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Astral by id+s Design Solutions



Park Plaza – London by Park Plaza Hotels



Aflac by Gensler



CNM Student Resource Center by AECOM

Sixth Annual Design Is... Award Winners Announced

Firms celebrated for shifting design around the world

CARTERSVILLE, Ga. – August 12, 2010 – In its sixth year, the Shaw Contract Group Design Is... Award program honors architect and design firms that are shifting the very idea of what design is. Through these winning projects, selected from commercial and hospitality spaces from around the globe, design is teaching, inspiring, healing, and uniting. The following six firms are the Design Is... Award winners for 2011:

Winner: id+s Design Solutions (Montreal) Rather than isolating Astral's jovial, approachable founder to an executive floor, the design team chose to create a light-infused space that reflects his personality as a means to welcome every employee from all five floors. The resulting space is contemporary, but timeless, echoing the values and roots of the firm.

Winner: Park Plaza Hotels (London) The largest hotel in London, Park Plaza is grand in scale but never intimidating. There's always a balance between clever and practical, comforting and functional. Subtle design touches keep each guest experience personal – right down to song lyrics printed upon the carpet – to make a lasting impression.

Winner: Gensler (Atlanta) Challenged to create a space representing "The Aflac Way," the design incorporated touches of branded elements throughout the space. A re-envisioned corporate cafeteria and conference center facilities draw staff from around the campus for cross-department collaboration. With a fully functional gym, the importance of health and well-being is evident throughout this LEED Gold certified facility.

Winner: AECOM (Phoenix) The design team looked not only at the aesthetic qualities of the CNM Student Resource Center, but the social, environmental and functional parameters as well. Technology helped shape the design, giving way to a variety of flexible spaces for students to interact. And the project's environmentally friendly materials were chosen for low maintenance while providing a sophisticated aesthetic.

Winner: Gensler (Santa Monica) The design team was challenged with reconciling the Beckman Coulter's culture-transforming goals with a tightly constrained budget. Their design strategy focused on impactful moves aligned with workplace tactics, creating a fresh, open facility that has become a deciding factor in bringing new talent on board. Collaborative space increased by 30%, energy costs in this LEED Gold certified facility have been lowered by \$900,000 per year.

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Beckman Coulter by Gensler



First National Branch Bank at Metro Crossing
by RDG Planning and Design

People's Choice Winner: RDG Planning and Design (Omaha) A 160-foot LED-lit glass wall illuminates First National Branch Bank at Metro Crossing, creating a bank building as a billboard. Etched with patterns of local prairie grasses and flowers, the glass feature carries through the interior of the building and delineates private spaces from public. To support the feature's striking presence, the rest of the interior is kept clean, modern and simple, establishing a sense of stability.

Click here to watch a video profiling the 2011 winners; copy and paste the link to post it to your Facebook page.

"The Design Is... Award program celebrates more than just beautiful spaces. It speaks to the power of design to transform any space in any environment, across the commercial and hospitality landscape," says John Stephens, vice president of marketing for Shaw Contract Group. "Every project is unique except for the unifying factor of how design can impact people working, people healing, people learning, and people creating. After six years and more than 1,100 entries from 22 countries, the Design Is... Award continues to champion design excellence across market segments and around the world."

Five distinguished members of the design community evaluated each project based on its design solutions beyond aesthetic quality. Judges reviewed the challenges, processes and results of each project and how each design team defined design.

The judging panel included:

D.B. Kim	associate principal, Pierre-Yves Rochon
Gayle Lane	director of interior design, EwingCole
Fedora Peschard	principal, Peschard Architects
Eileen Jones	principal, Perkins+Will
John Peterson	founder, Public Architecture

Winning firms will be recognized in an upcoming advertising campaign in leading industry publications and receive an original award sculpture. A \$2,000 scholarship in the name of each winning firm will be awarded to the program or organization of the firm's choosing. Shaw Contract Group will also promote its winners through promotional and marketing materials.

Firms can currently enter the 2012 Design Is... Award competition at www.shawcontractgroup.com.

About Shaw Contract Group

Shaw Contract Group defines design not only by great appearance, but also performance and sustainability. The result is long-lasting carpet with vibrant colors, distinctive patterns, and minimal environmental impact. As a division of Shaw Industries, Shaw Contract Group combines the expertise of the world's largest carpet manufacturer with the financial stability of a Berkshire Hathaway subsidiary. For more information, visit shawcontractgroup.com.