron

Campbell, AIA

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Project: Cedar Rapids Public Library

Location: Cedar Rapids

Architect: OPN Architects, Inc.

Contractor: Ryan Companies

Structural Engineer: M2B Structural Engineers

Engineer: Design Engineers

Photographer: Wayne Johnson, Main Street Studio

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Project: University of Iowa Campus Recreation & Wellness Center

Location: Iowa City

Architect: RDG Planning & Design

Contractor: McComas-Lacina

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Engineer: Alvine Engineering

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Hunsaker

Civil Consultant: Shive-Hattery

Photographer: Kun Zhang, Dimension Images

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Project: Iowa State University

Bergstrom Football Complex

Location: Ames

Architect: Substance

Contractor: The Weitz Company

Mechanical and Electrical

Engineer: Alvine Engineering

Structural Engineer: Raker Rhodes

Engineering

Civil Engineer: Snyder and

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Photographer: Paul Crosby

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How to Select an AIA Architect

Just as you would with any other major undertaking in life, it is important to find an architect who is a good match with your goals, your concept of the project, your personality, and your budget. Choosing the right person from the start allows you to enjoy the process as much as the finished product. The following steps in the selection process can make all the difference in creating a successful client-architect partnership.

STEP 1

Make a list of potential firms and solicit information from them. Colleagues and acquaintances who have worked with architects are excellent resources, as is your local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Contact those architects or firms and ask for information, qualifications, and references. If you are ready to ask the architect for a preliminary proposal, send a written description of your project to help them in the process. Find out how the architect charges for services and ask about additional expenses that could occur as the project moves ahead.

STEP 2

Evaluate your finalists. Consider your candidates' records in general, as well as their direct experience with projects similar to your own. Determine who can best complete the project within your timeframe and budget. If possible, visit a few projects designed by your finalists. There's nothing like looking at the actual work of a candidate to decide whether you are a match.

STEP 3

Interview two or three final contenders for the job. See if your personalities mesh, as well as your concepts for the project. Clarify the proposed schedule, fee structure, and areas of responsibility.

STEP 4

At this point, you will probably have a good idea who your leading candidate is. To reinforce your instincts, make a checklist. Look at relevant experience, technical competence, budget considerations, and timeframe. Finally, review the interview in your mind. Did the architect really listen to what you were saying? Did he or she ask the right questions? Did he or she offer reasonable solutions? Above all, did you feel comfortable?



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