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Best New Schools: Goodview Elementary, Cougar Elementary, Maggie L. Walker High ■ House & Home: Muted Modernism ■ Olympic Housing

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Preserving Art Amid an Island Setting

Interior living spaces with natural light and panoramic waterfront views are ideal for entertaining and relaxing. When an art dealer wanted an 800 square foot, two story addition with 360 degree lake views for his



weekend retreat on Candlewood Isle, Connecticut, he turned to New York City architect Jeffrey Berman, AIA, principal of Jeffrey Berman Architect - and to Marvin Windows and Doors for the big picture solution. The house, located in the middle of man-made Candlewood Lake, was originally built with Marvin products, and both the client and Berman chose Marvin for the addition.

The design goals were to create a large space for entertaining, protect an art collection and capture the magnificent views overlooking the garden and the lake. Marvin was the only manufacturer to provide the flexibility needed for different sizes and shapes, including larger assemblies. The wide expanses of glass maximized views, while retaining a smaller, residential scale for a grand window wall, and avoiding a curtain wall look. Window trim is painted on the outside, and provides the only opportunity to add color to the building's exterior palette of natural materials.

"The client wanted Marvin Windows and Doors, because they offer the best thermal performance and airtight seals to protect artwork from dust and dirt. Humidity and temperature control were also considerations in the windy lakefront environment. We used insulated double glazed, operable windows with integrated screens. On a cool summer night, the clients will open a window, enjoy the breeze, and feel like they're outside," said Berman.

Beachfront Conditions Provide Design Challenges

Hurricane-strength winds, extreme temperatures, ocean views and natural light were the environmental design criteria for a home facing the Atlantic Ocean in Locustville, on Virginia's Eastern Shore. This seaside summer residence - designed by Don A. Swofford, AIA, principal of DASA, in Charlottesville, Virginia - in classic Colonial Williamsburg style, had to withstand hurricane winds exceeding 135 miles per hour. The Marvin Magnum Window series was specifically chosen to provide the historic house appearance and withstand hurricane wind loads.

"The code calls for 105 mph wind resistance, but the owner wanted

to design to 135 mph for safety. The windows in the rooftop lantern could not have hurricane covers, so we designed the lantern with a steel frame running down to the foundation. Marvin's Magnum series provided 1-1/2" wide custom detailed muntins, solid thermal panes and authentic divided lites. Year-round temperature swings at this Atlantic beachfront vary from 105 degrees in summer to 10 degrees below zero in winter. These windows provide good R-values to reduce interior cooling and heating loads," said Swofford.

"Marvin helped us meet our design goals by manufacturing high performance windows to reflect the Colonial Williamsburg style, while cutting project costs by 40 percent. As the first architect in Virginia to use Marvin Windows and Doors, I'm confident Marvin can meet criteria for any job and work with architects and owners to meet special design criteria. We know we can rely on the quality, performance and aesthetics of their products. The Magnum series has successfully met unusually high wind resistant requirements. Most importantly, our client is very pleased with the results," Swofford added.

Light-filled Small Scaled Addition Saves Energy Costs

Starting the day in a cozy light-filled breakfast nook overlooking the woods is just what architect Michael Crosbie, an Associate with Steven Winter Associates, Inc. in Norwalk, Connecticut, had in mind when he designed an addition on the north facing side of his 1938 vintage home. He wanted the new windows to match the existing "six over one" windows on the rest of the house. Crosbie achieved these aesthetic goals and more, with Marvin Windows and Doors.

Crosbie chose Marvin because of the high quality they provide, the custom capabilities and selection available to meet project needs. Specifically, the simulated muntin - the strip separating panes of glass in a window sash - attached to the window gave the appearance of a true muntin, while providing the advantage of double paned glass and energy efficiency.

"I wanted the small scaled addition to appear like it had always been part of the house, and Marvin worked out all the details just perfectly. They ganged three windows together in one assembly for easier installation, but the windows look like three separate units. The contractor installed the windows in less than a day. The product versatility is endless; Marvin will do anything you want," said Crosbie.

Inside, the simple, tastefully detailed addition overlooks a naturally landscaped area, and includes built-in bench seating below the windows. "We rarely turn the lights on, because there is so much natural light entering the space, even with a northern exposure. As a result, we've saved on electricity and energy use. Marvin was the most economical choice available on the market that gave me exactly what I wanted: aesthetics, maximum natural light, energy efficiency, double glazed units and ease of installation," Crosbie added.



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Barbara A. Nadel, FAIA is principal of Barbara Nadel Architect, in New York City, specializing in programming, planning and design of institutional facilities. She is 2001 National Vice President of the American Institute of Architects and frequently writes about design and technology.

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From the Editor

School Daze

Some politicians want to believe that the economies of mass-production can be easily transferred to building construction. On its surface, the argument makes sense: if one building can be built for a certain sum, can't ten carbon copies of that building – using the same floor plan, the same wall systems, similar floor materials, and identical lighting fixtures – be constructed at significant savings?

Not necessarily. While prototype designs have been employed with great success in the gasoline and fast food industries, their application to new public schools presents an entirely different set of issues, many of which work against standardization. Yet the idea of establishing model school designs in Virginia has come up often in the state's General Assembly, most recently in the 2001 session. During that term, legislators directed the Department of Education to study the feasibility of providing model plans for elementary, middle, and high schools.

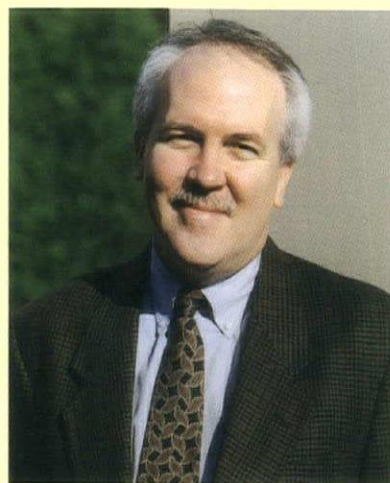
The outcome of the study was a resounding “no” to the suggestion that prototype school designs would serve their communities better or save taxpayers money. In fact, the study cautioned that attempts to create and replicate model school designs would probably be more costly than current practice, in which localities hire their own architects. While the school superintendents and facility planners included in the survey said such plans might be feasible and useful (although not necessarily for them), architects and engineers raised many valid concerns. Most of the respondents said school plans developed by the state would not meet the educational needs of many school divisions. They also warned against the loss of community involvement in the planning process.

One of the key architectural concerns is building size, which varies greatly in Virginia schools that range in population from 100 to 3,000 students. As buildings grow larger, the core and support facilities must grow proportionately. One set of school plans would not be sufficient to address the variety of schools needed; according to the report, it would require 16 sets. Furthermore, if each prototype was to include a full set of drawings and technical specifications, problems such as the obsolescence of specifications would quickly occur. Building code changes also would require an ongoing process of updating the requirements, adding more cost.

Arguments in favor of prototype schools tend to overlook the fact that each new school would need to be adapted to a new site, with accompanying professional fees. Each new set of documents would require review by the architect, who assumes the liabilities that go along with the design of a building to house hundreds, if not thousands, of students. Perhaps the most difficult problem would be deciding which educational program to adopt as the basis for model schools. This concern springs from the disparity in program offerings between population-rich counties such as Fairfax and those in rural counties like Alleghany. “Writing a common educational program would be almost impossible,” the report says.

On top of pragmatic concerns over site adaptations, a proper fit with the educational program, and community involvement, another issue bears deliberation. That is the cultural dimension. Schools are not simply prosaic containers like warehouses or factories. Like churches, libraries, and seats of government, schools are institutions that convey important messages about social and civic values. They deserve a level of attention and funding that is appropriate for an institution. Treating them like a hamburger emporium or a discount gas station is to debase the ideals of education in a free society. So I'm thankful that the model schools report was discouraging enough in its findings and recommendations that none of the politicians took up the cause in the 2002 General Assembly. Meanwhile, the feasibility report on a statewide program for developing model schools sits on the shelf and gathers dust. Let's hope it stays there.

– Vernon Mays





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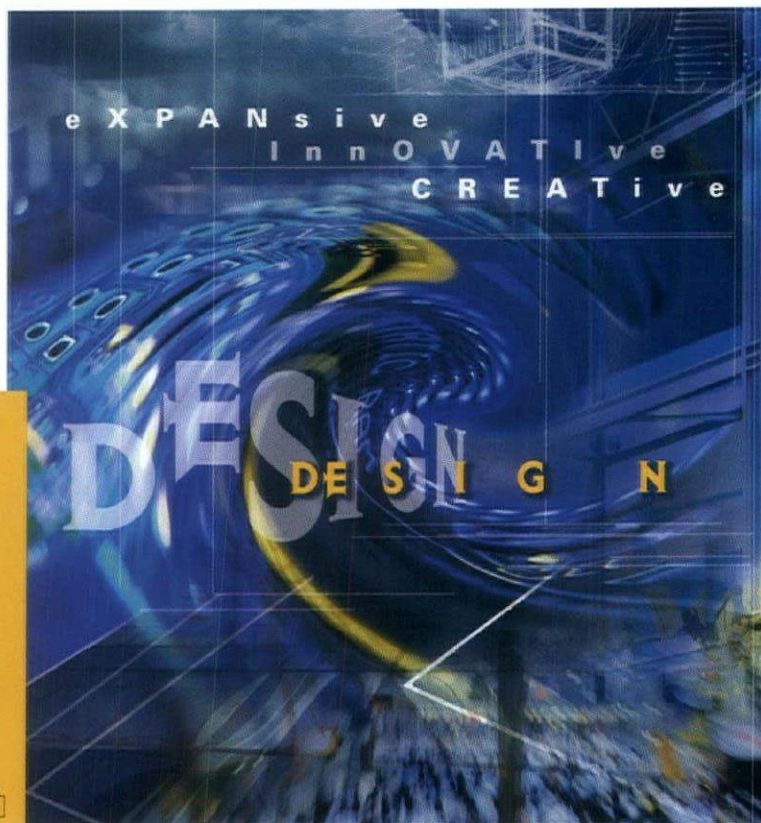
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Good Neighbors

With a plan of interlocking parts arranged along a central hallway, Spectrum Design has crafted Goodview Elementary School in a way that allows students to circulate with ease while soaking up filtered light and inspired details. *By Rebecca E. Ivey*

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Community Pride

Change is coming to Manassas Park, where VMDO Architects has combined sensitive site planning, the introduction of public space, and a recognizable design vocabulary to establish a sense of place at Cougar Elementary School. *By Vernon Mays*

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Renewed Legacy

After an extensive redesign by BCWH, which added improved facilities and current technologies, the long-abandoned Maggie L. Walker High School has sprung back to life as home for the Governor's School in Richmond. *By Mary Harding Sadler*

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Portfolio of New Schools

Across the state, architects are finding new ways to create handsome and functional learning spaces for public and private schools. From a county-wide renovation program to a philosophy-driven Montessori School, each project yields a custom solution.



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Design Lines

new developments in design

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House & Home

a muted take on modern style

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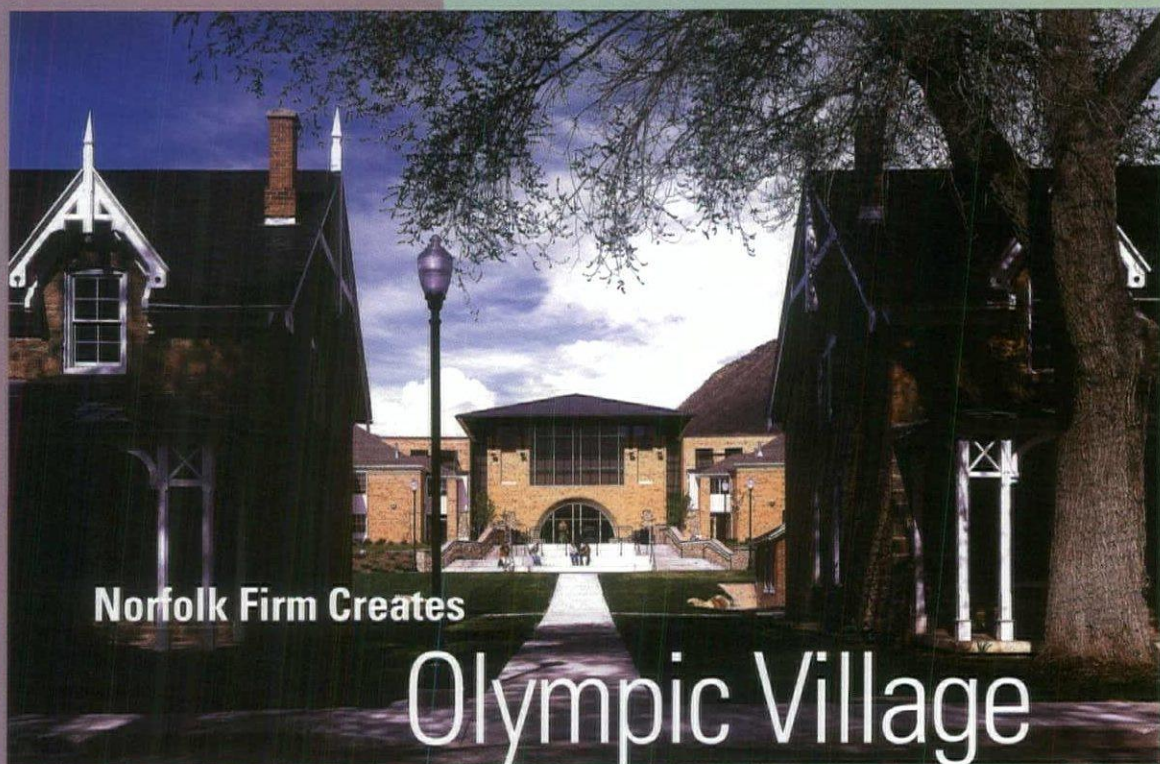


Taking Note

doing the small thing well

On the cover: Maggie L. Walker Governor's School,
renovation and additions by BCWH.
Photo by James West.

In our next issue:
Review of Virginia
Architecture;
Inform Awards



The refurbished buildings of Fort Douglas frame the Heritage Center, the hub of the complex.

Photos: John Wadsworth

Norfolk Firm Creates

Olympic Village

6

Athletes competing in the recent winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah, sampled a bit of Virginia hospitality in the course of their stay. Norfolk-based Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas was a key player in the design of the Olympic village located at Heritage Commons at Fort Douglas on the University of Utah campus. The firm surpassed 60 other competitors to win the master planning, historic development, and student housing design contract with the university, and followed with the creation of a sensitive, comprehensive plan that suited both the immediate needs of the Olympic community and the university's long-term agenda.

Working in collaboration with Architectural Design West of Salt Lake City, Hanbury Evans created the living/learning village to accommodate both students and athletes, taking into consideration the demands of the student body, the historic Fort Douglas site, and the stringent security and facility needs of the Olympic athletes. The architects designed 21 new buildings, razing parking lots rather than breaking new ground, to create traditional spaces suitable for Utah's students, an unusual demographic group

which is typically older than average collegians and often includes many married couples, some with children.

Hanbury Evans principal Jane Cady Wright, AIA, said the 32-unit "cottage-Gothic" buildings were configured as six separate neighborhoods, each made to accommodate a different student lifestyle. Rolling green spaces and pedestrian walkways connect these neighborhoods, and students gather at the commons, the Heritage Center. A pedestrian bridge connects the village to the rest of campus.

Planned to encourage outdoor activity and provide students with striking views, the community layout similarly suited the needs of the nearly 4,000 Olympic athletes during their two-week stay in February. With security a high-profile issue even prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, the plan was designed to restrict access. If necessary, the village could have been sealed off entirely by closing a single point of entry.

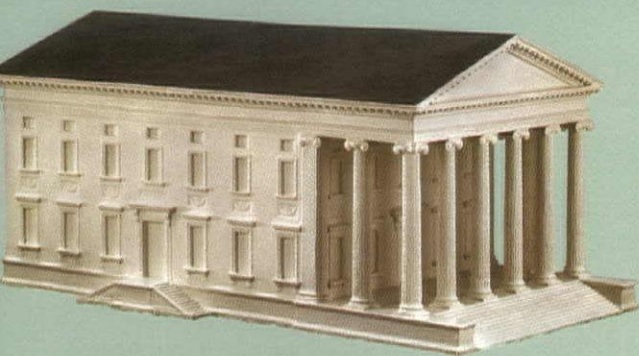
Perhaps the most challenging part of the project, Wright said, was the historic preservation of Fort Douglas, upon which the residential village was constructed. Originally built during the Civil War to guard the overland mail route, the fort later housed the buffalo soldiers who fought alongside Teddy Roosevelt on San

Juan Hill. The fort served as a POW camp during World War I, also accommodating victims of nerve gas attacks and influenza. Later, the facilities were used to train soldiers for World War II. To preserve the site, the architects refurbished 26 of the 60 historic structures located in the 70-acre fort and made smaller restorations to 29 more. Compatible new buildings meld with the historic components. This historic sense of place and connection to the environment made the village an ideal place to house Olympic athletes.

The Heritage Commons project has already won an Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a planning excellence award from the Society for College and University Planning. "Not only has the university saved an irreplaceable part of our nation's past, it has also proven that preservation can help ensure a strong future," said Trust President Richard Moe.

Campus buildings strategically frame views of the Rocky Mountains.





A replica of the 1786 model shows original detail.

Virginia Capitol Revealed Anew

Virginians, exposed to historic architecture at every turn, often cease to be amazed by the buildings they pass each day as they drive in to work or stroll out for lunch. Occasionally, an exhibition will shed new light on a familiar façade. "Jefferson & The Capitol of Virginia," now at The Library of Virginia in Richmond, does just that to one of Thomas Jefferson's essential works. In addition to the centerpiece – a replica of the 18th-century model of the Capitol – the exhibit displays architectural books consulted by Jefferson, Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, and plans and elevations that show the evolution of his design.

In 1784, Thomas Jefferson arrived in Paris as the United States' minister to France. Though he had drawn schemes for a Virginia Capitol in the 1770s, it was not until 1785 that Jefferson received a request for a plan for the new state capitol from the Directors of Public Buildings. In Paris, Jefferson searched for an architect to assist him, one whose admiration of classical forms mirrored his own. After five months of crafting rough schemes that echoed classic Greek and Roman temples, Jefferson engaged French architect Charles-Louis Clérissieu to produce detailed drawings. Using the Maison Carrée of Nîmes as a model, they created a commanding classical form. To specify how the exterior should appear, Jefferson commissioned a scale model from acclaimed model-maker Jean-Pierre Fouquet. Both model and drawings reached Virginia in 1786, just after construction had begun.

Builder Samuel Dobie is thought to have altered Jefferson's design, adding a basement and eliminating the front steps. Many of the interior and exterior details were completed in a less Jeffersonian style. Enlarged and modernized in the early 1900s, with a design that preserved Jefferson's façade by adding two complementary wings and the steps he initially specified, the Capitol is Jefferson's pivotal work of monumental civic architecture.

Now more than 200 years old, the Fouquet model has been thoroughly examined and remains in the state's possession. The original model is coated with twelve to fifteen layers of paint that are thought to mimic the color schemes applied to the building itself. The thick applications obscure details rendered in miniature, such as classical door and window architraves, tiny guttae beneath each window corbel, fruit and flowers ornamenting each tablet, and precise egg-and-dart moldings in the cornice. The replica of the model on display at the library shows these original details with clarity. Various paint colors found among the layers are displayed on the back of the replica. With Jefferson's notes, architectural books, and Clérissieu's engraving of the Maison Carrée, the model remains one of the only records of the original design.

"Jefferson & The Capitol of Virginia" will be on display through June 15 at The Library of Virginia, 800 E. Broad St., Richmond. The exhibition then travels to the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum in Williamsburg from July 4-Feb. 17, 2003.

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Six Architecture Firms Honored for School Projects

Six school designs were recognized for excellence by statewide education groups at their recent conferences. Criteria such as creative use of space, materials, and budgets influenced the jurors' selection of the best school projects in Virginia.

Five elementary schools in Carroll County won a Virginia School Boards Association award for Motley + Associates of Roanoke recently reconstituted through firm merger as Rodriguez Ripley Maddux Motley Architects. The rehabilitation project "brought five 20th-century buildings into the 21st century," observed the association's jury. One of these schools, Gladeville Elementary, also was singled out for a Virginia Department of Education award, presented during the agency's February conference. Jurors praised the design's "enhancement of the character and entry sequence of the building."

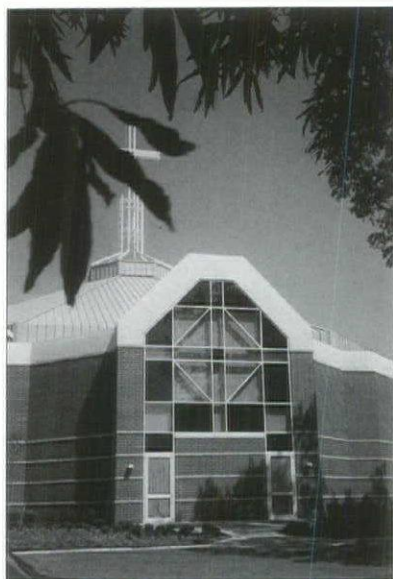
Both the school boards association and Department of Education gave awards to BCWH of Richmond for the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School in Richmond. The school board jury commented "the architect and community have worked magic by bringing 1937 building back to life."

Cougar Elementary School in Manassas Park also won recognition from both the association and state agency for VMD Architects of Charlottesville. The school board jury expressed its pleasure with the innovative "village" concept; the education department jury lauded the school's "interior and exterior architectural balance."

Other winners in the programs:

- Ballou Justice Upton Architects of Glen Allen for Thomas Dale High School in Chesterfield County;
- Grimm and Parker Architects of McLean for Carlin Springs Elementary in Arlington County; and
- Rancorn Wildman Architects of Newport News for Oak Knoll Middle School in Hanover County.

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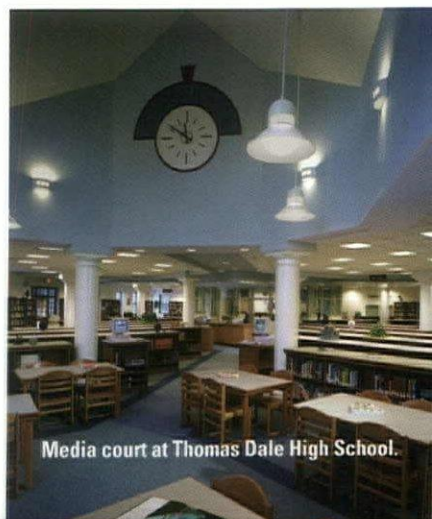
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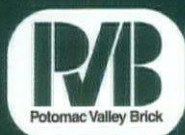
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Virginia ArchitectureWeek

Puts the Profession in Spotlight

Architecture Week is an annual statewide celebration of architecture and design in Virginia's communities. During the week of April 15-21, architects and organizations conducted tours, lectures, classes, and other events to invite people of all ages, from all walks of life, to explore the architecture that surrounds them.

In Charlottesville, a tour opened several architects' houses to public view. One of them, the organic abode of Carrie Meinburg Burke and Kevin Burke, is shaped by external forces – light, weathering, and context. Edward Ford's "urban leftover" site required an unusual design creating a uniquely comfortable domicile with steel, wood, and custom furniture. The residence of Robin Dripps and Lucia Finney embodies experiments in both architecture and landscape architecture, incorporating a glass stair, Plexiglas ceiling, water channel, large-scale earthworks, and man-made lake. Also on the tour was Peter Waldman's home in North Garden, a study in material and form that addresses environmental conditions. The tour's dessert course was Pavilion IX at the University of Virginia, where architecture school Dean Karen Van Lengen resides in one of Jefferson's most poetic classical compositions.

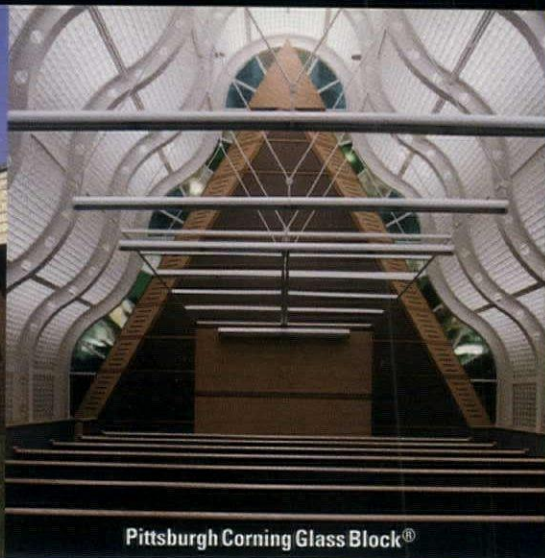
Members of AIA/Northern Virginia stressed the wide range of architectural styles – from Georgian through Art Deco – in a walking tour of Old Town Alexandria. The guides recounted the history of Old Town, as well as its pedestrian scale and street configuration, as they painted a complex picture of the town's architectural heritage.

At Nauticus, the National Maritime Center in Norfolk, the exhibition "If These Walls Could Talk" was augmented during Architecture Week by a booth that dissected the role of the architect and gave citizens a chance to chat with AIA members. Visitors were able to enjoy interactive exhibits on the history of concrete, explore examples of multicultural architecture (such as a Mongolian ger), and be entertained by the popular "What Would Your Furnace Say?" (in which household appliances explain just how they work).

These and many more events occur annually in April. For information on AIA events, visit www.aiava.org.



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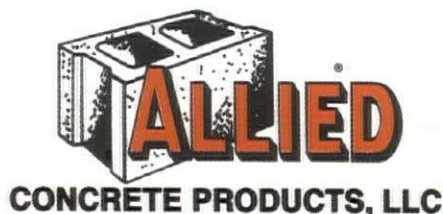
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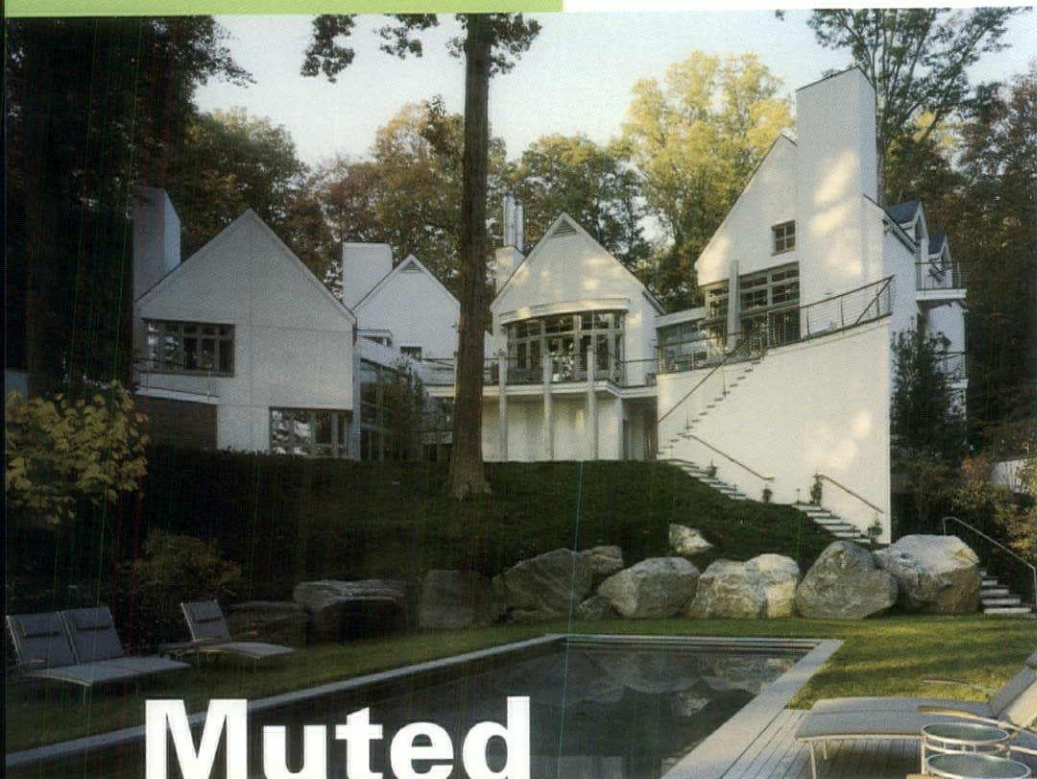
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Muted Modernism

By Nigel F. Maynard

Randall Mars, AIA, is a Modernist plying his trade in Washington, D.C., where the masses prefer their contemporary architecture in a coffee table book or a slick magazine. For architects like Mars, life can seem like a wobbly walk on a tightrope; it is important to strike a delicate balance at all times.

"In Washington you find that people want traditional exteriors and modern interiors," the McLean-based architect says. "They don't want to say to the world that they are modern, but they want all the light, energy, and space of Modernism."

Mars employed this exact type of balance when he designed a house for a young couple in McLean and their two small children. The architect had to bridge the modern tastes of the wife with the traditional inclinations of the husband. The result is a 9,000-square-foot home that has the framework of

traditionalism reinterpreted with contemporary detailing and organization.

The house is located on a three-acre sloping site that commands a sweeping view of the Potomac River at Little Falls. When the homeowners found the lot, it had an existing house that all parties decided should be torn down. Before making the final decision, however, Mars respectfully approached the previous owner, Elliott Richardson, who served as Attorney General in the Nixon Administration. Richardson, who has since passed away, was unequivocal. "He said, 'You have to tear this down. The house doesn't take advantage of the view or the position of the site. It doesn't work,'" Mars recalls.

With that fiat, Mars set out to design a house that needed to be defined by zones separating public and private areas. It had to be large enough for entertaining and displaying the couple's burgeoning art collection – which includes pieces by Chuck Close, Donald Judd, Andy Warhol,

and Alexander Calder – but it also had to be informal enough for their children to romp about unfettered.

The goals were clear; the design path was complicated. From the outset, Mars and the lady of the house headed in a progressive direction. A practicing interior designer who did the home's interiors, she was once a student in studio class taught by Mars. The architect also hired her later to do presentation drawings for his firm. But as the design evolved and a modern scheme developed, the husband's trepidation grew. "He was very concerned about getting forced into something that was horribly modern," Mars says. "So we toned it down. It became what I have been referring to as soft modern – it's not stark or harsh."

Though the husband wanted a house that more closely resembled an award-winning project the architect had designed 16 years earlier, Mars had no intention of duplicating it in this house. He opted instead to use the same form-language – white pavilions, stucco exteriors, and slate roofs – as his filter.

Mars resolutely avoided a rigid composition of right angles. Instead, he placed four simple pavilions on the hill and radiated them around a curve that focuses on the river, taking advantage of the site. Generous glass openings and a sliding pocket door help provide visual access to



The house's volumes are arranged around an arc to capture river views (top). A glass-and-stainless steel skylight (above) bathes the interiors in light.



The vaulted maple veneer ceiling and concrete counter take center stage in the house's spacious kitchen.

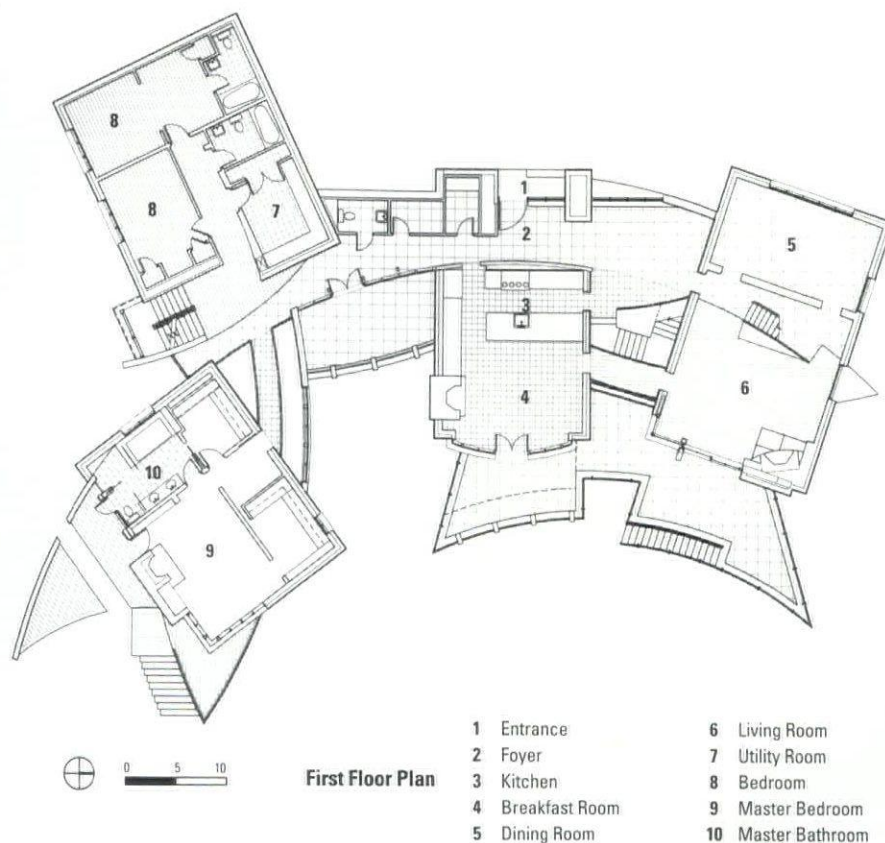
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the water. The pavilions are fanned out to create a sense of motion and the dynamics between the volumes made the house more modern, Mars explains.

Curved form became a *leitmotif* throughout the project. The interior is organized around a curved wall that flows from the master suite pavilion to the living/dining pavilion. This fluid form is visible in stair rails, walls, prow-shaped balconies that project from the house, a vaulted ceiling in the kitchen pavilion, and the circular driveway.

Modern interpretations can be seen in the absence of roof overhangs and in exterior materials such as stainless steel and exposed concrete. "The exterior details are modern, but the shapes of the pavilions are so conventional that they tone down modern, which is typical Washington," Mars allows.

The interiors are another matter. A collaboration between architect and client, the interior features stark white walls and a French limestone floor that play against soft woodwork. "It's modern," Mars says, "but the wood makes it warm and livable and it's detailed to add more interest."



Those details are abundant, from the cherry-and-maple custom stair to the sliding shutters that disappear to assure privacy in the master bath.

The house also has an indoor garden and two bridges – one connecting the master suite, the other connecting the living room to the kitchen. Light filters in from above the bridges via skylights suspended by stainless steel tension cables.

Now the kitchen is the focal point of the home, but it had a smaller footprint during preliminary design. “We were focusing on forcing everybody out of the kitchen,” Mars says. “But then the homeowners realized they wanted to allow people to hang out in the kitchen.”

The woman of the house came up with the original kitchen layout and the architect massaged the design. The homeowners wanted the space to be light and contemporary, so they opted for light-colored wood and modular kitchen cabinets. A massive concrete counter doubles as an informal eating surface and the vaulted maple ceiling ties together the kitchen and foyer and the entire pavilion.

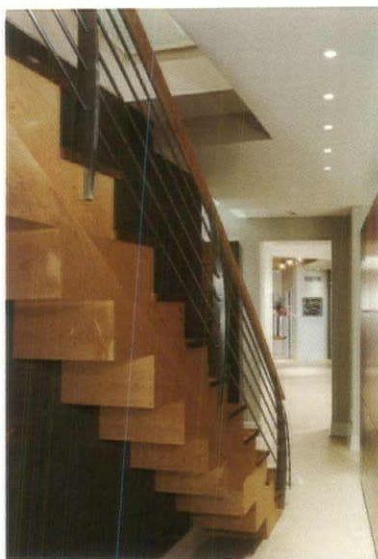
The house makes clear references to the style of Hugh Newell Jacobsen, although the relationships of the buildings to each other are not as rigorous as Jacobsen might have made them. “The house responded more to what was needed functionally inside,” Mars says. “I allowed the house to respond more to the environment and the function.”

For the man of the house – the traditionalist – things have changed: he now loves the whole idea of Modernism and is ready to embrace it completely. He even wants to do a purely modern house now. Mars, however, remains divided in his opinion. “Sometimes I wish I had taken things farther, sometimes I feel like I took it far enough,” he says. Ultimately, Mars feels he succeeded in his obligation to design a comfortable home that is fresh, maximizes the site, and is appropriate for the way his clients want to live.

Nigel Maynard is an associate editor at Residential Architect magazine in Washington, D.C.

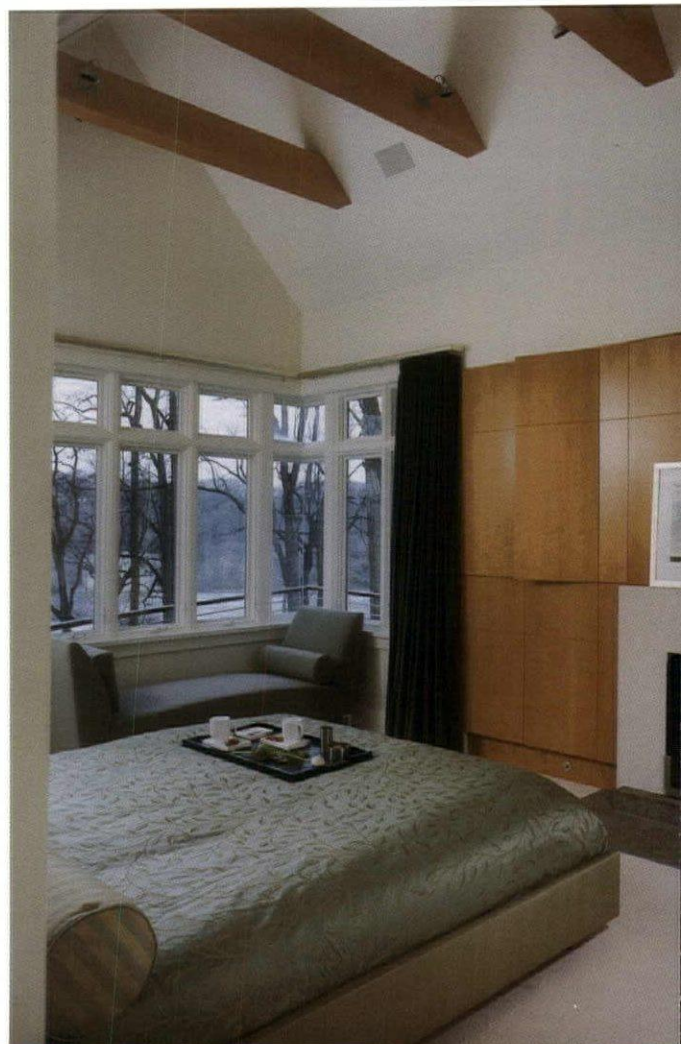


Sliding pocket doors lead to the terrace and facilitate indoor/outdoor living (above). The cathedral ceiling and sweeping views of the Potomac River give the master bedroom an airy feel (below).



Photos: Hoachlander/Davis Photography

The curved cherry-and-maple stair (above) hints at the design's nautical influence.





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Good Neighbors

Goodview Elementary School • Spectrum Design

By Rebecca E. Ivey

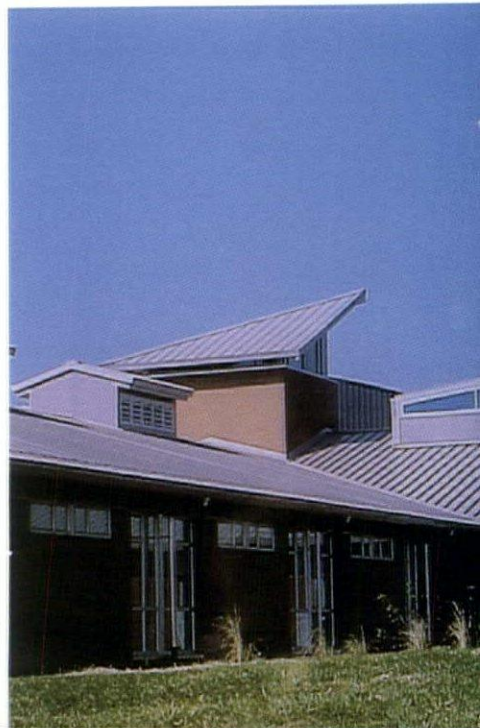


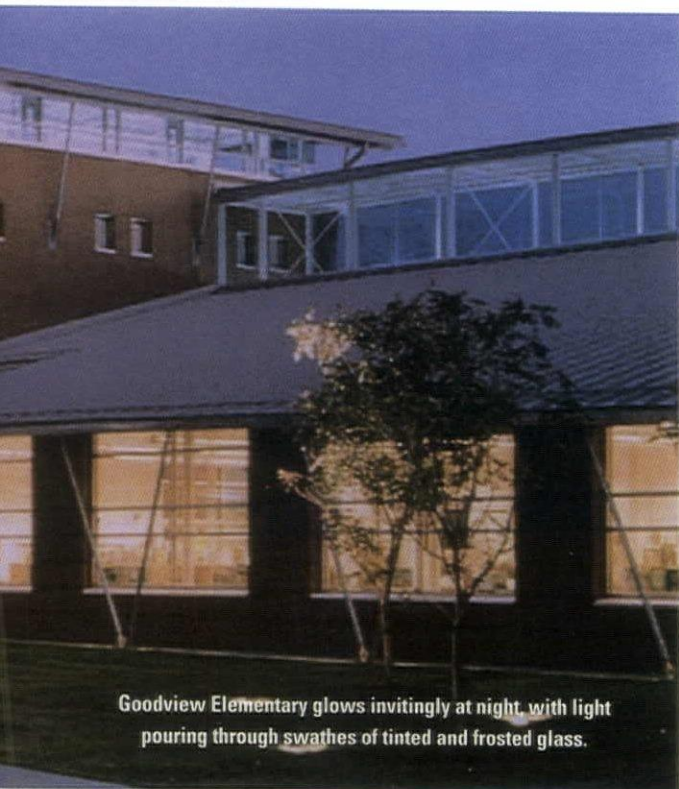
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With tight budgets, lengthy program requirements, and pressures to create space that can be built repetitively, a public school may be one of the hardest design challenges to approach with ingenuity. But at Goodview Elementary School in Bedford County, architect David Bandy, AIA, led a team in creating a school that fulfills pragmatic needs while giving administrators, teachers, and students an inspiring place to inhabit.

The school's floor plan is organized around a central hallway, arranged so that pieces can be enlarged, extended, diminished, or discarded altogether without changing the overall scheme. Bandy, a principal of Spectrum Design in Roanoke, began to design with the idea of circulation – how students, teachers, administrators, and parents would flow through the building, as well as where mechanical, electrical, and data systems needed to be. He then applied specific pieces to this grid. Along this main “pipeline,” elements such as the gym, administrative offices, and cafetorium plug in to one side; on the opposite side, three hallways extend outwards into separate “neighborhoods.” Three primary entrances, each identified by a distinctive tower, draw students directly into the pipeline.

From the exterior, Goodview Elementary immediately conveys an atypical and stylish persona. With sections of roof that resemble wings, sweeps of blue and green tinted glass, and the trio





Goodview Elementary glows invitingly at night, with light pouring through swathes of tinted and frosted glass.

Photos: James Adcock



A prominent overhang (above) directs water away from the building and shades classroom windows during the warm seasons.

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The school is identifiable by its dramatic roofscape, with a winglike form capping the main entry tower (left).

of towers, the school is anything but a simple box. As one approaches the bus entrance, the winglike student shelter springs into view and the main entrance tower rises in profile. Capped with a ring of blue-tinted windows and a light, angular roof section, the tower is boastful in its structural expressiveness. Steel bolts and beams connect the steel-and-glass cap to the solid brick walls. Inside, bright white air ducts pop out of the walls, emphasizing the systems as part of the school's design scheme. To the left of the entrance, exposed through glass walls, are the administrative offices; to the right is the media center, consisting of the library and computer lab. The counters school-wide are low and colorful, cloaked in a deep wash of primary colors.

Two larger pieces of this puzzle are the gymnasium and cafetorium. The high school-sized gym allows space for both in-school recreation and after-school activities. The curved roof hovers above a band of translucent panels, with daylight illuminating the space that is painted in subtle shades of gray, cream, and white. Mirroring the gymnasium is the cafetorium, enlivened by the same colors and window treatment. The space is flanked by a wall of glass that opens to the outside. Both sides of the lunch line are exposed, in stark contrast to elementary schools of old. Even the food preparation areas are exposed and well-lit. A stage rises opposite the bank of windows. With two tiers of lighting, a ramp for wheelchair access, and more than adequate space for



school productions and meetings, the cafeteria, like the gym, can be opened while the remainder of the school is secured.

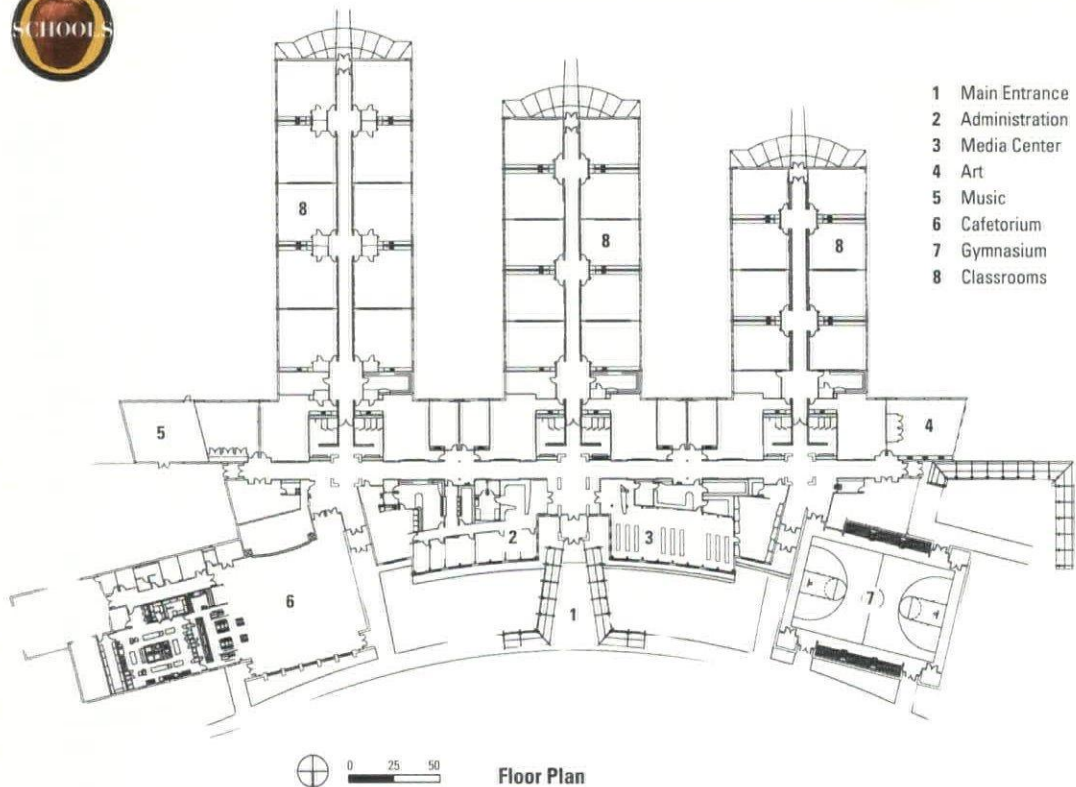
The central hallway creates an east-west axis through which students flow on their way in and out of the school and between activities such as physical education, art, music, and computer classes. The hall, lined with display cases and bulletin boards, is illuminated by sunlight filtering in from overhead. Clad in white – with a red, white, and black floor – this corridor feels energetic and airy.

The three “neighborhoods” stretch out to the south, placing similar grades

beside each other to foster sharing of classrooms. For every neighborhood there are two teacher workrooms with storage space, computers, sinks, and bathrooms. Each neighborhood terminates in a small patio leading to the playground. If the student population grows, extra classrooms can be easily constructed here, adding more space without changing the dynamic of the school.

The flow of traffic around the school is as well-considered as the flow within. And the generous use of glass means that, on bright days, there is little need for artificial lighting. These virtues not only make





The dramatic main entrance (left) reveals structural elements.

In the office, the reception desk features child-height cabinetry (below).



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the school inviting, but they have won Goodview Elementary wide attention, including an Award for Excellence in Architecture from the Virginia Society AIA and recognition from the statewide school boards association and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents.

With its kit-of-parts mentality and contemporary look, Goodview Elementary is now a powerful attraction for students. Bedford County officials are enamored of the award-winning school that doubles as a venue for community events – all for below the state's average cost per student. Bandy, for one, delights in the praise the building has received. But what has moved

him most is a comment from a Goodview student who claimed, “the architects built this school for me.”

Project: Goodview Elementary School

Architect: Spectrum Design, Roanoke (David L. Bandy, AIA, principal-in-charge; Steven M. Tenace, AIA, William W. Huber, AIA, project team)

Consultants: Glenn Earthman (facility planning); Anderson & Associates (civil); Hill Studio (landscape design); International Design Group, Richard L. Bryant CID, ASID (interiors); Ronald W. Rodkey, P.E. (structural); L. Blain Cahill, P.E. (mechanical); Laurence E. Richardson (electrical); Granville E. Grant (plumbing)

Contractor: Blair Construction, Inc.

Client: Bedford County Schools

Panels of frosted glass underscore the curved ceiling and admit light that warms the subtle color scheme in the cafetorium (above).



Community Pride

Cougar Elementary School • VMDO Architects

By Vernon Mays

A tour of Manassas Park is nothing to be inspired by. The small suburb of middle-class homes and industrial parks in burgeoning Northern Virginia is growing fast – and a bit out of control. Recent annexation of Prince William County land has doubled the city's size and almost all of it has been jam-packed with single- and multi-family housing, taxing the school division's undersized facilities.

But change is coming to Manassas Park. And in designing a new elementary school for the growing community, VMDO Architects of Charlottesville has strived to establish a stabilizing sense of place in a community that is full of nowheres.

Situated on the edge of a sprawling tract home development, Cougar Elementary School proudly resides in its suburban setting. It occupies an odd-shaped parcel of land – the least objectionable of several poor choices. Early design schemes

illustrate the challenge in achieving an uncompromising exterior space and a cost-effective, compact school. A breakthrough came with the idea to halt plans for a connector road through the campus. The final design limits vehicular traffic to a pair of cul-de-sacs and allows children safe access to all play areas.

Programmed by a panel of teachers, administrators, and experts in technology, educational methods, and facility design, Cougar Elementary seeks to develop lifelong learners. One of the first exercises was to recast the curriculum to focus on language arts and mathematics, while still providing strong social studies, science, and technology components. Step two was to design the building to reinforce the curriculum shift. "It was an exhaustive process," says Kenneth Thacker, AIA, the project architect for VMDO. "We were in schematic design for almost a year."

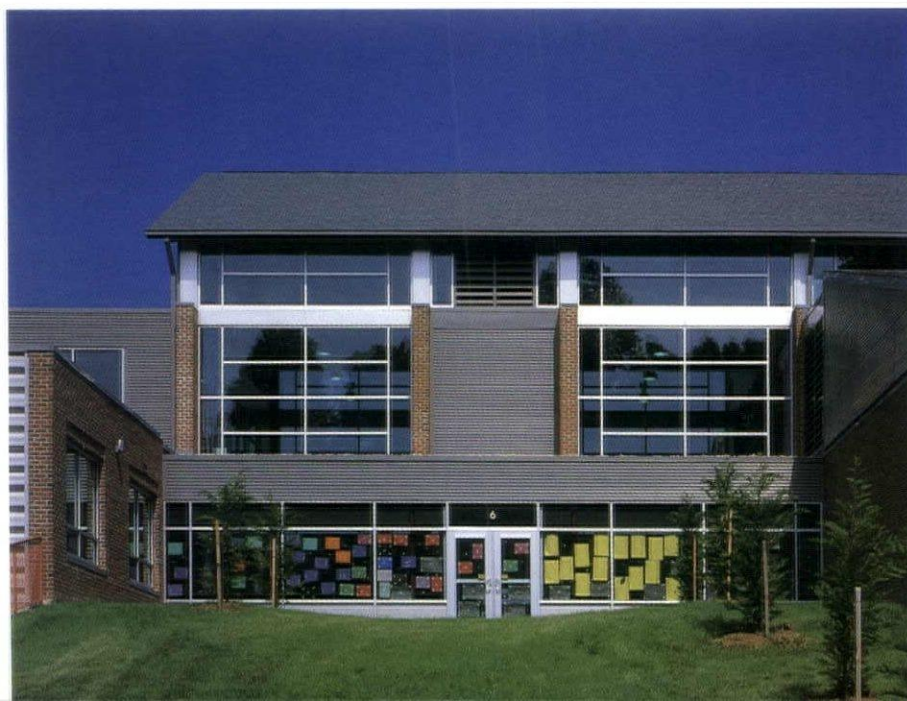


Students enter through a prominent pavilion on the front of the school (left). Three-story academic wings are wedged into the sloped site (above).

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Photos: Prakash Patel

Projecting wings create a courtyard (right) outside of the building's "village square."





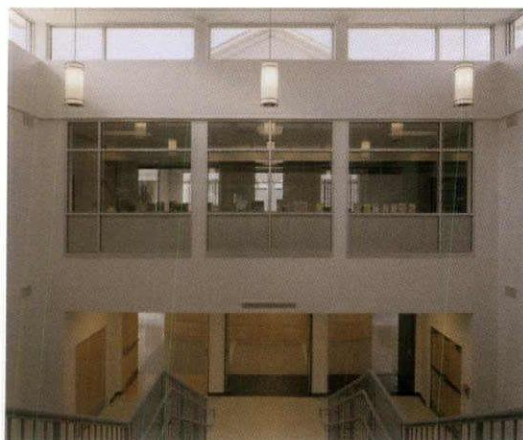
The "village square" easily converts from dining hall to assembly space (above). The main stair is placed in a light well (below) between the academic wings and central gathering space. Writing exercises are made fun through a student-run mail delivery system based in the Wee Deliver post office (facing page).

The resulting academic framework is one in which student-to-teacher ratios are significantly reduced. Social studies and science are taught in specially designed laboratories by teachers dedicated full-time to those subjects, and technology is integral to classroom learning. To ease the transition to school for at-risk students, a preschool wing was incorporated into the design, although its construction has yet to be financed.

The architects conceived of the school as "a learning village." The 1,000-student facility is subdivided into four communities – one preschool and three kindergarten-through-third grade – to achieve a comfortable scale. Each community is housed in a distinct academy denoted with a color-coded set of elements to distinguish it from the others.

From outside, the academic wings are easily identified. "They're as simple as you can get – like Monopoly hotels," notes Thacker. The corrugated-metal siding looks much like the clapboard on the nearby houses; brick covers the most visible parts of the exterior. The combination of materials makes for a pleasing effect, and helps diminish the scale of a building that could have been overpowering to its young occupants.

The building is organized around a central light-filled space. This flexible space, the "village square," hosts breakfast, assemblies, lunch, and community events. The Wee Deliver post office, a unique component of the language arts curriculum, is incorporated in found space beneath the main stair. Other design aspects include separate bus- and car-loading zones,



administrative offices with a clear view of the entrance, and a spacious library overlooking the central square.

The school's placement atop an existing knoll aligns the heart of the school – containing the entrance and most public spaces – with the middle floor of the academies. Each wing holds the same number of students – upper-level kids on the top floor, younger kids on the bottom floor. Shared spaces such as science and computer labs are in-between. School Superintendent Tom DeBolt and a hand-picked building committee encouraged the architects to give prominence to the computer labs in each wing. "They are promoting computers in the way that books were promoted to us," says Thacker.

Cougar Elementary was designed to be close kin – in design terms – to the Manassas Park High School done by VMDO a few years ago. "It's the same kit of parts, but these parts are more fundamental shapes that kids recognize," Thacker points out. Many architectural elements in the primary school reveal themselves at the high school: wood paneling, brick piers, clerestory windows, exposed structural steel, and cabinets that separate circulation from meeting places. "We wanted that continuity to help develop a sense of place where none really exists," Thacker says. "There are so few public spaces in Manassas Park."

Criticism of the school has been limited, although teachers have noted the gymnasium and cafeteria are too small, concessions that were made to a tight budget. For the moment, the entrance through a freestanding pavilion seems overly complicated, but that awkwardness may disappear when the new pre-K wing is built. At that point, the pavilion will link the existing school and the new wing. Until then, Manassas Park can be proud of the architects' success at making a very big building into a place that little kids can get their arms around.

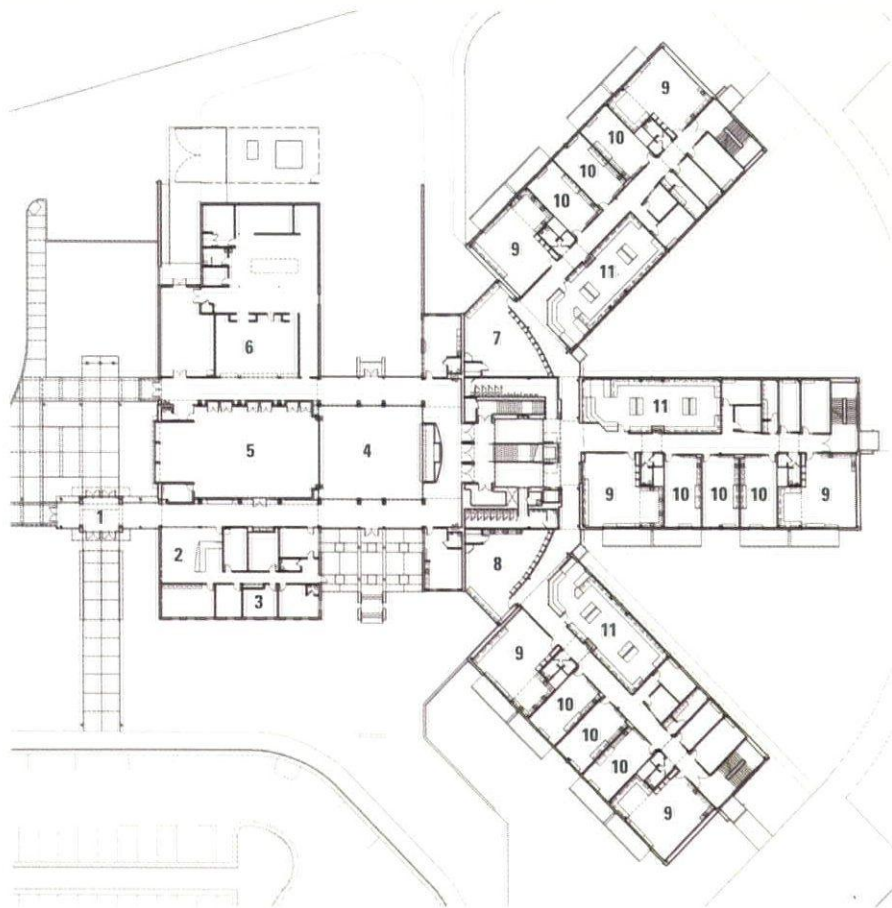
Project: Cougar Elementary School

Architect: VMDO Architects, Charlottesville (Robert W. Moje, AIA, principal-in-charge; Ken Thacker, AIA, project architect; Allison Henry, job captain; William Bradley, Ph.D., educational programmer; Joe Celentano, AIA, specifications; Tatiana Eck, Lorraine Kodumal, Damon Pearson, Erika Shrader, project team)

Consultants: Michael Rettig (block scheduling); Barnes and Johnson, Inc. (civil); Fox and Associates (structural); 2rw Consulting Engineers (mechanical/electrical); EIS, Inc. (food service); Virginia Computer Institute (technology); Susan DeBolt (landscape)

Construction Manager: SPN, Inc., Rockville, Md.

Client: Manassas Park City Schools



Main Floor Plan



- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Entrance | 5 Commons/Fitness | 9 Science Labs |
| 2 Reception | 6 Food Servery | 10 Auxiliary Classrooms |
| 3 Offices | 7 Music Studio | 11 Computer Labs |
| 4 Commons | 8 Art Studio | |

Renewed Legacy

Maggie L. Walker Governor's School • BCWH

By Mary Harding Sadler



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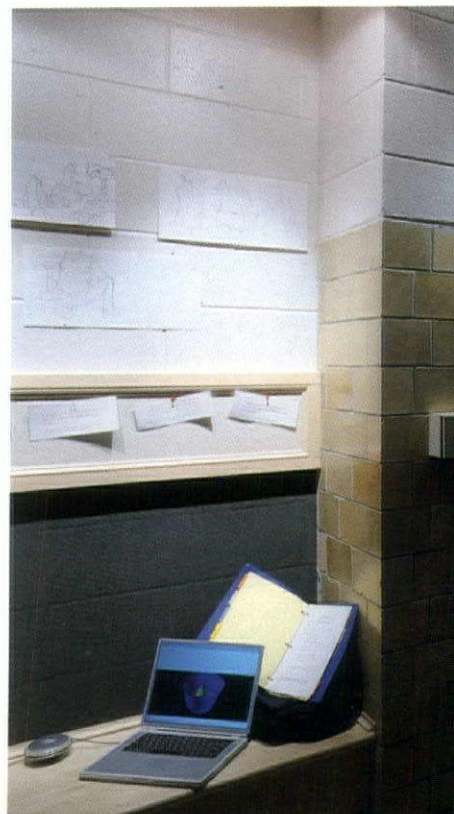
It's like we've moved out of an apartment and into our own house," explained senior Nakeia Monte about her school's new home at the Maggie L. Walker Governor's School. Students in instructor Edwin Slipek's architecture seminar admit nostalgia prevents them from fully enjoying what they call their "new toys" – state-of-the-art facilities that include networked computer labs, sound booths, an auditorium, a black box theater, and a darkroom.

These kids want their school halls to feel more lived-in. They want poster-covered walls, open doors, and the buzz of urban life. The school administration wants to keep a safe, orderly environment within and around this impressive, light-filled school. The school family has waited a decade to move into its own home, a goal finally attained last August.

"It's different from other schools we work with," said Doug Westmoreland, AIA, partner-in-charge at BCWH, the Richmond architecture firm that renovated the streamlined Art Deco building. "When we shadowed Governor's School students, we found that the teachers and students interact more between classes. In this school, every space is a learning space."

Westmoreland, along with project manager Charles Piper, AIA, and the firm's design team, fashioned the project to reflect this unique learning environment. On a small scale, they converted the alcoves once used for lockers into nooks with hardwood benches so students can gather comfortably in hallways. On a larger scale, they transformed a leftover outdoor courtyard into an enclosed skylit student commons. A large open space adjacent to the entrance vestibule, the commons provides a natural link for the library, cafeteria, counselors' offices, and locker rooms. Here the architects have designed something closer to a college student

Wood benches are built into alcoves where lockers once lined the halls (right).





An arc of flagpoles and circular drive announce the entry to the renovated Maggie Walker High School (left).



An enclosed green space (above) is rescued from the rubble of a once-abandoned courtyard (below). Glass block windows mark new additions, including a bridge that links classroom wings to the gymnasium.

union than a high school lounge. In contrast to the commons, which belongs to the entire school community, lounge space on the second floor is largely the domain of seniors. Classroom walls have been removed and the resulting openings framed in steel, linking a stepped forum to senior seminar rooms and lounges.

Built originally by Richmond architects Carneal Johnston & Wright beginning in 1937 and expanded in 1962, Maggie L. Walker High School occupies a prominent corner on Lombardy Street. This monumental high school is the dominant civic building in the neighborhood, with wings that radiate from the central block. While the school's character is formal and institutional, its ornament is Art Deco. Crisp linear reveals and inset tile animate the masonry walls on the exterior, while the random ashlar coursing of the interior concrete block walls adds interest to a utilitarian material.

The building's history has been tightly interwoven with that of Richmond's African-American community since it opened as the city's first vocational high school for blacks. The school was named for Maggie Lena Walker (1867-1934), founder of the current Consolidated Bank and Trust, the oldest black-owned bank in America. Noteworthy alumni include sports star Willie Lanier, Richmond's first two black mayors, and tennis player and humanitarian Arthur Ashe. The product of a progressive city school board and the New Deal (through which it received 45 percent of its original funding), this was the first Richmond school to have an African-American principal and faculty. But in 1989 it was abandoned. Ten years later, the city donated the property to the Governor's School Regional Board.

The building was renovated for the Governor's School for Government and International Studies through a partnership of public and private entities. Along with Petersburg High School,





this project is an exemplar for funding and developing regional magnet schools. The cost of the project is borne by three sources: one-third by participating school districts, one-third by private contributions, and one-third by preservation tax credits.

The constraints of state and federal tax credit programs created clear directives for the architects, who gathered the project team many times to flesh out solutions for installing HVAC and other systems in ways that would not drastically alter the original building, but clearly differentiated. Materials and details used in the new commons area – dark brick, glass block, steel lintels, and diamond-shaped tile – are found throughout the building wherever

the architects altered or expanded the existing building to create new facilities.

Mary Harding Sadler, the project's tax credit consultant, is a principal with Sadler & Whitehead Architects of Richmond.

Project: Maggie L. Walker Governor's School

Architect: BCWH, Richmond (Douglas Westmoreland, AIA, principal-in-charge; Charles Piper, AIA, project manager; Robert E. Comet, AIA, study team director)

Consultants: Stroud Pence & Assoc. (structural); Austin Brockenbrough & Assoc. (civil); Spectrum Design (mechanical/electrical); Engineers Plus (technology engineering); Dias and Associates (technology planning); William Spell (landscape); Sadler & Whitehead (historical consulting)

Contractor: KBS, Incorporated

Client: Maggie L. Walker H.S. Renovation Foundation



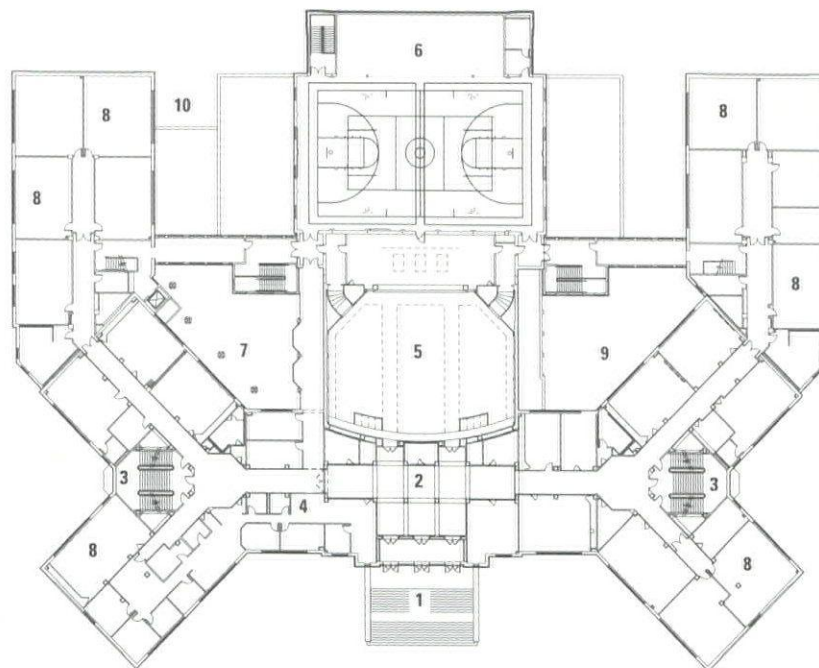


The new student commons provides a handy link between the library, cafeteria, counselors' offices, and locker rooms.



The high school's library opens directly onto the student commons, a space that was once an exterior courtyard.

27



First Floor Plan



- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Front Entrance | 6 Gymnasium |
| 2 Main Lobby | 7 Commons (below) |
| 3 Existing Stairs | 8 Classrooms |
| 4 Administration | 9 Exterior Courtyard |
| 5 Auditorium | 10 Rear Entrance (below) |



When work began, the auditorium was damaged by water and fire (above); now it is well-equipped for productions (left).



New Orientation

Frost Montessori School • Bruce R. Wardell, Architect



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Architect Bruce Wardell, AIA, approached the Frost Montessori School project with clear instructions from the client: emulate the concepts of Montessori education in order to augment the activities taking place inside. Asked to think of each classroom as a “prepared environment” – a term that reflects the desire to create settings that reinforce intellectual development – the design team immediately knew the new school should facilitate discussion and collaboration, while evoking calm.

But how? After boning up on Montessori principles, the team at Bruce R. Wardell, Architect, of Charlottesville, focused on “additive teaching,” a method through which concepts are taught using a single variable. The design for a single classroom unit was iterated around a central gathering space. Here the variable is orientation, which is perceived by changes in light and exposure. The architects used a limited palette of materials: copper, brick, glass, and steel, each used in a distinctive way that highlights its character. One of the four classrooms was intended for students age three and under, so the team seized the opportunity to differentiate this element of the repetitive plan, rotating the small room slightly off the rectilinear grid.

Each classroom contains a pivotal element – the “corner condition” – that speaks directly to the students. This is a wall proportioned to children, a seven-foot-tall plane with two small windows set at a child’s eye level. Surrounding glass panels

admit light while isolating and emphasizing the embracing corner. By shrinking the scale of the room, this area has become a magnet for the students, an activity hub from which they disperse to visit learning stations placed elsewhere in the classroom.

By taking into account the tenets of Montessori education, the architects have created a school that enhances the program, providing a challenging, yet serene, learning environment where students feel important, intrigued, and at home.

A bold entrance canopy and copper-clad service spaces convey a powerful image (above). Each classroom features a kid-scaled corner (below).



Photos: Charles Shoffner

Engaged by Hanover County to address a booming population, the project team from Richmond-based Moseley Architects designed a large but elegantly organized school for pre-kindergarten through fifth-grade students.

The challenge of constructing a 900-student school without overwhelming young students with its size proved a creative impetus for the architectural team led by William H. Riggs, AIA. They organized the academic wings with student size in mind, locating the youngest students adjacent to the bus loop to reduce walking distances. Each hallway is color-coded to guide students through the school. Clerestory windows illuminate the hallways, also visually shortening their length.

The wedge-shaped structure locates public spaces – such as the cafeteria, gymnasium, administration, and media center – at the pivot point, from which academic halls extend and wrap around an interior courtyard. The courtyard design provides more than an open recreation space; it also outfits the academic classrooms with windows that bring in natural light, and creates a circulation loop for fluid movement by students.

Public spaces are distinguished by exposed structural elements, such as steel trusses and beams, ductwork cloaked in vivid colors, indirect lighting, and brick walls. Continuous clerestory windows allow light to flow in from above in the gymnasium, cafeteria, and media center.

Designed for the surrounding community as well as the students themselves, Pole Green Elementary can be used as a public meeting hall, with academic wings secured while the public areas are opened and partitions removed to provide an expansive space. Like many schools being built today, the well-organized Pole Green Elementary is called upon to serve a variety of functions efficiently – and stands to serve the community needs of Hanover County for years to come.



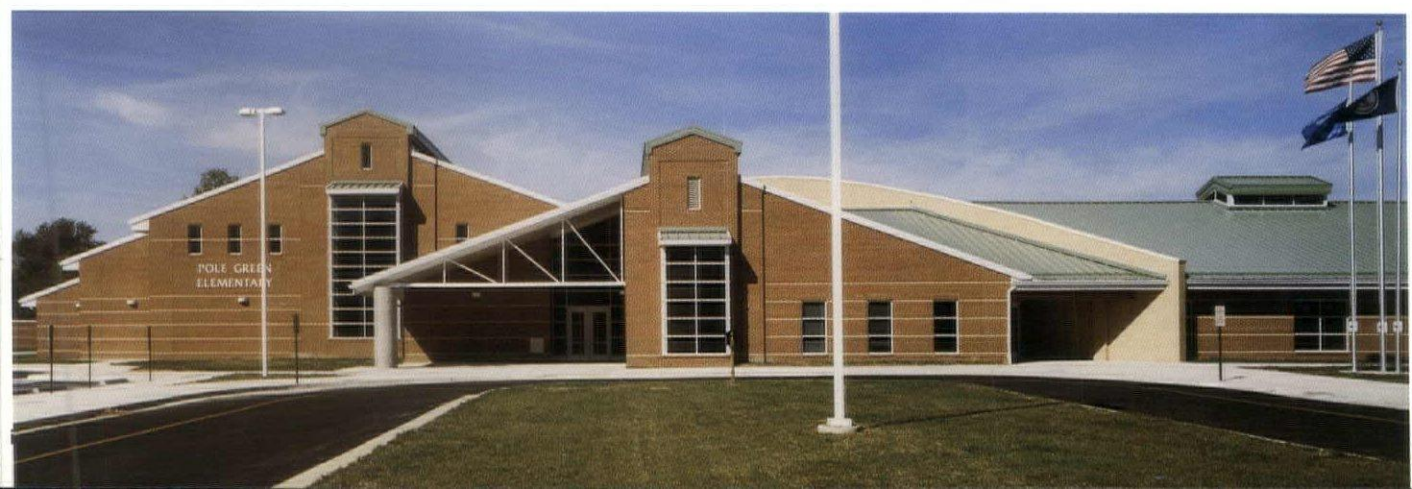
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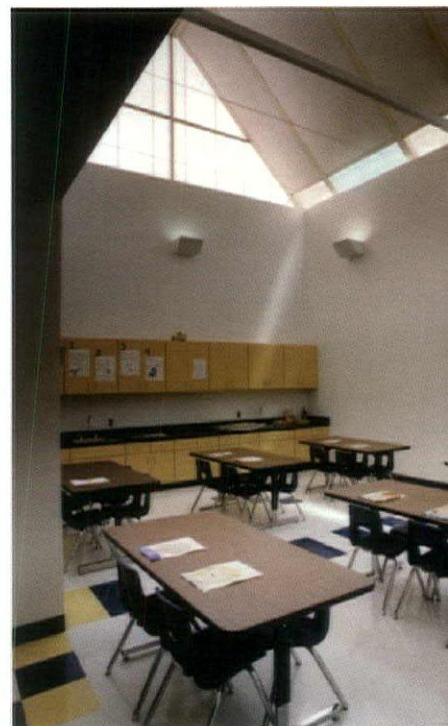
Primary Asset

Pole Green Elementary School • Moseley Architects



The cylindrical lobby (above) is centrally located for easy access to the offices, media center, and cafeteria. To avoid a bulky look, the 900-student facility was designed with varying roof heights (below).





Rural Retreats

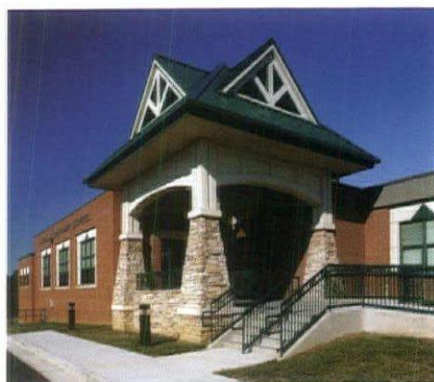
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Carroll County Makeovers • Rodriguez Ripley Maddux Motley

Sheltered entrances were key additions to each school (above left, below left). At Oakland Elementary a courtyard was converted to a new art room (above).

In southwest Virginia, rural Carroll County found itself in the unenviable position of needing to update all of its schools in order to meet state Department of Education standards. Phase I of the program was to address the county's five elementary schools, each of which required new heating and air conditioning systems, additional classrooms to lower the pupil/teacher ratio, and rooms for special education, music, and art. A gymnasium was to be added to each school, as well.

The design challenge was taken on by Motley + Associates, of Roanoke, which recently merged to become Rodriguez Ripley Maddux Motley. The architects conducted 51 meetings with the local communities and school staffs to determine a course of action. While each of the five schools had similar programs and existing buildings, it was clear that each community wanted the renovations to create a school that was unique to its locale. This attitude provided a special opportunity



for the architects to expand and renovate the facilities while creating distinct architecture in each location.

A variety of materials was used in imaginative ways to transform these five bland buildings into community icons. Architectural themes ranging from Victorian to "mountain rustic" to contemporary were developed. The existing brick exteriors were expanded by using matching brick with brick accents on the additions. An important aspect of each school design is the metal roof structures that provide covered

walkways for arriving and departing students. In addition, window replacements were designed to complement new windows so that the new and old construction blend easily.

Each existing site was limited by topography, building placement, and traffic patterns. In response, the site plans were reconfigured to provide a school bus entry, a monitored entrance for the public, and play areas that are safely accessible to students.



A Victorian theme informed the design of the additions at Fancy Gap (left).



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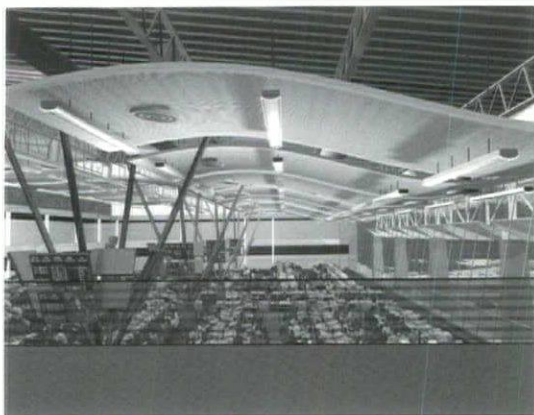
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Architect: Baskerville & Son, Richmond, with Bond Hugo Farley, Richmond
Project: Dominion Phase One Tredegar Expansion

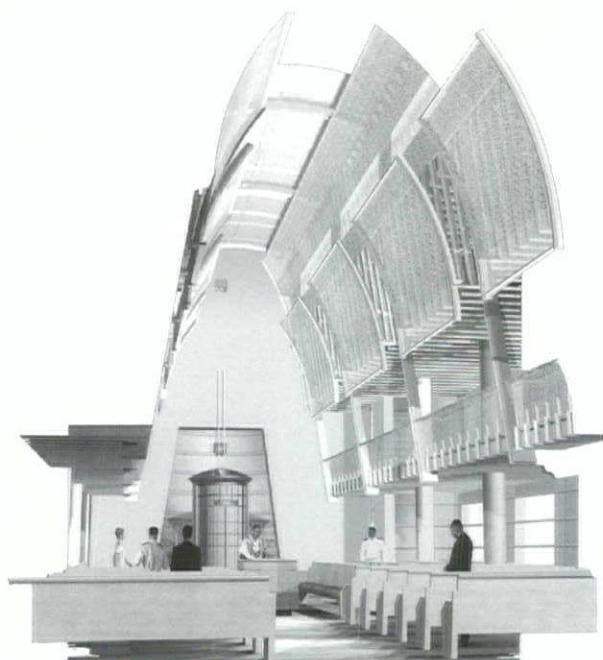
As Phase One of a master plan to expand Dominion's corporate headquarters, the firms designed a 41,000 s.f. trading floor, which acts as a broker, trading resources such as electricity, oil, natural gas, and coal. A 2-story space with a surrounding mezzanine fosters employee communication. Tel: 804-343-1010



Architect: Magoon & Associates, Williamsburg
Project: Christopher Newport University Spectator Seating Facility

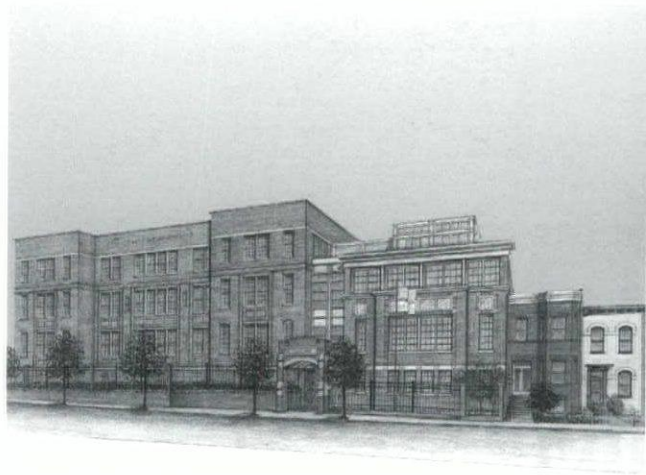
Magoon & Associates has designed the 3,100-seat spectator facility for the university's outdoor athletic events. The design includes lower-level restrooms and concessions, an upper-level President's box with private viewing platform, a press box, and an elevator tower for wheelchair accessibility. Tel: 757-253-8675

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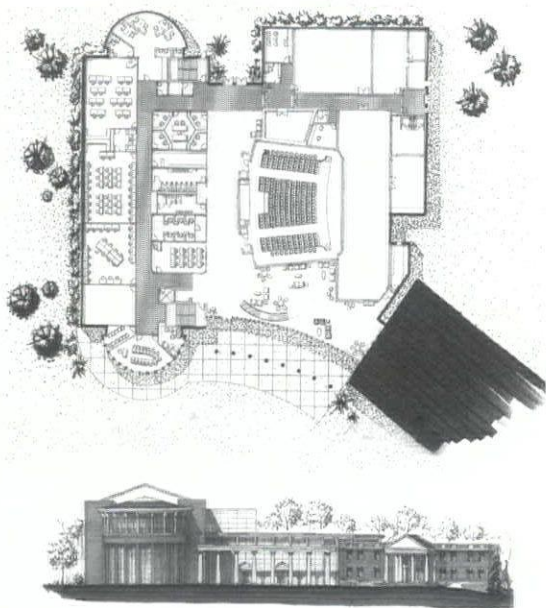
Architect: Boggs & Partners Architects, Annapolis, Md.
Project: Uriah P. Levy Center & Jewish Chapel, U.S. Naval Academy

This 30,000 s.f. U.S. Naval Academy project includes a 350-seat chapel, media center, offices, and reception areas. The chapel will display traditional Judaic art, woven into elevated metal wire-cloth panels that filter an ethereal light into the three-story space. Tel: 301-858-8118



Architect: Quinn Evans Architects, Washington, D.C.
Project: Cleveland Elementary School

This project includes extensive renovations of the existing school and an addition to house a new cafeteria, gymnasium, administrative offices, and art room. New mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and sprinkler systems will be incorporated, as well as modern telecommunications. Tel: 202-298-6700



Architect: Wiley & Wilson, Lynchburg, with McMillan Smith & Partners, Spartanburg, S.C.

Project: Centennial Hall, Lynchburg College

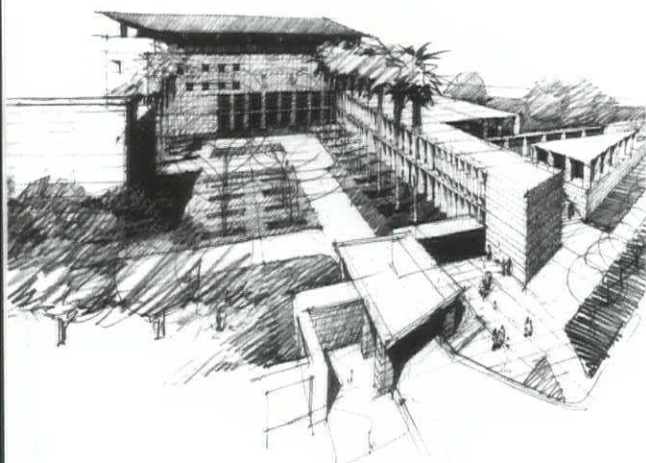
The new 65,000 s.f. Business and Communications School will house classrooms, offices, auditorium, TV studio, publishing labs, newsrooms, video/edit room, control rooms, and student commons. Tel: 434-947-1901 / info@wileywilson.com



Architect: Daggett & Grigg Architects, Charlottesville

Project: CSX Office Building

This 34,000 s.f. office building occupies a site reclaimed from the CSX Railroad by the city of Charlottesville. The building is designed to offer office condominiums in a 19th century warehouse aesthetic reflecting the style of buildings of that era in the downtown historic district. Tel: 434-971-8848



Architect: DMJMH + N, Arlington

Project: U.S. Embassy Compound

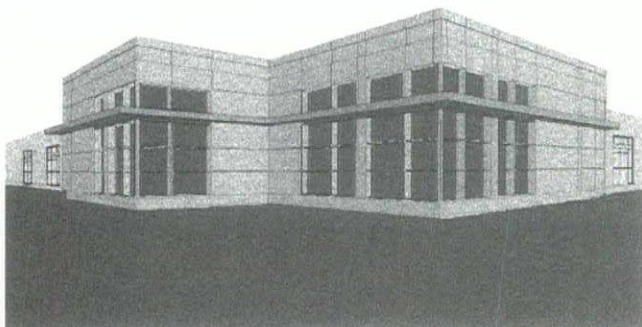
The U.S. Embassy compound will be part of a diplomatic enclave located in Abuja, Nigeria. Multiple structures connected by landscaped zones and covered walks create a campus atmosphere. The office building contains a 4-story atrium with open balconies, fostering a community environment. Tel: 703-807-2500



Architect: Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern, Inc. (HSMM), Virginia Beach

Project: Hampton Community Center

Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern is completing the design of this \$3 million, 21,000 s.f. facility, which includes a gymnasium, fitness areas, aerobics rooms, and meeting rooms. It features a 30-foot-tall wall for rock climbing in the main lobby. Tel: 757-306-4000 / sloomis@hsmm.com



Architect: BCWH, Richmond

Project: Chesterfield Technical Center Addition

This 35,500 s.f. addition contains flexible technology classrooms, labs, commons, and dining facilities designed to support information technology instruction. The facility also provides classrooms and administration for the Chesterfield Schools Adult Education program. Tel: 804-788-4774

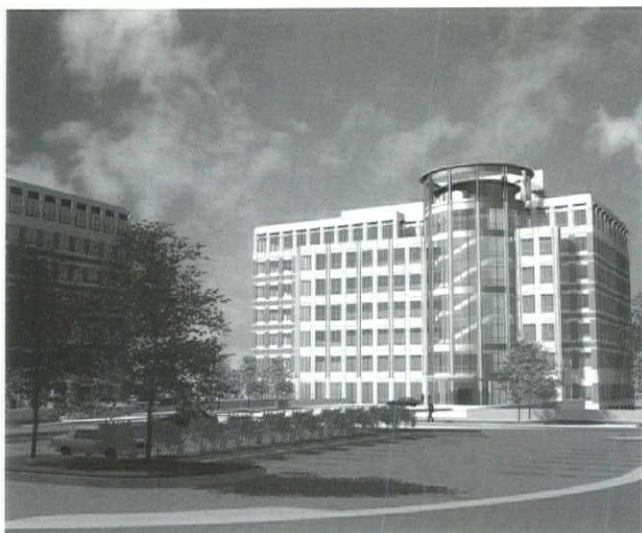


Architect: Mitchell/Matthews Architects and Urban Planners, Charlottesville

Project: Sweet Briar College Residential Complex

Mitchell/Matthews has been selected to design a residential complex at the western end of the central lawn at Sweet Briar College. Designed in 1901 by Ralph Adams Cram in rural Amherst County, the campus's Georgian buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. Tel: 434-979-7550

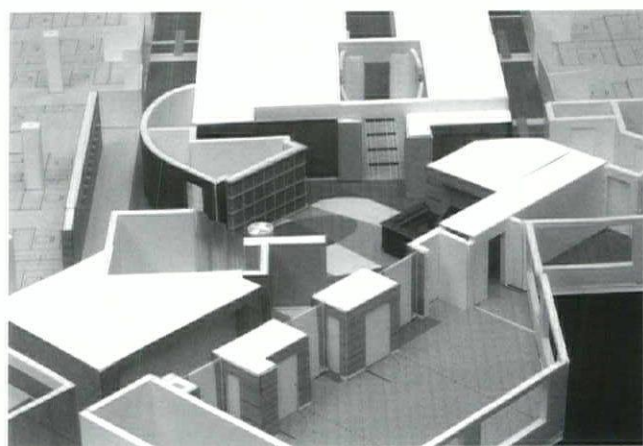
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Architect: Boggs & Partners Architects, Annapolis, Md.

Project: Sallie Mae Headquarters

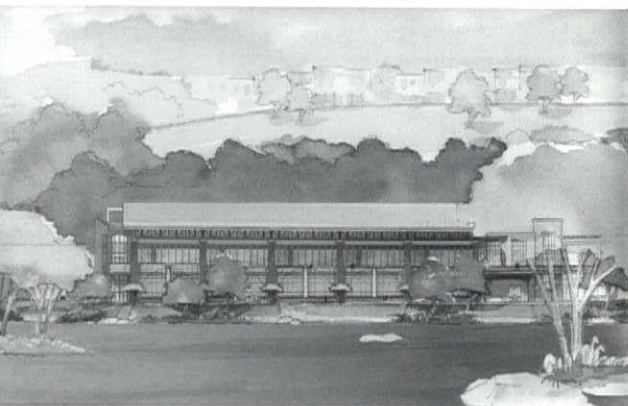
This new 230,000 s.f. headquarters will consist of offices, executive board rooms, conference centers, a cafeteria, and a fitness center. Spaces within the building, including the employee working environment, will reflect the client's mission: education, lending, and leadership. Tel: 301-858-8118



Architect: Spector, Knapp & Baughman, Washington, D.C.

Project: Reznick, Fedder & Silverman

The accounting firm of Reznick, Fedder & Silverman will occupy 70,000 s.f. of office space in an unusually shaped building on the edge of an urban/suburban location. The design solution responds to both conditions. Construction will be completed in April 2002. Tel: 202-332-2434



Architect: Bond Hugo Farley, Richmond, with Baskerville & Son, Richmond
Project: Dominion Trading Floor

The trading floor is a 41,000 s.f. open space housing Dominion's trading departments. The structure reflects the forms and tectonic power that characterize early buildings along the riverfront. Proximity to the river and retention of views from Oregon Hill were key design objectives. Tel: 804-359-8984

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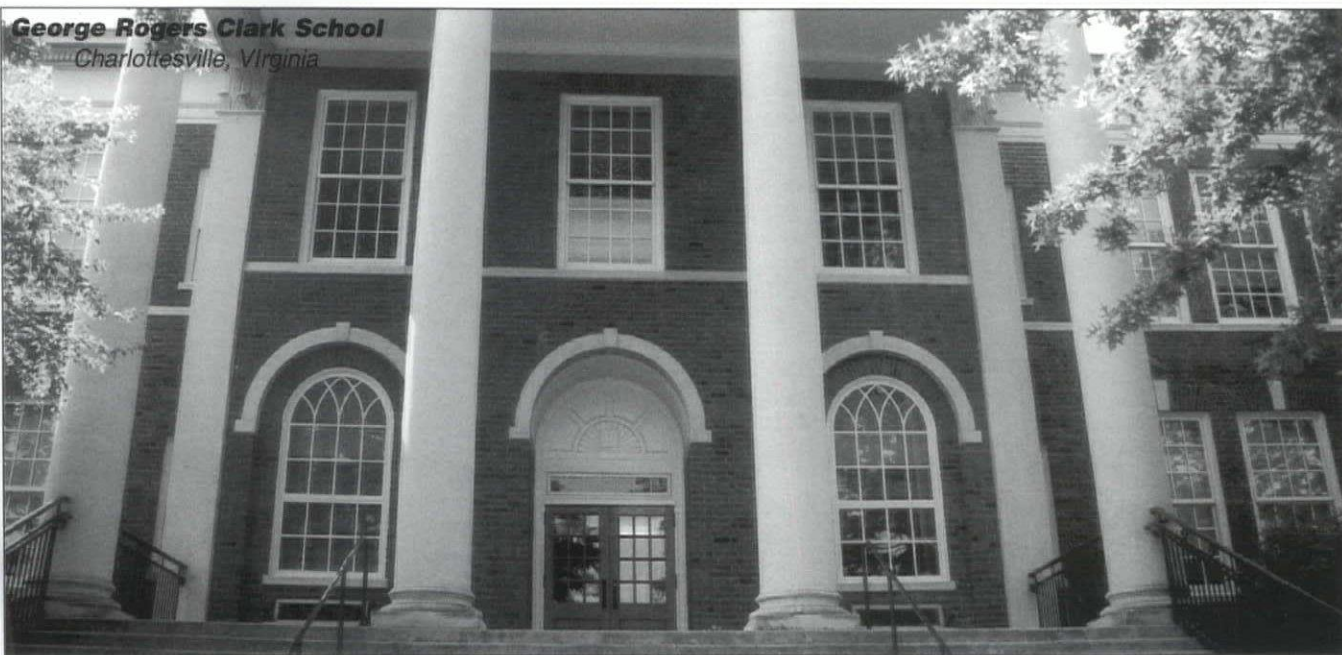


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The TAF Group, upon moving into its new Virginia Beach offices, dreamt up a fitting challenge for summer intern Nick Simpson: create workstations for the new space, incorporating leftover 30-by-60-inch standardized furniture panels from the firm's old office and reinforcing the new locale's design scheme of exposed structure, vivid color, and raw industrial materials. Simpson's answer was the MSU, or Mobile Storage Unit.

A project team consisting of Thomas Ellis, Jared Coffin, AIA, and David Keith, AIA, guided Simpson along the way. Simpson, who has since graduated from the University of Virginia, conducted an in-house charrette, producing a number of ideas for the adaptive reuse of the panels. Finally, he chose the most practical option, a storage unit. The refined result is a flexible cabinet that both defines working space and provides multiple types of storage.

To construct the unit, two panels are stripped of fabric. Each panel is coated with chalkboard paint on one side; an adhesive surface is applied to the other. The framework of metal conduit and ribbed metal siding mimics industrial elements in the office's interior. A stretched wire fabric forms the back of the MSU, while the conduit engages panels by acting as a support for shelves, snaking its way up and down the unit. The conduit ends after creating a rail that can be used to support a display or hold chalk. A 6-inch wire chase in the center leads to a retractable extension cord that hangs from each unit to access electricity. A continuous power line along the ceiling of the studio allows the MSU to be located anywhere within a 30-foot radius on its 5-inch castors.

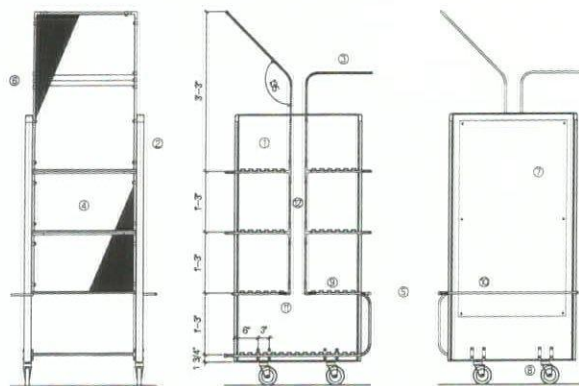
The design also won an honorable mention in the Totem Design/Herman Miller for the Home Workspaces Competition held nationally. But more than being a successful exercise in creativity and conservation, the Mobile Storage Unit project is noteworthy for allowing a student and firm to create the proverbial something out of nothing.

— Rebecca E. Ivey



Photo: Jared Coffin

The MSU transforms mundane materials into a unit with multiple functions and a sleek industrial aesthetic.



With its largely rectilinear configuration, the unit provides an orderly solution to storage, mobility, and electricity supply problems.