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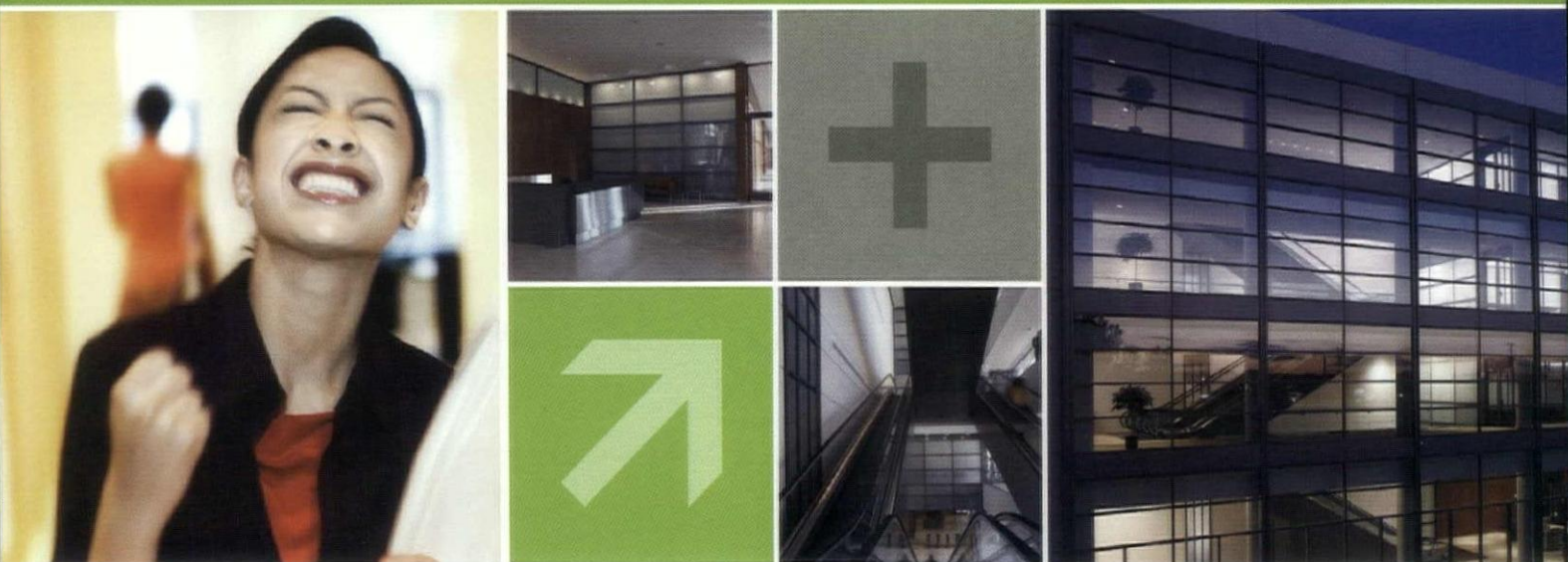
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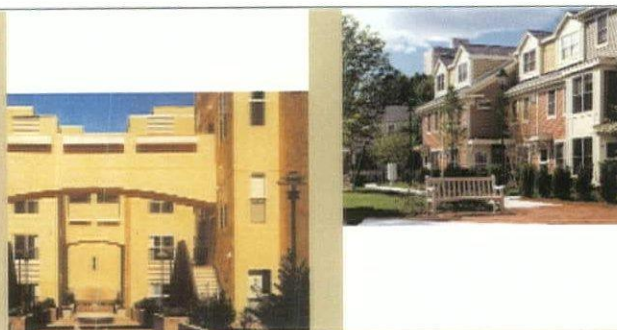
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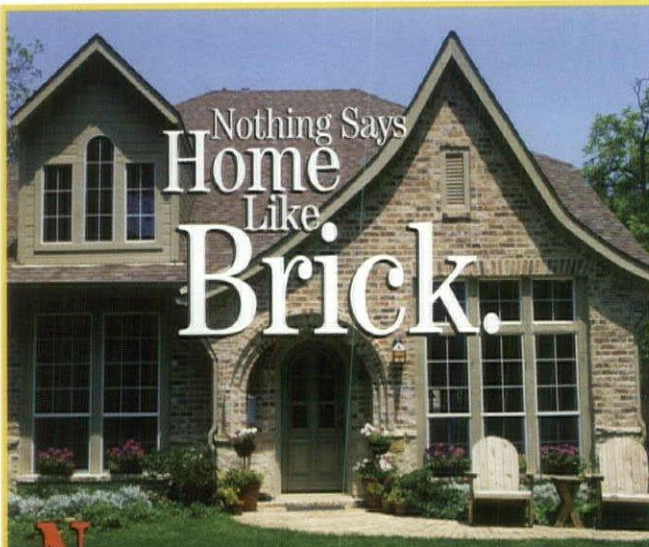


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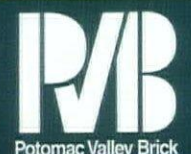
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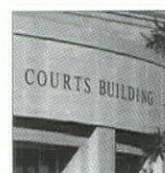
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Inform (ISSN 1047-8353) is published five times a year by the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects and is funded in part by a grant from the Virginia Center for Architecture Foundation.

Subscription rate: \$22 for one year, \$6 for single copies of quarterly issues. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to **Inform**, The Virginia Center for Architecture, 2501 Monument Ave., Richmond, VA 23220. Telephone: 804-644-3041. Note to subscribers: When changing address, please send address label from a recent issue and your new address. Periodicals postage paid at Richmond, Virginia, and additional mailing offices. Editorial offices: 2501 Monument Ave., Richmond, VA 23220. Phone: 804-644-3041. Copyright 2005 by **Inform**.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Positive Signs

I've seen the best of times and the worst of times for architects. From where I sit right now, things are looking pretty rosy.

Fifteen years ago, the profession of architecture was in dire straits. A downturn in the nation's economy all but halted construction projects in the private sector and took a major toll on public works, as well. Firms were scaling back drastically. Classified ads for open positions were greeted with a flood of applicants, many of whom were overqualified. Principals of long-established architecture firms were wringing their hands wondering how they would support their practices more than six months down the road. In essence, they feared they were half a year away from shutting down their firms. And that degree of pessimism was widespread.

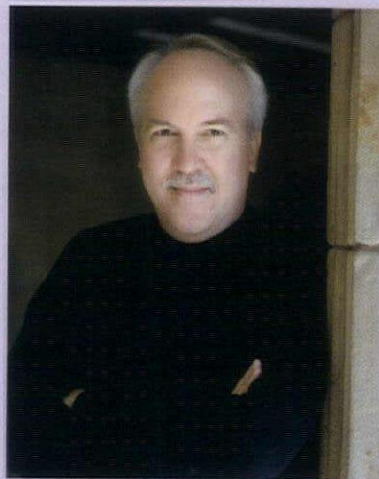
It's a much different story today. Most architects are as busy as they've ever been and the profession is expanding its expertise into new areas. To understand the sense of optimism that pervades the architecture profession, one only has to look at the four companies that are profiled in this issue under the category of "Emerging Firms." The eldest of the four, Commonwealth Architects, has been in business only six years. But, by assembling a wide-ranging team of experienced pros, this Richmond practice has mushroomed from two to 40 employees and won commissions for high-profile historic rehabilitation jobs across the state. Most of these projects are in urban centers that are still on the comeback trail from the flight to the suburbs that began 50 years ago. So it is not an overstatement to say that cities are being saved. And, although founding principal Robert Mills dismisses some of Commonwealth's success as "dumb luck," there is strong evidence that professional competence and good strategic planning have contributed, as well.

Slightly west on I-64, the husband/wife combo of Christopher Hays and Allison Ewing are bringing an international portfolio of work to roost in Charlottesville. After years of globe-trotting as principals at William McDonough + Partners, the couple's Hays + Ewing Design Studio will allow them to spend more time at home with their two children and give them greater control of their professional lives. In the process, they are able to function as a wellspring of knowledge on sustainability issues for clients who are so inclined. Hays, as well, is involved as a developer of a 10-unit residential project that is breaking new ground in terms of how it combines ecological concerns with marketability.

A hundred miles away, in a light-filled studio located just a few blocks from the White House, John Burke and Todd Ray of Studio27 Architecture pursue their share of conventional commissions for residential and commercial design. But they also have made time to work on "big picture" projects such as a series of affordable housing prototypes that are adaptable to individual clients. The Texas developer who hired them is building the first of these prototypes now. Meanwhile, down in the mountainous surroundings of Roanoke, architects Lora Katz and Mark McConnel, of Katz McConnel + Associates, complement their emphasis on good design with well-rounded skills in project financing, interior design, and historic preservation. Their niche is multi-dimensional.

The broad range of activities in which these firms are involved bodes well for the architecture profession. Not only do these initiatives reflect a high level of optimism, ambition, and accomplishment, but they speak to the expanding influence that architects are having on important decisions in many communities. From my point of view, these few case studies demonstrate a healthy entrepreneurial spirit, and one that is grounded in solid values. That tells me architects – and architecture – are in a very good place these days.

—Vernon Mays





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Home Court Advantage

By creating an adaptable arena and a striking new landmark for Old Dominion University, Moseley Architects of Virginia Beach performs a crowd-pleaser with the Ted Constant Convocation Center. *By Rab McClure, AIA*

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Dynamic, Progressive, and Green

Moseley Architects' engineering and computing center at Old Dominion University reflects technological savvy, exuberant ambition, and environmental sensitivity. *By Rab McClure, AIA*

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Portfolio: Emerging Firms

An entrepreneurial spirit continues to spawn new architecture firms in the region. Inform profiles four such practices that are quickly making their mark in a competitive profession.

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Design Lines

new developments in design

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Taking Note

doing the small thing well



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On the cover:

Ted Constant Convocation Center.
Photo by Maylone Photography.

In our next issue:

Libraries Past and Present

Visions for Architecture

On November 4, more than 350 guests gathered in the Greater Richmond Convention Center ballroom to recognize the year's architectural achievements and support the continued growth of the Virginia Center for Architecture at the eighth annual *Visions for Architecture* celebration. Among the evening's honorees, SMBW Architects principal Willard M. Scribner, FAIA, of Richmond, received the 2005 William C. Noland Medal and Reston's LeMay Erickson Architects was cited with the T. David Fitz-Gibbon Architecture Firm Award.

Virginia Center for Architecture Foundation Chairman Kirk Train, AIA, noted that the Center strives to become "a cultural amenity for our community and state, and an advocate for values such as farsighted planning, environmental responsibility, and inclusiveness in the American dream of homeownership." Adding that the Center is focused on elevating the level of discussion about design, Train introduced guest speaker Susan Stamberg, who closely follows trends in art and architecture.

Now a Special Correspondent for National Public Radio, Stamberg co-hosted the national nightly news program *All Things Considered* for 14 years. Although she has won every major award in broadcasting, Stamberg admitted one of her proudest achievements was serving as Public Director on the board of the American Institute of Architects.

Susan Stamberg enjoys a light moment with Foundation President John Braymer.



The William C. Noland Medal Willard M. Scribner, FAIA

The highest honor given to a Virginia architect was received this year by Willard M. Scribner, FAIA, a founding principal of SMBW Architects of Richmond. The Noland Medal is given to recognize architects who have established a distinguished body of accomplishments, sustained over time, which span a broad spectrum of the profession and transcend normal professional activities.

Scribner joined the Richmond firm of Glave Newman Anderson Architects following his graduation from the University of Virginia, and quickly rose to principal. In 1991, he and three colleagues spun off from the firm to create SMBW, which has grown to become a key player in significant projects such as the Greater Richmond Convention Center, the recladding of Richmond City Hall, and expansion of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. A mentor to young architects, Scribner helped establish the SMBW Fellows Program and conducts professional practice classes at the University of Virginia.

Scribner has played an active role in Richmond urban planning since 1990, and as Richmond City Planning Commission chairman he was instrumental in efforts to revitalize the city's downtown. As chair of Richmond's Public Arts Committee, he was responsible for establishing a formal Percent for the Arts Program. Scribner's leadership of the Virginia Center for Architecture Foundation played a large part in the purchase and restoration of the Richmond mansion that now houses the Center.



Medalist Will Scribner with wife, Kathy.

Photos: Taylor Dabney

T. David Fitz-Gibbon Architecture Firm Award LeMay Erickson Architects

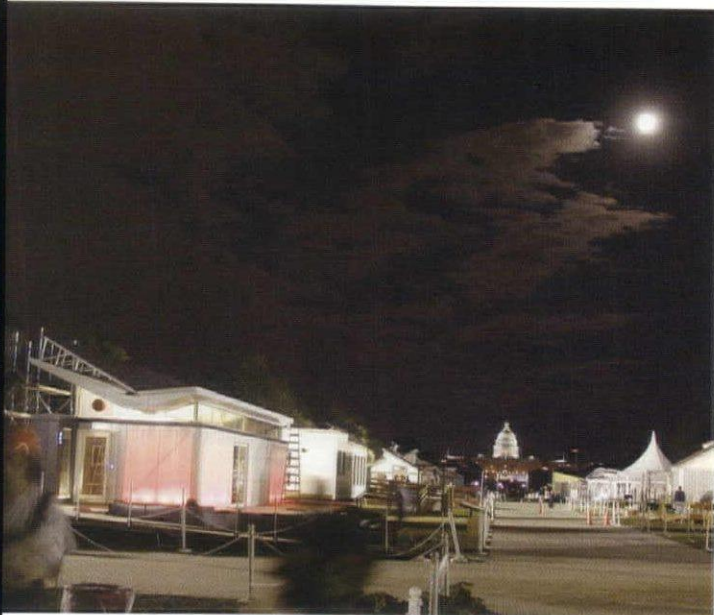
A reputation for excellence and dedication to quality design and client service was rewarded when the Reston firm of LeMay Erickson Architects was tapped as the recipient of the T. David Fitz-Gibbon Architecture Firm Award. LeMay Erickson was founded in 1986 by Michael LeMay, AIA, and Paul Erickson, AIA. They are now joined by Jared D. Willcox, AIA, as the third principal in the firm.

Over time, LeMay Erickson's commissions have grown steadily in scale and complexity, expanding from a single generalist studio executing park shelters and residential additions to a business completing multi-million-dollar church expansions. Having established itself as an expert in religious and public safety projects during its first 15 years, LeMay Erickson recently added two studios to focus on commercial and residential development.

The firm's principals demonstrate their commitment to the profession through their continued involvement with emerging architects through teaching and registration exam preparation. The partners have been active in their professional community for more than 30 years at all levels. Following the lead of the firm's principals, other staff members are active in civic and professional organizations.



Erickson, LeMay, and Willcox receive congratulations from VSAIA President Scott Spence (second from right).



Virginia Tech's entry (at left, above) stood out under lunar light, as well.

Hokies Make Strong Showing in Second Solar Decathlon

A hotly contested 2005 Solar Decathlon was won this fall by a team of students from the University of Colorado. Eighteen teams representing universities from 13 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, and Spain entered the competition with full-scale demonstration houses that were judged to determine which one best blended aesthetics and modern conveniences with maximum energy production and optimal efficiency. The buildings were displayed for public viewing on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., from Oct. 7-16.

"These homes are helping to bring the promise of solar power to reality," said Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman. "It's inspiring to see these young people work together through the design and building stages of these next-generation homes."

From the outset each team designed its solar house bearing in mind that it had to be powered entirely by the sun. The students competed in 10 areas, ranging from architecture, livability, and comfort to how well the buildings provided energy for heating and cooling, hot water, lighting, and appliances. Each house also had to produce enough "extra" power to operate an electric car.

Virginia Tech took the early lead by winning the first two contests – Architecture and Dwelling – and earning 299 out of a possible 300 points. "We saw some amazingly high-quality work across the board and it exceeded our expectations," said Sarah Suzanka, who chaired the Architecture contest judging. When the final tally was announced at the close of the event, Colorado finished with 853 points, followed closely by Cornell University and California Polytechnic State University. Virginia Tech slipped to fourth. The University of Maryland was the only other team in the mid-Atlantic to field an entry.

Lead sponsorship of the Solar Decathlon comes from the energy department's National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The agency's belief is that as students strive to conserve every watt of electricity generated by the houses' solar panels, they will absorb the lesson that solar energy is a precious commodity. Along the way, the students also learn about high-tech materials, innovation, fund-raising, and the skill required to communicate with a team.

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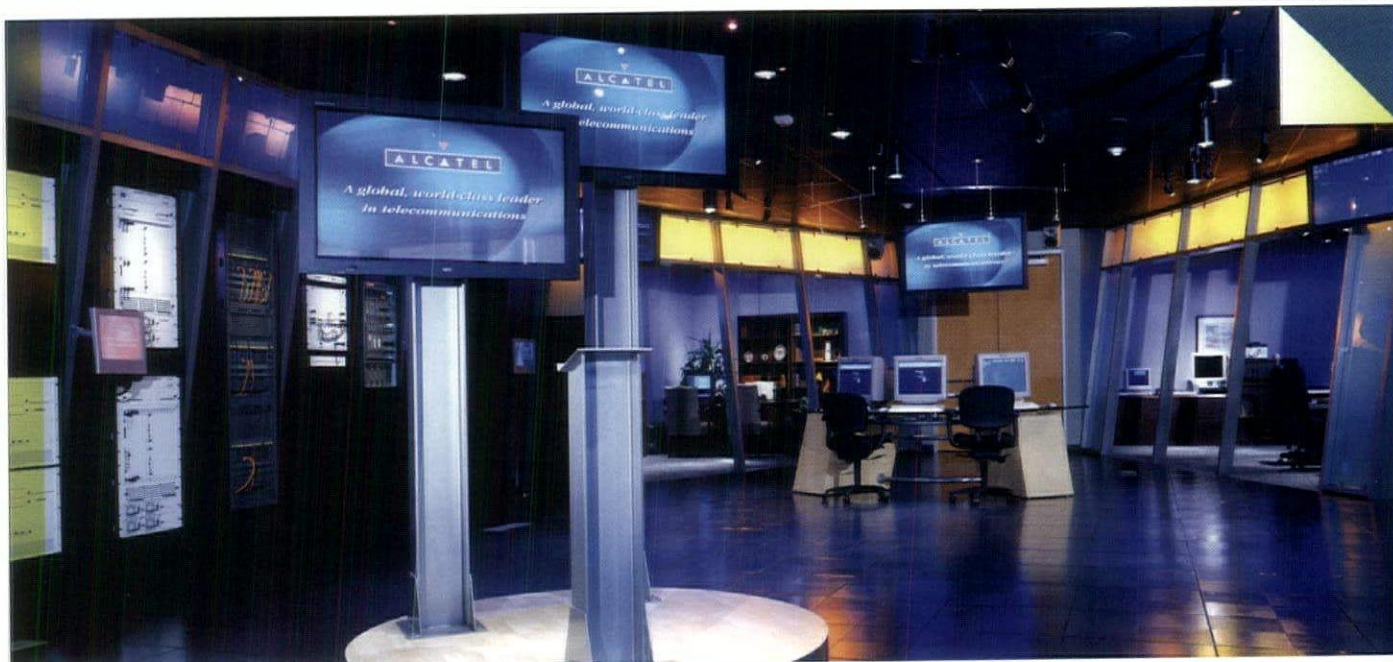
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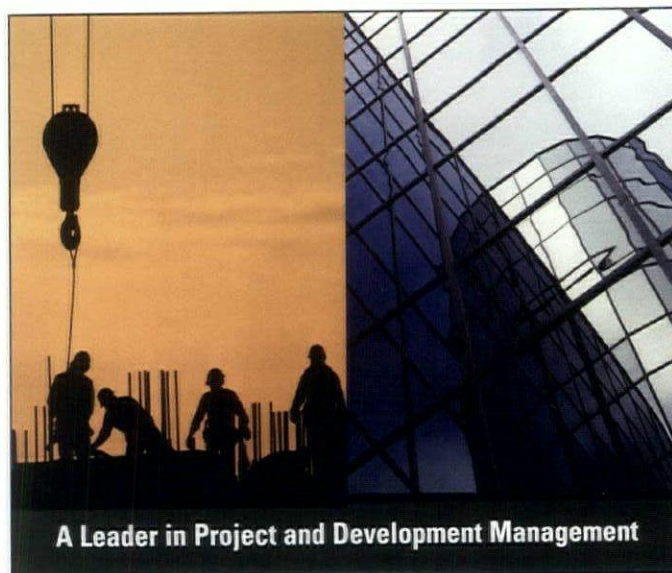
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Planners, Preservationists Address Prospects of Gulf Coast Recovery

If Hurricane Katrina can rightly be considered one of the worst calamities to befall the United States, the disaster also presents an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild and restore the devastated Gulf Coast region. Yet major questions remain, including what gets rebuilt, how that rebuilding process will occur, and who makes those decisions. "I see it both as tragedy and opportunity," said Sara Galvan, managing editor of *The Next American City* magazine. "I'm confident the Gulf Coast will be rebuilt."

In November, Galvan joined a panel of planners and preservationists who met at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., to examine the financial, logistical, and political challenges of the post-Katrina era. The event also featured presentations by Paris Rutherford, director of urban design for RTKL Associates; Peter Brink, vice president for programs at the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Saroj Jha, senior infrastructure specialist at the World Bank.

Even as they acknowledged the need for architects, preservationists, and others to be engaged in Gulf Coast recovery, the panel repeatedly stressed the importance of local involvement and decision-making authority. "Even the most well-intentioned planners," Galvan said, "must be checked by a diverse group of individuals with local knowledge."

Too often, noted Jha, local communities are relied upon in the immediate wake of a disaster, only to be shunted aside in sub-

Mark Wolfe/Courtesy FEMA



The force of Hurricane Katrina completely destroyed many buildings, such as this landmark church in Biloxi, Mississippi.

sequent months and years. "Once the professionals take over and communities take a step back," Jha said, "[solutions] are brought to the community and they are merely asked whether they like them or not." It is necessary, Jha continued, for local, state, and federal governments to develop an institutional framework for mitigation and recovery at every stage. Specifically, Rutherford outlined four steps that comprise a roadmap for change in the Gulf Coast: readying the infrastructure, recalibrating the regulations, creating catalyst projects, and strategizing for the future. In addition to damaged infrastructure, Rutherford noted

continued on page 10

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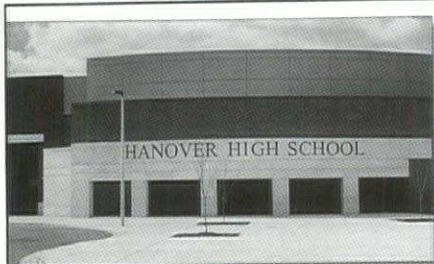
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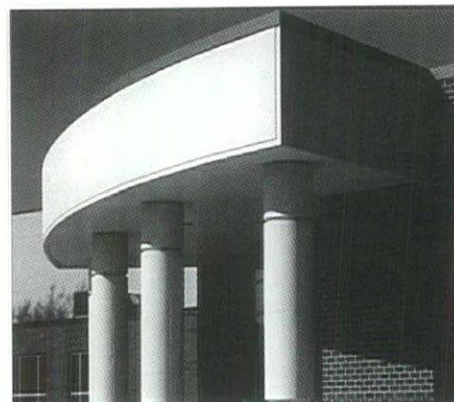
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that the region's reputation – and especially New Orleans's – had suffered from unflattering images of looting and poverty. "We need to examine land-use and marketing policies and think more carefully about how local character creates a sense of place," he said.

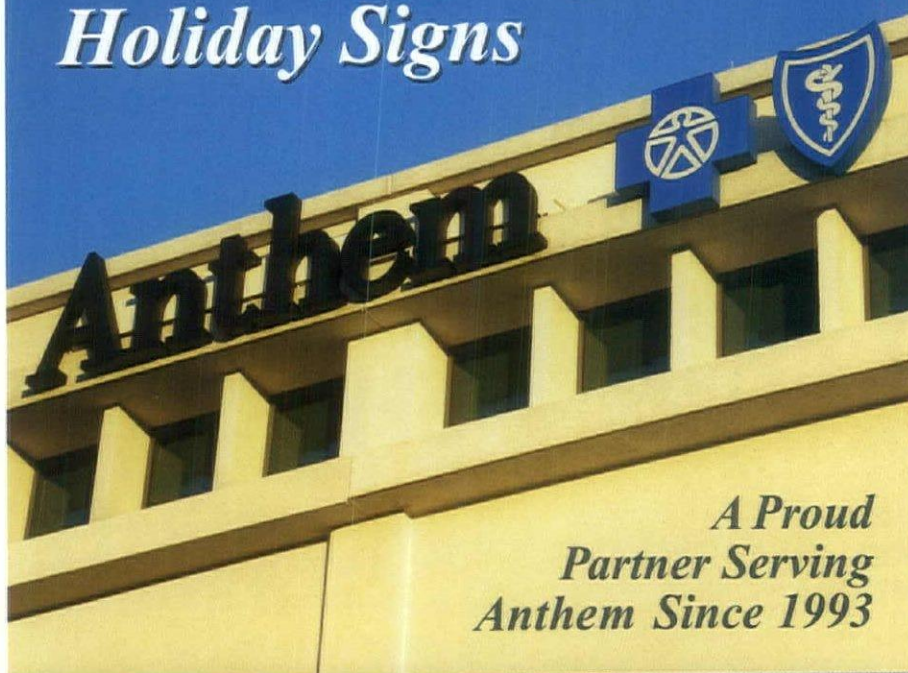
For one, panelists agreed that the region must align its redevelopment goals with market-based strategies to boost local economies. Galvan suggested this might include rewriting building codes, better design in affordable housing, and the creative use of concepts such as "usufruct," where the city is allowed to assume temporary ownership of a residence to fix it up and lease it out. In addition, Rutherford advanced the idea that key catalyst projects across the region would encourage the formation of public-private partnerships. "In this emerging age of city-states," Rutherford said, "the Gulf Coast needs to be an identifiable player in the new global marketplace."

Redevelopment should also include rehabilitation, said the National Trust's Peter Brink. "Oftentimes when surveying damaged areas, the first impulse is to plow facilities to the ground and start over," he said. "We've also learned that this impulse is almost always wrong." He cited that \$1 million spent rehabilitating buildings holds more local value than the same \$1 million dedicated to new construction, because most of the money spent on rehabilitation goes toward local labor, rather than materials.

The National Trust is advocating for new legislation that would encourage property owners to choose rehabilitation over demolition, Brink said. These incentives include a federal Disaster Relief Historic Homeowner Assistance Tax Credit, which would authorize credits of 30 percent of qualified rehab costs for historic houses damaged by Katrina, and a two-year, \$60 million grant program under the federal Historic Preservation Fund, to be used for repair of historic structures in the region. The Trust also has established a Hurricane Recovery Fund, so far raising more than \$1 million.

Over the long term, local communities can be sustained and empowered by preservation projects, Brink concluded. "They feel a connection to something real and lasting that wind and water cannot destroy." – Kim A. O'Connell

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That issue is the subject of a traveling exhibition at the Virginia Center for Architecture, "Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset." The exhibition – which continues through Jan. 15, 2006 – explores the history of low-cost housing options in America and highlights 18 case studies of exemplary projects nationwide.

The buildings displayed in the exhibition are a sign of hope for the 25 percent of American households that face severe housing challenges. These 30 million households include not just the poorest and those without jobs, but also teachers, firefighters, health-care workers, and other key contributors to our communities. The case studies demonstrate that well-designed developments can offer new opportunities for the least wealthy Americans, while creating real value for their surrounding communities.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Virginia Center for Architecture is co-sponsoring a symposium on Jan. 12, 2006, on "Livable Communities: Mixed-Use, Mixed Income Development." Also sponsoring the event is Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Virginia Housing Development Authority. Presenters will explore effective investment strategies and community designs that enhance all components of a community – housing, commercial, and retail.

More information on the exhibition and "Livable Communities" symposium is available online at www.virginiaarchitecture.org.

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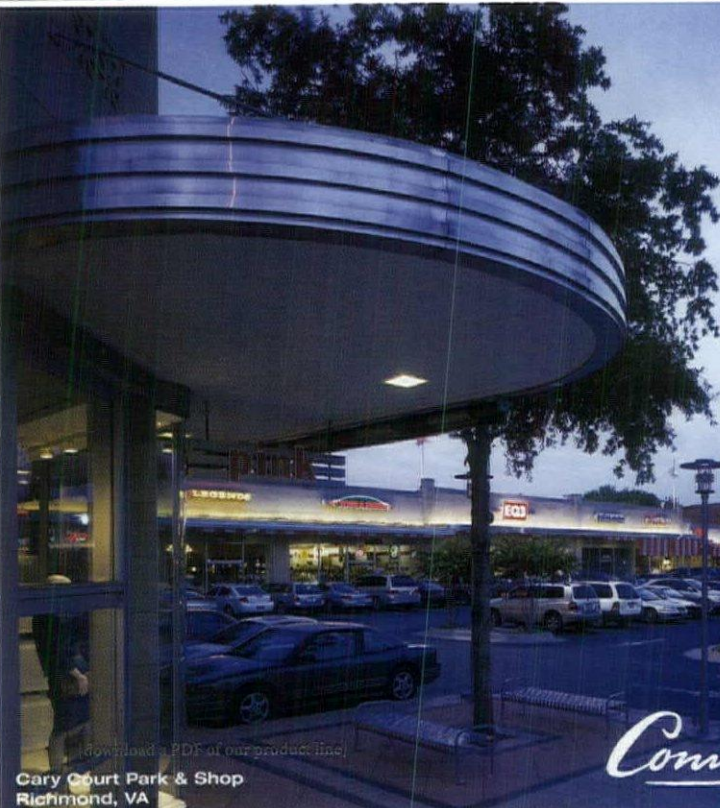
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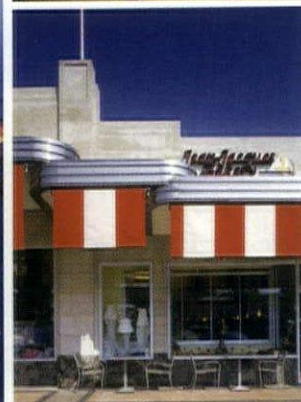
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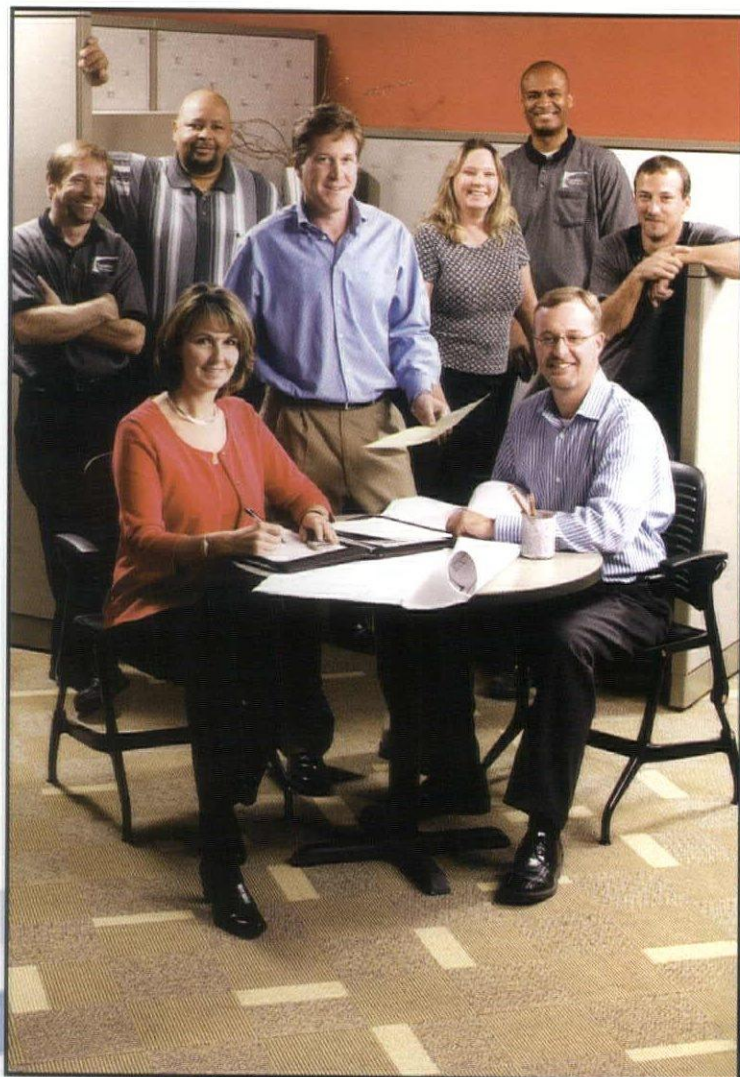
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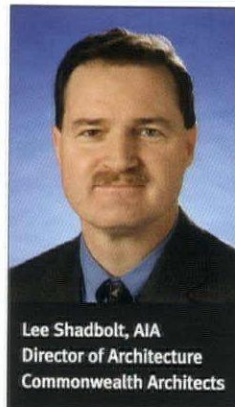


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Home Court Advantage

Moseley Architects of Virginia Beach performs a crowd-pleaser with ODU's Ted Constant Convocation Center.

By Rab McClure, AIA



Though it contains the word “old” in its title, Old Dominion University was founded just 75 years ago, in 1930, as the Norfolk Division of the College of William and Mary. It became independent in 1962 and achieved university status in 1969. Today it enrolls more than 20,000 students and conducts more than \$600 million annually in business and research initiatives, making it the largest generator of new jobs in its region. ODU’s campus is buzzing with growth and activity: currently it has 45 building projects in some stage of planning, design, or construction – more than \$250 million of work.

Two recent projects by Moseley Architects’ Virginia Beach office exemplify the best of recent work at Old Dominion: the Ted Constant Convocation Center and the Engineering & Computational Sciences Building (see story, p. 18). The Convocation Center – designed along with Rossetti Architects, of Detroit, Mich., and completed in October 2002 – anchors 85 acres of proposed and ongoing development on the east side of campus, extending the university’s presence across busy, commercial Hampton Boulevard. Hosting a variety of university

and community events, the Constant Center is the place where overlapping goals find expression.

Cruising past one active construction site after another, university architect Tom Robinson, AIA, described not only the campus visible through the window, but the one developing in the imaginations of his staff and their consultants. “We see parking lots as land banks – place holders for future building sites,” he says. “But opportunities also pop up unexpectedly.” One example is an intramural field the university will be able to create now that the Convocation Center hosts men’s and women’s basketball games and the aging Field House can be rebuilt to more efficiently serve recreational sports.

“Who would have thought we could find space on our land-locked campus for a new intramural field?” Robinson asks. It’s an interesting view into the domino effect one project can have on another – pieces falling into place through a combination of planning and serendipity.

Arriving at the Convocation Center, Doug Higgons, the general manager, led us through locked doors and into the facil-

An impressive landmark on campus (left), the center hosts a variety of events, seating up to 9,700 people (right).



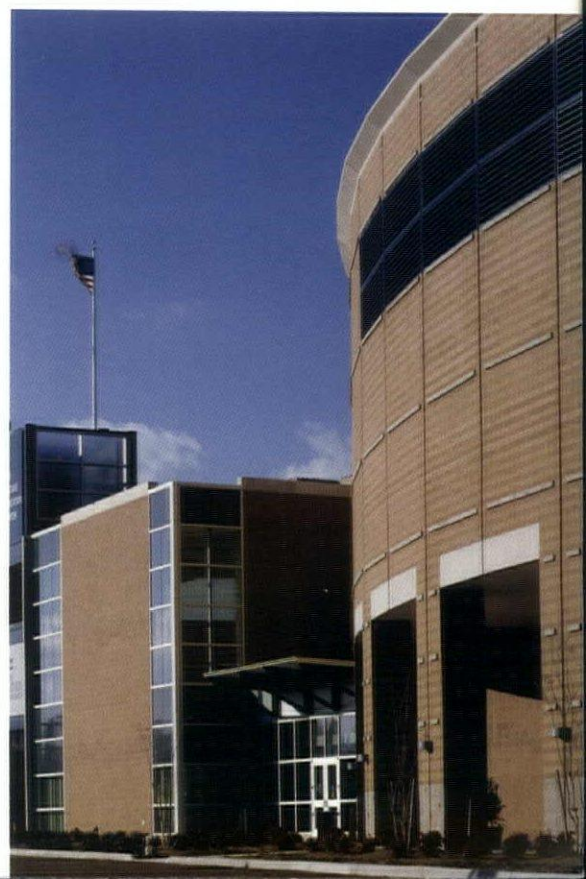
Private suites (above) meet the demands of today's donors and corporate sponsors.

ity while it was being set up for that night's Bruce Springsteen concert. Walking briskly, with a chattering two-way phone, Higsons explained that based on size [5,000-10,000 seats], ODU is ranked nationally in the top 20 for ticket sales. "This year, we'll host 131 events. Many of those require a two- to three-day setup."

Along the upper concourse, the arena space is ringed by 16 luxury suites. With the palletized basketball floor removed, a stage was set up at one end. Truss-mounted, hanging curtains formed the performance and backstage areas. Staff from Springsteen's road crew climbed ladders, hung speakers, hoisted light rails, and performed sound checks. The arena's acoustics have such a good reputation, the Charlottesville-based Dave Matthews Band tweaks its production techniques here prior to initiating its international tours.

In fact, acoustics were an important consideration during design. A projecting horizontal surface, or "eyelid," above the concourse level contributes to the reverberation time appropriate for musical performances and also reflects crowd noise

Human-scale detailing at entries animates each street façade (right).



Photos: Maylone Photography



The glass-enclosed lobby offers views of campus and showcases university and community events.



The main lobby includes exhibits celebrating ODU athletic achievements and memories.

back toward the court during home games, increasing home-court advantage.

Facing Hampton Boulevard, a multi-level glazed lobby exhibits significant moments from ODU athletic history and also provides views toward campus. Woven into this space is a curved stone arcade, extending on either side to form a large plaza, the scale of which is overwhelming, at least on non-game days, and could benefit from more intermediate- and human-scaled elements. On the opposite, Main Street side, however, two future building sites flanking the eastern entrance will someday define a more modestly scaled courtyard with retail, restaurant, and café opportunities. Also, to their credit, the designers sensitively programmed each building face with active public functions, intentionally detailing façades to avoid the over-scaled blank walls that sometimes plague this project type.

Today, the Ted Constant Convocation Center actively links the university and Hampton Roads communities. The link is physical, as a result of the Center's position on Hampton Boulevard; the link is social, combining students and the public at various types of events; and it is symbolic, with the entry lobby's outstretched arms and its mixing bowl interior. The Center regularly brings large numbers of people to the area and presents them with the opportunity to engage in university life – to take in a concert or game, to spend an enjoyable evening, to spend money. They may even witness history, such as the last-second shot that wins the championship game or the hard-earned graduation of a friend or family member.

Rab McClure, AIA, is an assistant professor in the Department of Interior Design at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Project: Ted Constant Convocation Center, Norfolk

Architect of Record: Moseley Architects, Virginia Beach (George Nasis, AIA, principal-in-charge; Taylor Muniz, AIA, project manager; Lewis Campbell, AIA, Jeff Hyder, AIA, Tim Pruitt, Patrick Ramirez, Bill Zawistowski, design team; Tim Meinhardt, Billie Harvey, Toi Reeves, construction management and administrative team)

Consulting Architect for Arena Design: Rossetti & Associates, Detroit, Mich.

Consultants: Stroud Pence & Associates (structural); LandMark Design Group (civil); Hanover Engineers (mechanical/electrical); Syska & Hennessy (sports lighting); William Caruso & Associates (food service); Acoustical Design Group (acoustics, sound, video)

Contractor: S.B. Ballard Construction Co.

Owner: Old Dominion University

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Located near the heart of campus, the Engineering and Computational Sciences Building, like the Convocation Center, is a key piece of ODU's strategic growth puzzle. It consolidates previously dispersed programs, housing them in a facility that manages at once to contribute to the established campus fabric while also expressing the university's values and progressive ambition.

The building, by Moseley Architects' Virginia Beach office, consists of two wings. The short leg of its L-shaped layout faces Elkhorn Avenue (slated for conversion from vehicular traffic to pedestrian greenway), while its longer wing faces south, defining the Sciences Quadrangle and reinforcing a major cross-campus pedestrian connection. An entry on the corner overlooks future student housing, currently under construction across the street.

Inside the two-story lobby, metal panels complement gray terrazzo floors, stainless steel-and-glass guardrails, and an articulated ceiling of suspended metallic panels and drywall. Finishes and materials, along with a large video display wall promoting student and faculty research, reinforce the impression that technologically-savvy scholarship happens on site. Immediately adjacent, in "the Cave," students and faculty conduct visualizations, modeling, and simulations using the latest virtual reality tools. These sessions can be simultaneously projected for larger audiences in the adjacent 100-seat auditorium, equipped with rear-projection screens and artfully-arranged acoustic paneling. The auditorium utilizes geothermal heating and cooling – a pilot application for the university.

Cladding the south- and west-facing façades, exterior sunshades reveal another key initiative: to employ the U.S. Green

Exterior sunshades
reduce heat gain,
diffuse daylight,
and unify the façade
(left and right).

Photos: Maylene Photography



Dynamic, Progressive, and Green

Moseley Architects' engineering and computing center at Old Dominion University reflects technological savvy, exuberant ambition, and environmental sensitivity.

Building Council's *Green Building Rating System*, also known as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). The project went on to earn LEED certification and recently won a Merit Award from the James River Green Building Council. The sunshades reduce heat gain, energy usage, and glare. Combined with interior light shelves, they simultaneously increase the amount of ambient interior daylight. They also perform a key aesthetic function, applied individually on lower floors to express the individual nature of private offices. Like a functional cornice, the sunshades also link a row of top-story windows, unifying building elements and bays into a cohesive whole and signifying the more communal nature of the open-office OCCS and Data Center.

By introducing metal panels into the standard campus material palette, the architects were better able to integrate the

aluminum sunshades, underscoring the building's technology-invested program and the campus's growth and progress.

The building does, after all, sit directly adjacent to a research-stage prototype of the nation's first magnetic levitation rail line, which hopes to elegantly flip the German and Japanese paradigm of "smart track/ dumb car" and dramatically reduce track-laying costs and revolutionize mass rail transit. In its latest iteration, the project's team structure relies more directly on input from ODU's scientific and engineering community.

The resulting facility neatly expresses the technologically progressive nature of its occupants, faithfully fulfills its traditional campus planning duties, sets a responsible example with regard to environmental sustainability, and ultimately sets an optimistic tone for the future of this young, dynamic, and ambitious campus community.

— Rab McClure, AIA



Finishes in the lobby, along with video display monitors, convey the technological savvy of building occupants.





Firm principals (from L to R): Doug Harnsberger, Richard Ford, Walter Redfearn, Lee Shadbolt, Patricia Taylor, Robert Mills, and Dominic Venuto.

Lee Brauer Photography

Remaking History

Commonwealth Architects is saving urban centers and bringing new life to historic buildings across Virginia.
By Deborah Abbey Kelly

22

Commonwealth Architects started with a big idea in 1999: bring together architects with a passion for restoration and help rescue Richmond's ample inventory of abandoned historic buildings from demolition by neglect. In just six years, that mission has succeeded beyond the expectations of the firm's founders, aided by a fortunate confluence of events that included the rise of historic investment tax credits and a real estate boom fueled by attractive interest rates.

"Some of it is pure, dumb luck," says founding principal Robert Mills, AIA, with characteristic modesty, as he describes how he and Doug Harnsberger, AIA, an architect and architectural historian, launched the practice after working together on Richmond's Commission of Architectural Review. "We were in the right place at the right time."

Commonwealth's focus on urban revitalization and adaptive reuse, combined with the principals' project history and network of clients developed over decades of practice in Richmond, soon attracted a diverse array of high-profile commissions. They included St. John's Church (Richmond's oldest, built in 1741), Anthem Southeast, the Superior Building, Shockoe Place, Cary Court Park & Shop, and the conversion of Stuart Circle Hospital on Monument Avenue into luxury apartments and office suites.

The firm grew quickly, from about 10 staffers in its first year to 40 today. They've diversified beyond their initial concentration on historic properties, offering a full range of architecture, landscape design, interior design, and urban planning services. Still, adaptive reuse projects represent 65 percent of their business.

The 2001 project for insurance giant Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield triggered Commonwealth's early leap to a mid-sized firm that could take on large-scale projects. That growth was a goal from the outset. "What surprised us was how quickly it happened," Harnsberger says.

Currently on the boards are some of the most significant projects they've tackled to date. The largest is the \$80 million restoration and reuse of the downtown Miller & Rhoads department store, built in 1924, into a complex including 140 condominiums, a 250-room Hilton Hotel, retail shops, and a restaurant. They're also converting the once-grand Hotel John Marshall into upscale apartments and retail shops, with a restaurant and rooftop swimming pool. Nearby, Commonwealth is guiding the renovation of the Berry-Burk building into 32 apartments or condominiums, with retail on the lower floors. "The last thing you want to see is buildings of that quality torn down," Mills says. "Think what it would cost to replicate these buildings today. We couldn't afford it."

State and federal historic investment tax credits that typically save developers one-third of a project's rehab costs have helped drive the firm's growth. "They've really been our engine," says interior designer Dominic Venuto, a third principal who signed on a few months after the firm's formation. The tax credits mean it's often cheaper to rehabilitate than build from scratch. "We feel that the recycling of existing buildings is the ultimate sustainable solution," Mills says, since it entices people back to cities and limits suburban sprawl.

Richmond's downtown rehab explosion has just about tapped out the available historical properties that are both eli-

gible for tax credits and attractive to developers, Harnsberger says. But plenty of other historic resources exist throughout Virginia and the mid-Atlantic, which is the firm's market area.

Commonwealth is actively pursuing those opportunities with growing success. They're providing full architectural services for Lynchburg's Academy of Fine Arts Performing Arts Center, which includes rehabilitation of the landmark Academy of Music Theater and new construction projects that will incorporate four existing buildings into a two-acre cultural center with a pedestrian courtyard, fountain, and other landscaping features.

Before forming Commonwealth, Mills headed the architecture studio for the Richmond office of the Washington, D.C., firm Ai. When Ai closed its Richmond office, Mills teamed up with Harnsberger, a solo practitioner specializing in historic preservation. Harnsberger had worked for several large firms and spent five years as historical architect for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the agency that decides whether proposed projects are eligible for state historic tax credits. Venuto, another Ai alum, added his interior and office design talents a short time later. Now the firm is managed by seven principals.

From Commonwealth's Shockoe Slip offices, appropriately located in a restored 19th-century commodities exchange warehouse, Mills talks about the challenges to come. While Richmond's reclamation of its urban core has been impressive, more work remains to be done, he says. State and national leaders need to create investment tax credits for infill projects in historic districts, such as the six-story, historically compatible building slated for construction in the vacant space between the Hotel John Marshall and the Berry-Burk building. Such projects enable cities to "get rid of the broken teeth," Mills says.

Still, Richmond's continuing urban rebirth fulfills both professional and personal goals for Commonwealth's founders. "We're proud that we've been able to develop a niche," Mills says, "and do what we love ... combine history and architecture."

Deborah Abbey Kelly is a freelance writer and editor based in Richmond.



The \$80 million conversion of Miller & Rhoads from a vacant department store to 110 condominiums and a Hilton Hotel is expected to help boost Richmond tourism.

On the Drawing Board

Commonwealth Architects is working on some of its largest projects to date in Richmond and cities across Virginia. Included among them:

Miller & Rhoads conversion – This \$80 million mixed-use project, covering an entire city block along Richmond's East Broad Street between 5th and 6th streets, will transform the abandoned department store into a 250-room Hilton Hotel, 110 luxury condominiums, retail shopping, a restaurant, and landscaped pedestrian walkways and sidewalk cafés. Completion is scheduled for 2008.

Hotel John Marshall adaptive reuse – This former grand hotel and conference facility, built in 1928 at 5th and Franklin streets in Richmond, is slated for conversion to a \$50 million, mixed-use project that will return the property to its former elegance. Plans call for 178 apartments, retail shops, and a restaurant. Located within the state and federal Grace Street Historic District, the complex is taking advantage of state and federal investment tax credits. Completion is projected for 2007.

Chamberlin Hotel rehabilitation and adaptive reuse – Located at Fort Monroe in Hampton, this majestic, 1928 structure, with 280 rooms on five acres, will be reborn as a \$50 million assisted living facility with beautiful views of Hampton Roads Harbor. A parking lot will become a 393-space parking deck, and a new, architecturally compatible building will be added. The projected completion date is 2007.

Academy of Fine Arts Performing Arts Center – Originally built in 1905, this facility in Lynchburg will be the centerpiece of a regional performing arts center. The project includes the rehabilitation of the historic Academy of Music Theater and will cover two acres spanning two blocks of Main Street.

Berry-Burk conversion – The building, which operated as a clothing store from 1928 to 1989 on Grace Street in downtown Richmond, will become 32 upscale apartments or condominiums, with retail shops at street level. The transom windows will be returned, the canopy will be renovated, damaged terra cotta and limestone will be repaired, and a parking area will be built in the basement. Completion is scheduled for 2006.

– Deborah Abbey Kelly

23



The former Hotel John Marshall (above) is being converted to an apartment building with retail shops and a restaurant.

The Future is Now

With the construction of a new service center and renovation of existing facilities, Commonwealth Architects and Perkins + Will create a fresh new corporate campus in Richmond.

Like all building projects, the expansion of the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield complex in Richmond began with a need – a need to renovate the existing headquarters and to provide new space to consolidate scattered personnel and accommodate growth of the data center. And, like many building projects, the emphasis changed as discussions with the client progressed. “The data center became the driver of everything,” says Lee Shadbolt, AIA, who served as project manager.

Planning for the Southeast regional headquarters began in June 2000 with the selection of an architectural team composed of Commonwealth Architects, of Richmond, in collaboration with Ai, of Washington, D.C. (The Ai practice has since become part of Chicago-based Perkins + Will.) In pursuing the commission against tough competition, the Commonwealth/Ai team was a natural. Not only were the two firms familiar with

each other, but Ai possessed experience with large-scale data centers, such as America Online, and Commonwealth’s senior staff had a track record with office buildings, while offering a local presence to oversee the daily progress on the building.

Early in the process, a key accomplishment was the acquisition of nearly 12 acres of adjacent property, which allowed the company to remain on the site and more than double the size of its facility at the same time. With a total of almost 27 acres of land at its disposal, the design team found it advantageous to extend the campus southward toward Broad Street and position the new building to create a landscaped forecourt at the new front entrance and a more private, grassy courtyard behind the existing building. Reinforcing the site’s linear organization is a circulation path that funnels employees from the parking lots into the buildings along a new “Main Street.”

New building (at right in photo, facing page) frames an entrance forecourt. Glass skin (right) reveals the simplicity of structural frame.



The two buildings are nested (left) to provide adjacencies with the parking deck and data center.

25

A three-level parking deck for 820 cars (right) connects to the first floor with a bridge; its low profile keeps from blocking views.



This system of pedestrian movement continues inside the building with corridors along the west façade of the new building. For vertical circulation along the pedestrian spine, escalators were selected over elevators – in part because they move people faster over short distances, but also to promote more interaction between employees and building users, Shadbolt says.

From the start, Anthem representatives demanded “very large floor plates” for the complex. The design solution was to connect the two buildings in a way that makes them function as one, yielding usable floor areas of more than 100,000 square feet on each linked floor. Raised access flooring and under-floor air distribution provides Anthem employees with the latest generation in indoor air quality, energy conservation, and sustainability. The system allows employees to control temperature and air flow in their individual cubicles.

Escalators beside the lobby make a convenient link between the building's four floors.



Raised access flooring also offers the advantage of locating the electrical, phone, and data cabling beneath the floor, rather than overhead. This was appealing to Anthem's management, because the company frequently reconfigures work teams – which means moving people, workstations, offices, and cabling. The cost for such “churn” is greatly reduced over the long haul by the raised flooring system, although the initial construction costs are greater.

Ultimately the main driving force in the project was the need for a high-powered data center that could grow with the company and deliver the highest degree of reliability. This created the demand for a 58,000-square-foot facility tucked securely in the base of the building. Among other attributes, the plant contains an uninterrupted power supply, switch gears, generators, and chillers that deliver layout flexibility and

potential for expansion – all without risking downtime in the computer system or a loss of data.

On the outside, the building skin is modern and timeless, complementing the existing building exterior, but not copying it. The east façade exposes a plinth that contains the data center; the west elevation is composed of primarily glass and aluminum panels, which serve to reinforce the circulation spine and accessibility of the public spaces.

Dedicated in November 2003, the facility already is undergoing a major behind-the-scenes transformation as its computing capabilities are expanded for use as the central data center for WellPoint, Inc., the insurer's new parent company. So, although they commissioned a building with the future in mind, Anthem's executives have discovered that the future is now.

– Vernon Mays

Project: Anthem Southeast Headquarters

Architect of Record: Commonwealth Architects, Richmond (Robert S. Mills, AIA, principal-in-charge; Lee A. Shadbolt, AIA, project manager; Dominic Venuto, CID, IIDA, principal for programming/interiors; Ken Van Riper, AIA, Alastair Reilly, AIA, Cathy Saunders, CID, James Vea, Christiana Lafanzani, James Smither, Elizabeth VanBuren, project team)

Associated Architect: Ai/Perkins+Will, Washington, D.C. (Alison Williams, FAIA, design principal; Rusty Meadows, managing principal; David Haresign, AIA, principal-in-charge; J.P. Spickler, AIA, Marc Schneiderman, IIDA, Kelan Dyer, AIA, Carolyn Ubben, AIA, Arthur Meister, Shelly Boyle, IIDA, Cesar Campana, project team)

Consultants: Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc. (project management); KPMG Consulting Tax Advantaged Design (taxes); Ai/Integral Performance Engineering (MEP engineering); Rathgeber/Goss Associates (structural for HQ2); Fox Associates Consulting Engineers (structural for deck, HQ1); Draper Aden Associates (civil); Glazing Consultants, Inc. (glazing); Froehling & Robertson, Inc. (geotechnical); Schnabel Engineering Assoc. (testing); Engineering Consulting Services (testing); Wilbur Smith & Associates (traffic); Professional Service Industries (environmental); Lerch Bates & Associates (vertical transportation); Acoustical Design Collaborative (acoustical & A/V); Tricon Foodservice Consultants, Inc. (food service); Illume Creatif (lighting); Lucas & Associates (roofing); The Whitlock Group (security A/V); James C. Bethel (specifications); Ferguson Engineering (life safety); National Institute for Fitness and Sports (fitness); Facility Support Inc. (computer networking)

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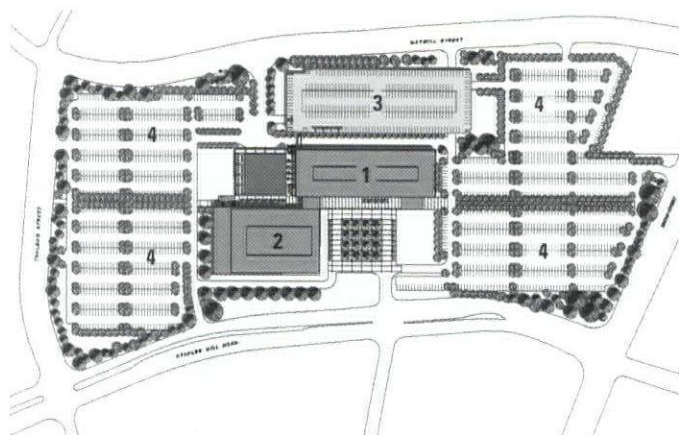
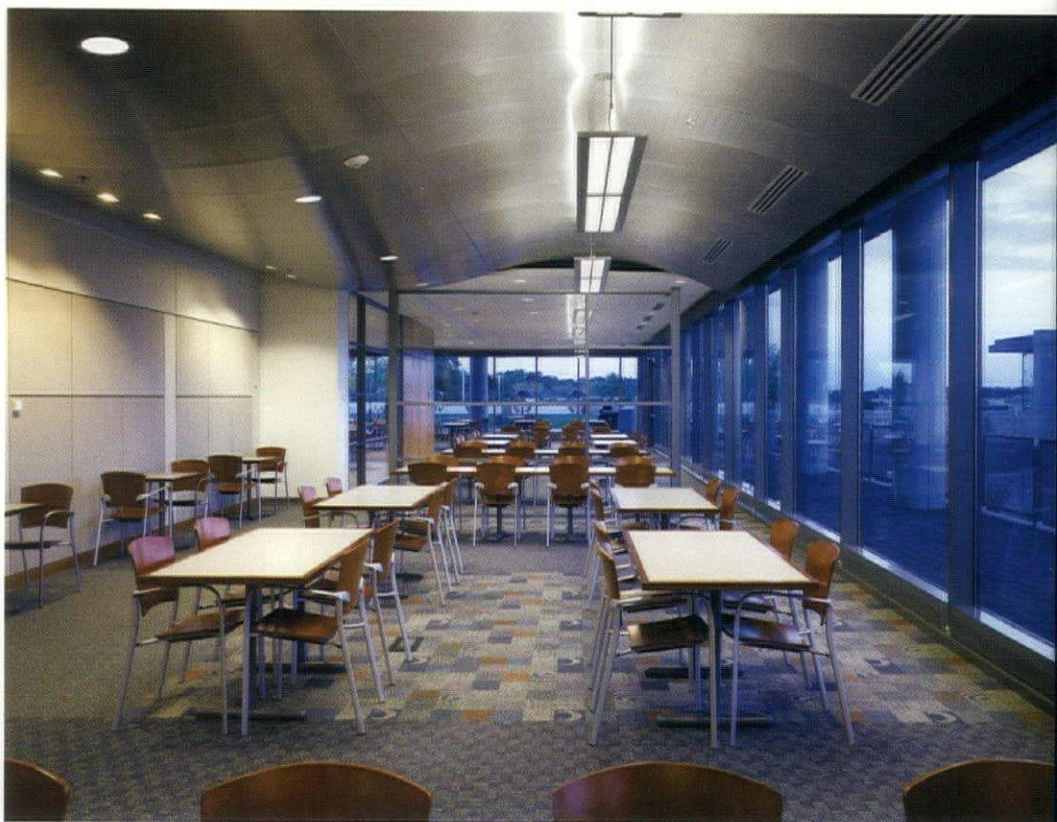
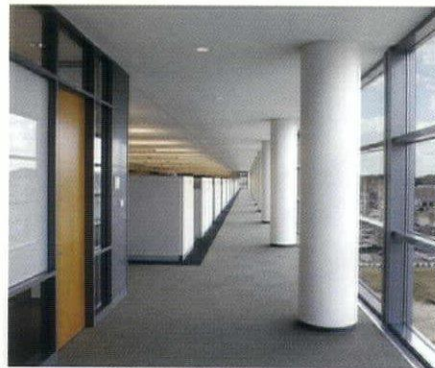
Owner: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield

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Offices receive plenty of daylight (right). Cafeteria features a curved, perforated metal ceiling (below).



- 1 New Building
- 2 Renovated Building
- 3 Parking Deck
- 4 Surface Parking

Site Plan





Coming Home

With the recent advent of Hays + Ewing Design Studio, a global partnership lands comfortably in Charlottesville. By Kyle Copas

28

Design has taken Charlottesville architects Christopher Hays, AIA, and Allison Ewing, AIA, around the world during their careers. Now the couple wants to apply their global perspective to a regional approach to sustainability. In launching Hays + Ewing Design Studio, the partners – in marriage as well as business – have brought that understanding home.

The couple's shift to a local focus may come as something of a surprise for those who know their previous work with William McDonough + Partners. Hays, McDonough, and Russell Perry started WM+P in 1994, and Ewing also was an early WM+P initiate, joining the effort to complete a competition entry for what became one of the firm's first signature projects, Offices for Gap, Inc. in San Bruno, California.

Before landing in Charlottesville, Hays and Ewing already boasted portfolios that tended toward the cosmopolitan. The pair's previous tours of duty had included stops in Japan – Hays at Nikken Sekkei, Ewing studying housing types on a grant – as well as the Renzo Piano Building Workshop in Genoa. Two decades into their respective careers, their experience encompassed projects on four of the seven continents.

In late 2003, however, Hays became the first to scale back on his contributions to the couple's frequent-flier miles when he left McDonough's office. "I sensed an opportunity to build on our experience with sustainability and address more local and regional needs," says Hays. In the process, he also sought to realize a long-term dream of starting his own practice.

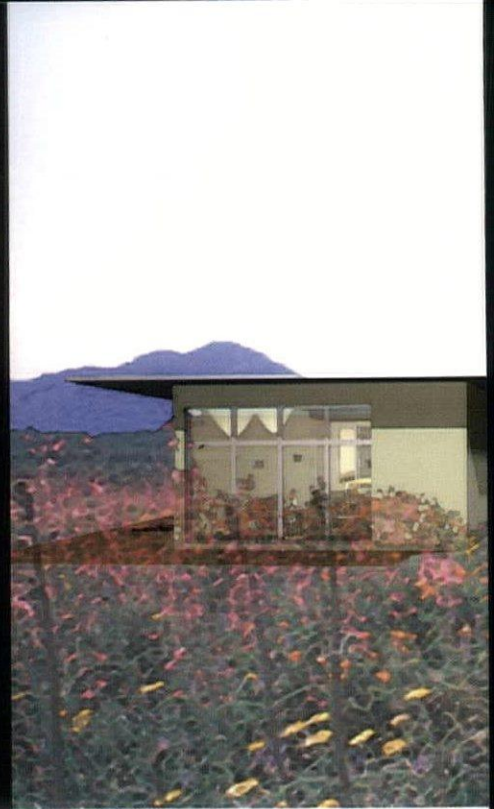
Hays began his solo effort in a light-filled studio of the house he and Ewing designed for themselves, but there were

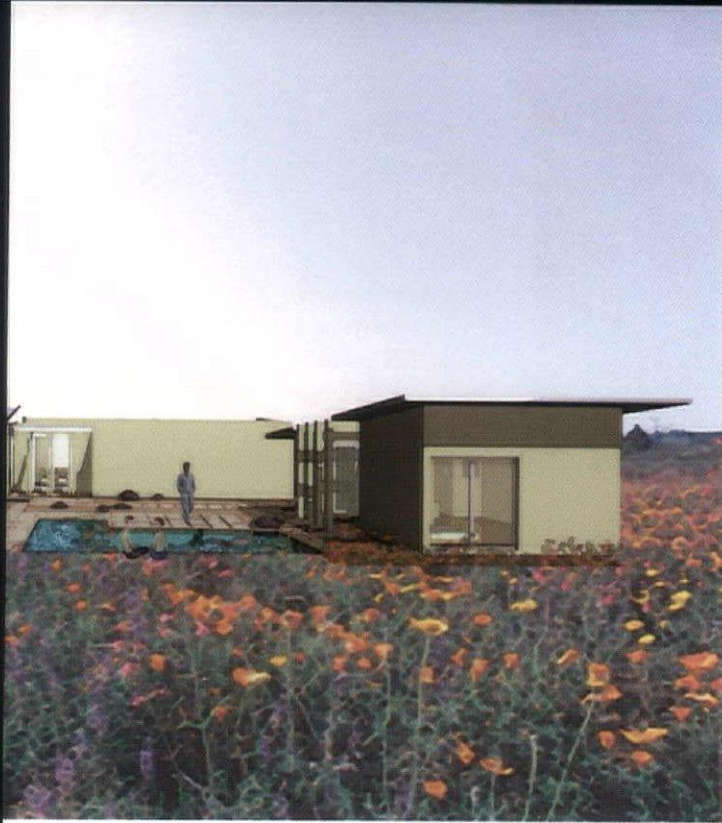
two early projects whose site visits have required very little travel: a duplex makeover next door and a 10-unit development called RiversEdge across the street. Hays got involved in both not only on the design side, but also as a developer. "It has provided a great way to deepen our understanding of market-driven forces," he says, and helped fulfill the couple's desire to find design solutions that are both sustainable and marketable.

Last summer, Ewing, who had become a partner at WM+P, joined Hays to form Hays + Ewing Design Studio. Residential projects form the bulk of their present workload, but the pair hopes to expand the practice as they move into institutional, commercial, and academic work. Still, the shift in scale and geography has already brought about a welcome change in the design focus for both Hays and Ewing. "By doing full-service work on smaller projects, we get an ideal integration of design at all levels – from concept to execution and from mechanical systems to materials," says Ewing.

In their earlier work and what's on the boards now, Hays and Ewing continue to develop a fresh outlook on sustainability. They're also pursuing opportunities farther afield, including a recent commission for a new residence in West Virginia and on a community master plan similar in size to RiversEdge outside Tubac, Arizona. "What distinguishes us is our desire and ability to integrate building and landscape and to draw design ideas from nature," Hays says. And that's an idea that ought to feel at home anywhere.

Kyle Copas is a freelance writer in Charlottesville.

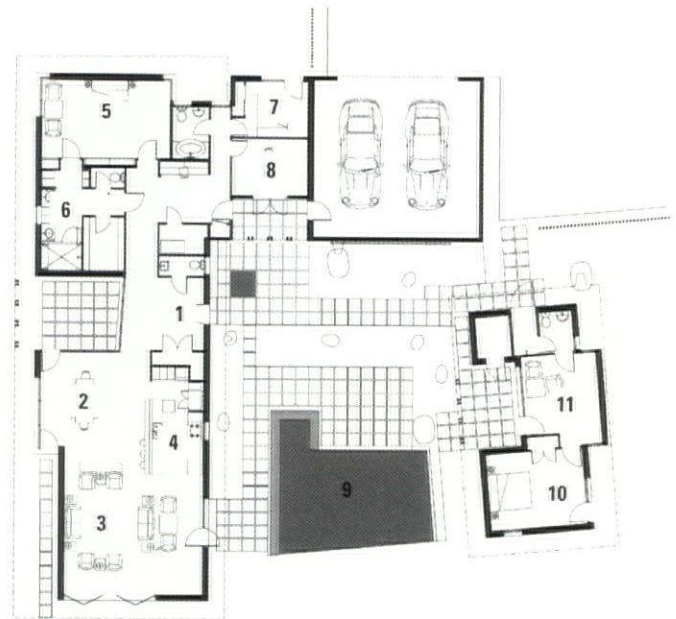




Marty Moore Photography (portrait)

Tubac House

A house design (above) that captures dramatic views of the striking desert landscape south of Tucson, Arizona, demonstrates Hays' and Ewing's abiding interest in establishing connections between people and nature. The line between building and landscape dissolves, too, with folded roof forms inspired by a nearby mountain and its stone gardens and pools in the courtyard evoking nearby stone washes. Notable among numerous sustainable strategies are walls made of autoclave-aerated concrete blocks, a toxin-free lightweight concrete material that provides thermal insulation and enhanced R-values.

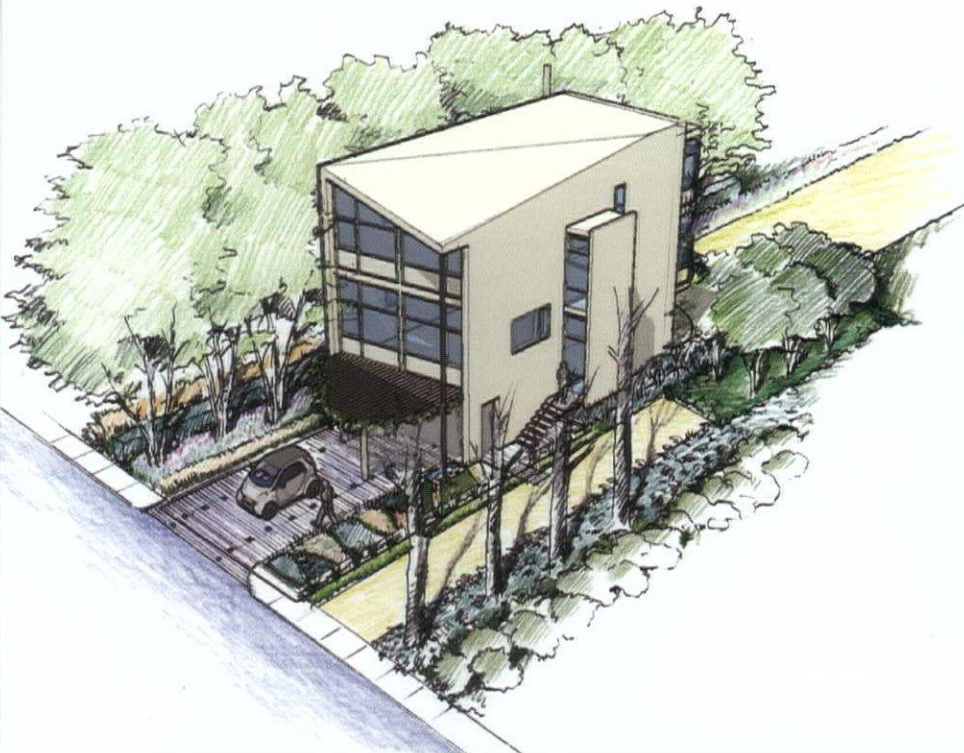


Floor Plan



- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1 Entrance | 7 Bedroom |
| 2 Dining Room | 8 Study |
| 3 Living Room | 9 Pool |
| 4 Kitchen | 10 Guest Bedroom |
| 5 Master Bedroom | 11 Sitting Room |
| 6 Bath | |

29



RiversEdge Community

Eight highly efficient single-family houses and two Habitat for Humanity homes share a common garden and a rain garden in the preserved open space of this Charlottesville community's narrow 1.5-acre site (left). Hays and Ewing wear many hats on the project, crafting a master plan, designing spec as well as custom homes, and developing the project in collaboration with several other local design professionals. Notes Hays: "Our experience on RiversEdge is a way for us take control as designers instead of being at the end of the train – particularly in how we can work ecological goals into the overall development as buyers come on."



From their downtown D.C. office, John Burke (left) and Todd Ray lead a small team in a wide range of dynamic work.

Kindred Spirits and Creative Solutions

Studio27 Architecture takes a collaborative approach to edgy, forward-thinking design.

By Kim A. O'Connell

Sustainable design, with its emphasis on ecological integrity, is admirable when applied to even a single structure – and can be transformative when implemented on a larger scale.

With this in mind, Studio27 Architecture designed a prototype for a sustainable urban townhouse, known as the Regenerative Rowhouse, with environmentally savvy elements that can be expanded to a whole block or neighborhood. While the rowhouse includes earthy features such as a rainwater collection system and rooftop garden, the design is modern and edgy, with spare forms and minimal ornamentation.

The contrast is intentional. Since its formation in 1999, Studio27 has produced a wide range of residential, commercial, and institutional work, garnering several awards from the Virginia Society AIA and other groups. While crafting specific solutions to design problems, Studio27's principals, Todd Ray, AIA, and John K. Burke, AIA, are also interested in the larger implications of their work. They want to ground their architecture in human realities, while holding their ideas in "constant tension," which they say informs and enriches the designs. At the Unit Derwin condo, for example, Studio27's modern renovation deliberately frames views of Washington's traditional architectural icons.

The small firm – currently 10 employees – is committed to a collaborative process, with both staff and clients. The firm typically produces five to 10 design options for a project, giving clients many points of entry to the work. "The way we approach projects is unique, especially in the way we collaborate with clients," Ray says. "Building types become less of a concern." They focus instead on creatively resolving the issues at hand.

Perhaps collaboration comes naturally to Burke and Ray – they are not only partners, but brothers-in-law. Soon after the two young architects married sisters, they began moonlighting on side projects together. Realizing they had similar tastes, the two launched their own firm in March 1999. "We were producing better work together than apart," Ray says. "It's that collaborative element again. The whole studio works that way."

"There's a complementary aspect to us too," Burke adds. "We always say that if I worked on a design problem, it got solved too quickly, and if Todd worked on it, it never got solved, because he kept trying to stretch it out. So we create a happy medium."

The firm's name offers clues to the principals' guiding philosophies and animated style. Burke and Ray deliberately chose "studio" over more staid words like "office" or "atelier" to convey the creative, collaborative culture they sought to cultivate. The number stems from the concept of "two guys working seven days a week," a jovial reference to the salad days when the principals worked in Ray's basement.

Today the firm operates out of an open, airy office only blocks from the White House. Notable residential work includes the Huis JCMZ, a modern pavilion in a conventional suburb, and the Anderson & Pettitt house, which balances a renovation of a 1920s residence with a complementary modern addition. On a larger scale, the firm has spearheaded a planning and redevelopment effort for the town of La Plata, Maryland, whose central business district was leveled by a 2002 tornado. Finally, reflecting its chic but accessible sensibilities, the firm has designed a series of affordable housing prototypes that marry the ease of the Sears catalog with the design-for-the-masses mentality of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses. The first NuSonian house, as they are cleverly called, began construction in Texas this fall.

Going forward, Burke and Ray hope to continue growing the firm and taking on larger institutional and commercial projects – as long as the client is creative and participatory. "Collaborating with the client takes the work in a direction that maybe we wouldn't take it without their input," Burke says. "Secondly, it involves them so much in the design that they have ownership over it, so that when we get to the rocky waters of construction, they stay in the boat and don't jump out."

Kim O'Connell is a freelance writer in Arlington.



Studio27 reoriented the spaces of this D.C. condo, bringing in light and framing views of the National Cathedral (below).

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Rooms with a View

Just as negative space can inform a work of art, architecture is often illuminated by what is not built. In Washington, D.C., the clean lines of a modern condominium, with time-honored views of the National Cathedral and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, allow for a fuller appreciation of both styles.

Known as Unit Derwin, the condominium is located on the eighth floor of a hilltop building in northwest Washington. Originally, the 1,100-square-foot unit was a relatively confined space, with walls that boxed rooms and blocked views. When Studio27 was engaged to renovate the condo, the firm sought to capitalize on its spectacular panoramic vistas, a rarity in the low-lying capital city.

The cathedral became a unifying design element. "The issue with Unit Derwin was the client's love of the National Cathedral," says principal John Burke. "Each room had an analogy to an aspect of the cathedral, such as stained glass, baptistery, narthex, etc."

The design intervention was minimal, primarily focused on removing existing walls to reorient living spaces and allow each room to deliver a framed view of the cathedral. Warmth and light are abundant, with clerestory windows, translucent sliding panels, and bamboo flooring creating visual fluidity from room to room.

With a desire that the space offer both prospect and refuge, the designers balanced the strong views with serene spaces. The expanded bathroom is a study in contrasts, with walls and tub covered in gray river pebbles, an earthy look offset by the highly articulated, stainless-steel fixtures. More importantly, says principal Todd Ray, the whirlpool tub offers the best seat in the house for city views.

— Kim A. O'Connell



At dusk, the rear view of the house reveals its complex arrangement of space.

Modern Marvelous

A new glass-clad residence is influenced by European pavilions, while creating intimate living spaces that complement its suburban setting.

Among the glass pavilions that typified high Modernism, few can match the architectural purity of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's 1951 Farnsworth House – famously praised, and derided, by historian Franz Schulze as “more nearly temple than dwelling.” The greater challenge, one might argue, would be to realize such a high level of design while ensuring that a family had all the comforts of home.

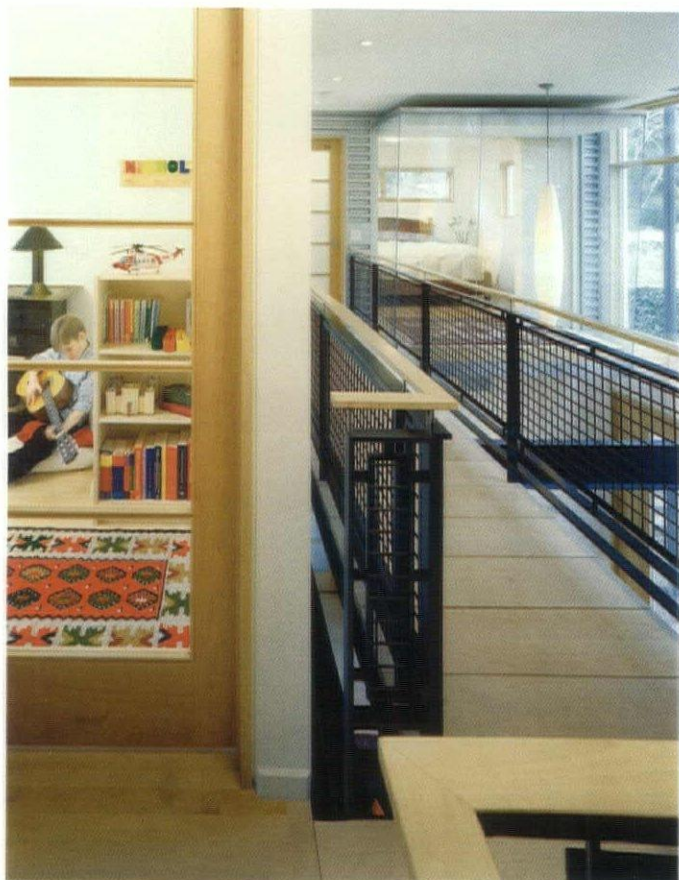
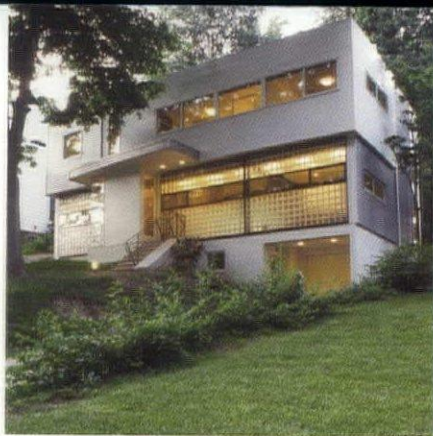
In suburban Maryland, a new glass-clad residence may come as close as possible to achieving these dual goals. Known as Huis JCMZ, a nod to the client Johannes Zutt's initials and his Dutch heritage (“huis” means “house”), the two-story, pavilion-style residence combines extensive use of glass with a provocative mix of building materials. Originally, Zutt had purchased a 1940s colonial on a tree-lined property, with the modest goal of renovating and adding to the building. However, it quickly became clear to him that, as an admirer of European Modernism, he would be happier with an altogether new house.

After interviewing no fewer than 11 architecture firms, the owner hired Studio27 Architecture based on their common admiration of Modern design and the firm's dynamic use of materials. Together, Zutt and firm principals John Burke and Todd Ray sketched out ideas. Le Corbusier and Philip Johnson were obvious influences, but the owner also referenced lesser-known sources such as the Maison de Verre (the French steel-and-glass house designed by Bernard Bijvoet and Pierre Chareau) and the works of Swiss architect Luigi Snozzi.

“The job started to get bigger and bigger,” Burke says. “But when we talked to the contractor, it was much more money than the owner wanted to spend.” The solution: build on top of the existing foundation. Constraining the new house to the old footprint also helped keep the building in scale with the traditional suburban neighborhood.

The 2,500-square-foot pavilion explores the idea of public and private spaces and how they relate to their surround-

Built on the old foundation of a 1940s Colonial, the house responds to the scale of its neighborhood.



Upstairs bedrooms are accessed from a cantilevered bridge, which overlooks the open living room and back yard.

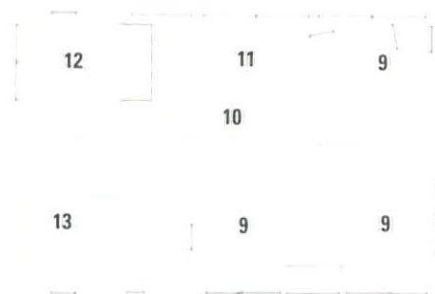
ings, say Burke and Ray. On the exterior, corrugated aluminum, shiplap wood siding, and painted brick are layered, reflecting the well-defined yet overlapping spaces inside. The first floor features an open plan, with the kitchen and dining spaces facing the street and the living room pressed against a grid of windows rising two stories high. Upstairs, the four bedrooms are accessed from a cantilevered bridge that overlooks the living room. In the most fantastical move in the house, one bedroom is situated in an asymmetrical tower that pierces the roof, allowing for a third-story loft with views of the treetops.

Rather than being monolithic, however, the tower is lightened by the fact that the architects extended it down into the living room, where it rests on an unexpectedly thin support, like a brick held up by a pin. Although the house contains other such poetic gestures, the architects say, its ultimate beauty lies in its discipline. "It's orderly," Ray maintains. "Everything had to be rational and functional."

— Kim A. O'Connell

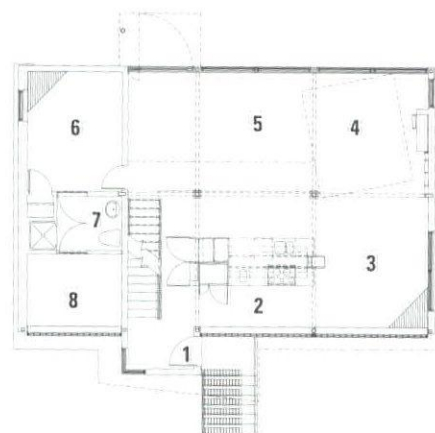


A fragment of the house's distinctive tower extends down into the living room, where it appears to be held up by an impossibly thin support.



Second Floor Plan

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Dining Room
- 4 Library
- 5 Living Room
- 6 Family Room
- 7 Bath
- 8 Office
- 9 Bedroom
- 10 Bridge
- 11 Open to Below
- 12 Master Bedroom
- 13 Master Bath



First Floor Plan





Streamlined DESIGN

Katz McConnell + Associates makes its mark in Roanoke with full service and extensive market knowledge. By Kyle Copas

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Working in a small market with more than its share of big architecture offices, the Roanoke firm of Katz McConnell + Associates has quickly distinguished itself as a practice offering a unique blend of high design and quality service. Bucking the trend of multiple layers of responsibility that often takes the control of a project away from architects, principal Mark McConnell, AIA, says the firm tries to make developers' lives easier. "We say to our clients, 'Let us take care of that for you.'"

"We understand a development pro forma, how to pursue historic rehabilitation tax credits, how to work with the local regulating authorities," McConnell says. Both McConnell and his partner Lora J. Katz, AIA, use the phrase "thoughtful design" to describe their practice, a reference to their knowledge of the entire design and construction cycle.

Katz's dual-track experience as an architect and an interior designer comes into play as well. "One person can carry the design concept through into the furnishings and enhance the whole," she notes. KM+A's current work – a rather singular mix of historic preservation and modern office projects – coheres thanks to an emphasis on up-front analysis, trusting relationships, and a keen eye for practical details.

Katz, a Roanoke native, met McConnell more than 15 years ago, when they occupied adjacent desks at the Richmond firm then known as Glave Newman Anderson. In the intervening years, she worked in Washington, D.C., for Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern. Four years ago, about the time Katz returned to Roanoke, McConnell was launching Mark McConnell + Associates, looking to build on experience with several numerous large-scale projects he gained while working at Spectrum Design. Having long seen their talents as complementary, he

and Katz began discussing a partnership, hoping she might leverage her hospitality experience at Marriot and elsewhere in a full-blown follow-up to preliminary work McConnell executed for the historic Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton.

But with the hotel renovation delayed, McConnell continued to pursue a historic preservation commission for the Imperial Centre for Arts and Sciences, a \$32 million arts center in Rocky Mount, N.C. Meanwhile, Katz signed on with McConnell, and the new firm soon landed the commission for the Imperial Centre. Within two weeks, the Stonewall Jackson Hotel's owners were ready to start, too.

Both partners report that starting a small firm with more than \$60 million worth of work under construction wasn't easy. With their initial projects now successfully completed, KM+A is focusing on smaller-scale projects throughout the region and farther afield in Illinois and San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

Firm members are also encouraged to engage in civic life and are given time to do so, just as Katz has with the local United Way chapter and Architectural Review Board. McConnell, former chair of the Arts Commission, is now preparing a run for City Council.

KM+A's commitment to sustainability exhibits a similar level of social engagement. McConnell reports his surprise at discovering several years ago that "pushing green" doesn't make clients beat a path to the door, but he pressed on undeterred. When they sense a favorable attitude toward sustainability – especially where there are clear returns on investment – KM+A educates clients about the impact of their choices at every stage of design. "We haven't found any sustainable clients," McConnell sums up succinctly, "but we've made some."



KM+A Offices

The firm's Roanoke office (left and facing page) occupies the street-front of an old furniture warehouse. That location was requested by their developer client, who reasoned that the night-owl designers would provide eyes on the street almost round-the-clock. The desire to admit both natural light and other tenants to the building presented a stiff design challenge. KM+A's solution was simple and cost-effective: use sheets of glass suspended from the 13-foot ceilings to create a curved corridor that offers enticing views of the offices on either side. Light, too, passes through the offices and the corridor, but not sound, as large suspended fabric panels reflect the uplight into glare-free spaces and deaden noise.



Warehouse Row Business Center

Leveraging something old to create something new, this \$3 million renovation relied in part on historic rehabilitation tax credits to transform former warehouses into incubator office space for fledgling Roanoke-area technology firms. KM+A's design maintains the building's no-frills industrial feel and form, but a translucent canopy – discreet and nearly invisible above the main entrance (above) – suggests the deft and simple modern interventions to come. Skylights illuminate the open stairwells, whose combination of glass, wood, and perforated steel delivers daylight to all three floors (left). Like the materials and furnishings employed throughout the interiors, the stairwells stress a sense of lightness and transparency.

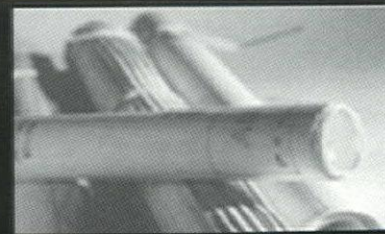
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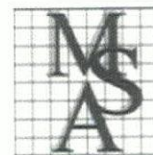
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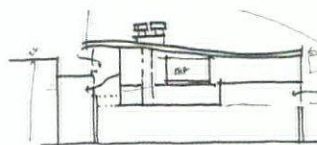
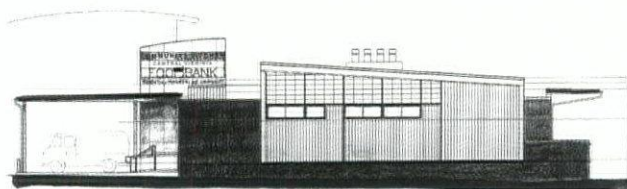
On the Boards



Architect: Arc Studio, Newport News

Project: Cedars II Office Building

This three-story Class A office structure located in Oyster Point Park in Newport News occupies a 1.5-acre parcel. The 21,000-s.f. building will feature exterior lighting and an illuminated sign. The façade consists of precast concrete and masonry with a steel-and-glass entrance. Tel: 757-873-9644

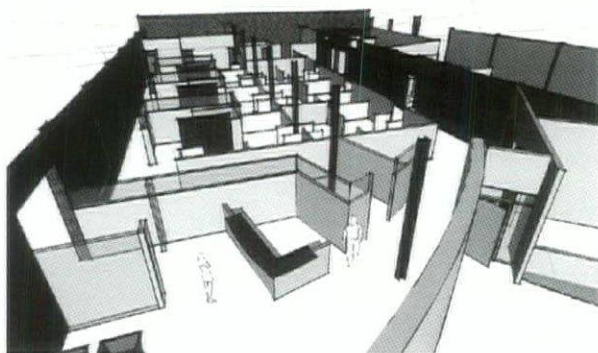


Architect: Baskervill, Richmond

Project: Central Virginia Food Bank Community Kitchen

This 5,000-s.f. daylighted kitchen facility will provide additional space for the Central Virginia Food Bank and Meals on Wheels. Design goals include efficient food production flow, an enjoyable place to work, LEED certification, and public accessibility. Tel: 804-343-1010 / www.baskervill.com

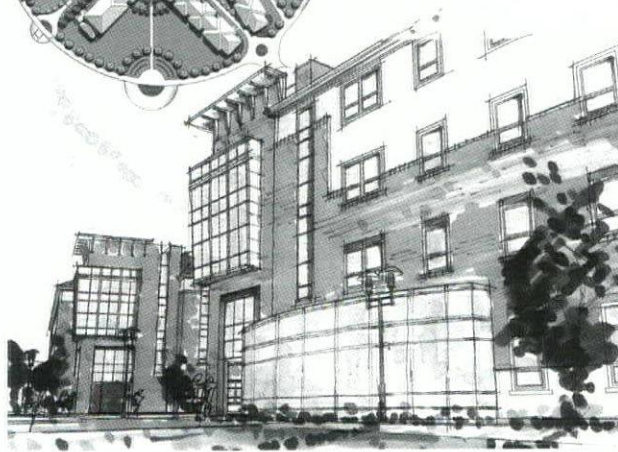
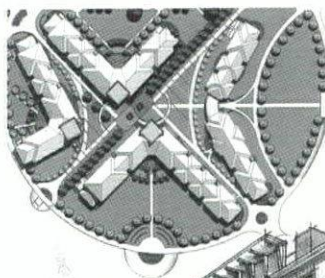
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Architect: BCWH Architects, Richmond

Project: Offices for BCWH Architects

Located one mile west of the firm's current office location, the former Nash automotive dealership on West Broad Street and Hermitage Road is the new site of the BCWH office. The space will feature skylights and a newly restored terra cotta wall. Tel: 804-788-4774



Architect: Clark Nexsen Architecture & Engineering, Norfolk

Project: Residential Life Student Housing Quad

A new quad-student housing and residential life project at Old Dominion University provides 900 bedrooms within a pedestrian-friendly campus environment while linking the school's academic core to its arts, athletic, and recreational facilities. Tel: 757-455-5800 / www.clarknexsen.com



Architect: Cunningham + Quill Architects, Washington, D.C.
Project: The Wooster and The Mercer Loft Condominiums

These two new loft condominium buildings designed for ABDO Development will bring a new type of upscale residential development to Arlington. The brick, glass, and metal buildings reflect traditional warehouses while providing modern amenities. Tel: 202-337-0090 / www.cunninghamquill.com

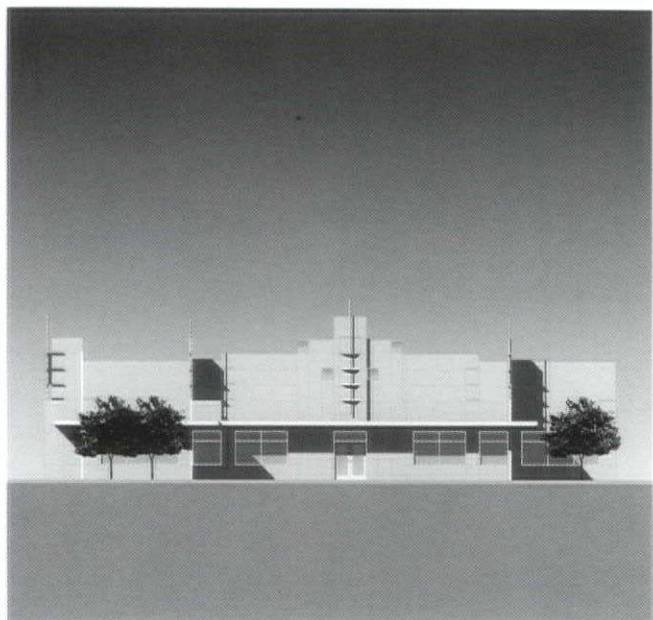


General Services Administration

Architect: DMJM Design/DMJM Rottet/McCluer
Project: Lafayette Building Modernization

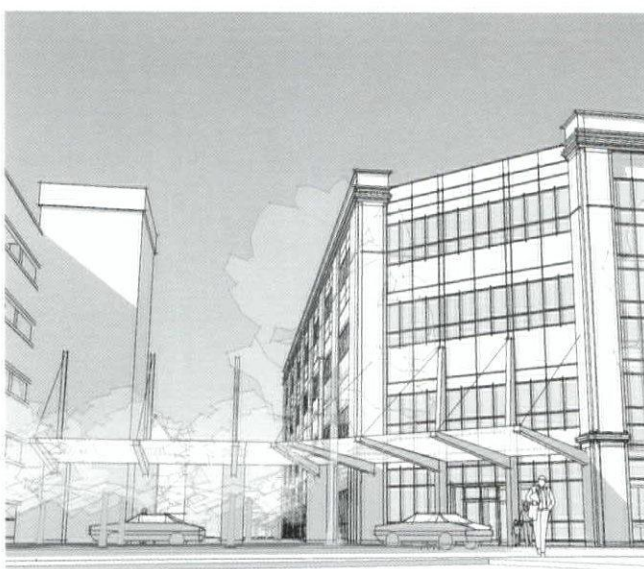
The modernization of this 1940 office building, a GSA Design Excellence project, will provide quality workplaces while maintaining the historic integrity. A National Historic Landmark, the building is prominently sited near the White House on Lafayette Park. Tel: 703-682-4900

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Architect: Morgan Gick McBeath & Associates, Falls Church
Project: Independent Fleet Maintenance Facility

This project in Prince William County is a build-to-suit for a specialty business devoted to the maintenance and repair of tractor-trailers. The 22,000-s.f. facility includes administrative offices, employee facilities, and 10 maintenance/repair bays. Tel: 703-538-7100 / www.morgangick.com



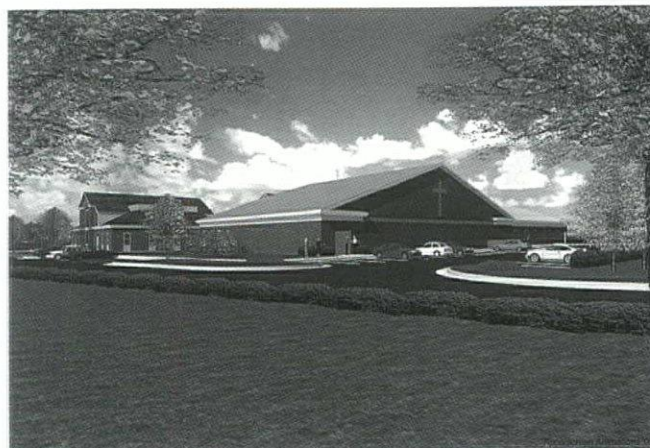
Architect: Gresham, Smith and Partners, Richmond
Project: Main Line Health Medical Office Buildings

Two new medical office buildings will provide 250,000 s.f. for medical tenants, an ambulatory surgery center, and other clinical functions. These buildings are key components in the development of two sites at Bryn Mawr Hospital in Philadelphia. Tel: 804-788-0710 / www.gspnet.com



Architect: William Henry Harris & Associates, Inc., Richmond
Project: Yorkminster Presbyterian Church Fellowship Center

This Fellowship Center for a church located near Yorktown includes a Phase One 16,000-s.f. Multipurpose Center and a Phase Two connector to the sanctuary. The traditional-style center will be clad in brick to match historic Yorktown colors. Tel: 800-473-0070 / www.harrisarchitects.org



Architect: Huff-Morris Architects, Richmond
Project: Ironbridge Baptist Church

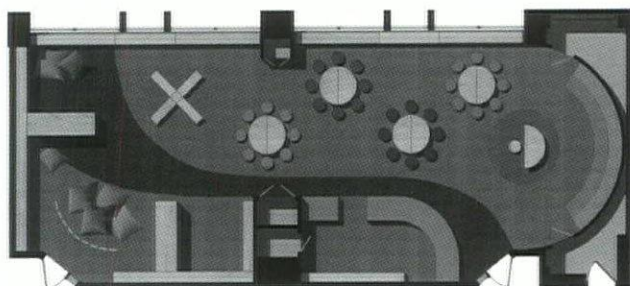
This 20,500-s.f. addition to Ironbridge Baptist Church in Chesterfield County will provide this growing church community with a new 800-seat worship area along with new administrative space and a choir rehearsal area. Tel: 804-343-1505 / www.huffmorris.com

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Landscape Architect: Land Planning and Design Associates, Charlottesville
Project: Lynchburg General Hospital

Working with Centra Health and HKS Architects, LPDA is responsible for the healing gardens in the new Centra Health Cancer Treatment Center. Special paving, water features, and colorful, unique plants establish an environment with restorative qualities. Tel: 434-296-2108 / www.lpda.net



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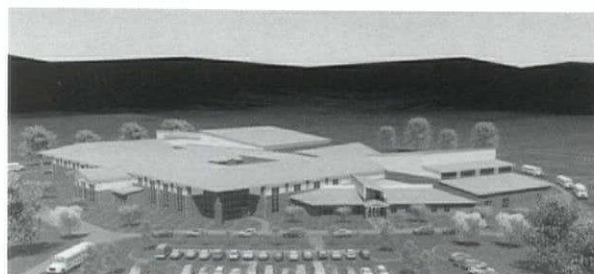
Architect: Meditch Murphey Architects, Chevy Chase, Md.
Project: Ludlow-Taylor Elementary School Media Center

The Ludlow-Taylor Media Center was designed as part of the Capitol Hill School Libraries Project, which will transform eight school libraries in Washington, D.C. The design features suspended translucent ceiling panels, a presentation amphitheater, and space for 4,500 books. Tel: 301-657-9400



Architect: Mitchell/Matthews Architects and Planners, Charlottesville
Project: Clifton Hill

Responding to an explicit program, this 50,000 s.f., five-level luxury condominium is located on a hilltop and steeply sloping site overlooking the City of Charlottesville. The program also calls for below-grade parking, adjacent guest cottages, pool pavilion, and related dependencies. Tel: 434-979-7550



Architect: Moseley Architects, Harrisonburg
Project: New Fauquier County High School #3

This high school's consensus-driven design was inspired by a community group made up of administrators, teachers, parents, and local citizens. The 230,000-s.f. building will accommodate 1,200 students, with core spaces sized for 1,500 students. Tel: 540-434-1346 / www.moseleyarchitects.com

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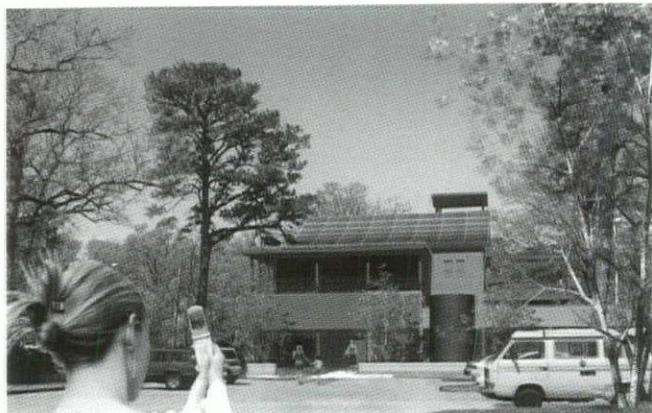
Architect: SFCS, Inc., Roanoke
Project: Roanoke City Market District Study

SFCS is teaming with DPZ on a study to update Roanoke's downtown market area. Citizen workshops are helping to guide renovations to the market building, enhancements to the farmers' market, and historic improvements. Tel: 540-344-6664 / tlj@sfcs.com



Architect: SK&I Architectural Design Group, Bethesda, Md.
Project: The Warehouses @ Union Row

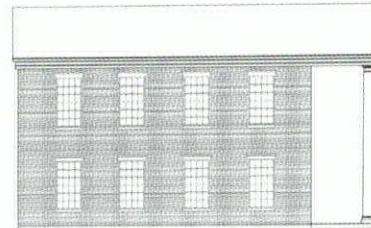
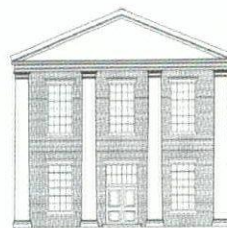
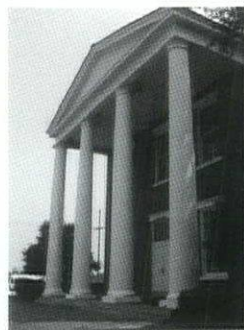
The renovation and expansion of two warehouses will provide more than 50 loft condominiums as part of the 14th Street Corridor revitalization in Washington, D.C. An open passageway running the length of the block, along with third-floor bridges, will connect the buildings. Tel: 301-654-9300



Architect: Watershed, Richmond

Project: Ernie Morgan Environmental Action Center

Winner of a 2005 AIA Richmond Merit Award, this project is intended to achieve LEED Platinum certification. In keeping with the client's mission of environmental leadership, the facility will educate visitors on the principles of sustainable building. Tel: 804-254-8001 / www.watershedarch.net



Architect: Wiley & Wilson, Lynchburg

Project: Suffolk Visitors Center/Dismal Swamp Interpretive Center

This project involves the adaptive reuse of the 1840 Nansemond County Courthouse into a new Suffolk Visitors Center. Conceptual designs include a Great Dismal Swamp Interpretive Center addition, along with interpretation of Suffolk's heritage. Tel: 434-947-1901 / www.wileywilson.com

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Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Title: Inform
Publication Number: 0007-0483
Date of Filing: 9/30/05
Frequency of Issue: Quarterly plus a special issue
No. of Issues Published Annually: Five
Annual Subscription Price: \$22.00
Office of Publication: Virginia Center for Architecture
2501 Monument Avenue
Richmond, VA 23220-2618
(address applies to all managers below)
Publisher: John W. Braymer
Editor: Vernon L. Mays
Managing Editor: Blair Guncheon
Owner: Virginia Society of the American Institute
of Architects, 2501 Monument Ave.,
Richmond, VA 23220-2618

Extent and Nature of Circulation

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H. Copies not distributed	607	1
I. Total	8,800	8,100
J. Percent paid/req. circulation	63%	69%



The interior includes a coffee bar (left) and gathering places for a variety of activities (below).

Photos: Blake Marvin

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When Joe Gibbs speaks, people listen. And so it was with his efforts to rejuvenate team spirit among the Washington Redskins, the NFL franchise that lured him back as head coach in 2003. To foster camaraderie among players and coaches, Gibbs campaigned for a new players' club at the Redskins Park training facility. It was his vision to create a retreat where the players and staff could unwind and relax in a place with all the comforts of home.

Given this charge, the design team at HKS, Inc., of Richmond, created a mezzanine level above existing basketball and racquetball courts and transformed it into a club with lots of personality. Lead designer Molly Winstead-Leal, an interior designer at HKS, met with Redskins' representatives to determine the needs for the facility. In response, she divided the 1,500-square-foot space into distinct zones that allow for a coffee bar, television/computer gaming room, and an area for playing board games.

"The guys actually play a lot of board games," she says. Separate living space provides a place to watch television, play poker, or surf the Internet. In addition, each of the two main



lounge areas features an oversized, flat-screen TV.

A pair of curved walls helps to create divisions in the space that accommodate such a wide range of activities. Finish materials in the club veer toward stone and wood, with stainless steel accents — "masculine materials," as Winstead-Leal describes them. Some of the leather-upholstered furniture for the club also required special bracing so that it would stand up to the demands of the larger-than-life team members.

Maple wood cabinetry highlighted with cherry wood accents makes a clever reference to the maroon-and-gold team

colors. Patterned glass in the partition between the two main living areas provides a sense of connection between the two spaces, while providing separation. In the coffee bar, the granite-topped island provides a focal point the players, with pendant lights reminiscent of cigars hanging above the island.

Articulation of the ceiling gives the room a sense of openness, while overcoming the height limitations inherent in carving new space from an existing shell. "We were stealing that space," says Winstead-Leal. "We needed to make a comfortable space out of nothing."

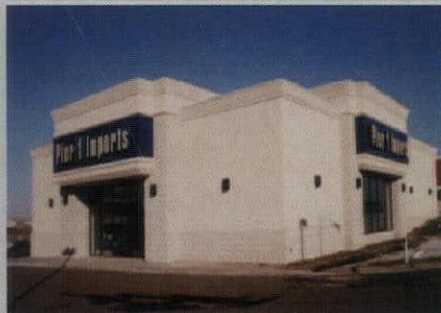
—Vernon Mays

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Washington, DC

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Roofing Contractor: Progressive Services, Inc.

Color: Hemlock Green

Profile: Redi-Roof Batten Panel

