

AIA Alaska

A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects



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Architectural Firms Receive 2011 Design Awards from American Institute of Architects -Alaska Chapter

Anchorage, Alaska (October 14, 2011) – AIA Alaska, a Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Alaska), is honored to announce the 2011 Design Awards for Excellence in Architecture, the profession's highest recognition of works that exemplify excellence in architecture, interior architecture and urban design.

The AIA Alaska Design Awards Program was established in 1965 to promote community awareness of great designs being developed by Alaskan architects. For the past 46 years, these annual design awards have recognized buildings that both satisfy the needs of the user and significantly contribute to a stimulating built environment.

Each year, architects throughout Alaska submit to AIA Alaska the projects that they feel are exceptionally responsive to their clients' needs or exhibit design excellence above and beyond competent design. These submittals include a description of the project, architectural drawings and photography. To ensure the judging of the awards is unbiased, AIA Alaska Design Awards are always judged by AIA representatives from another state's chapter.

Selected from 17 submissions, nine projects were recognized at the 2011 AIA Alaska Convention Banquet held at the Captain Cook Hotel on October 8. Five members of the AIA Michigan Chapter served on the jury panel. They awarded three HONOR Awards, three MERIT Awards, and three CITATION Awards for projects that best exemplify northern design requirements, sustainability and site/context sensitivity, and innovative design.

Honor Award –Ravenwood Veterinary Clinic

Location: Eagle River, AK

Architect: mayer satler-smith

Project Summary: The Ravenwood Veterinary Clinic is located in Eagle River, a community near Anchorage. The rectangle shape of the facility is clearly defined, rather closed against the urban surrounding. Two exterior courts are carved out of the overall volume. The entry courtyard feels welcoming to visitors due to its visual openness. All public functions like reception, waiting area, retail and grooming are grouped around the entry courtyard to create a sense of spatial flow. Perforated metal siding is used to enclose the courtyards, allowing the semi-public spaces to feel open or enclosed, depending on the viewer's angle.

All public functions of the facility are located on the first floor, while all the administrative and staff functions are located on the second floor. The functional distinction is also expressed in the siding: the lower black corrugated metal siding is in contrast to the light wood siding on the upper floor. From the extensive roof deck staff can experience the distant mountain silhouettes.

Low maintenance finishes like concrete floors are chosen to withstand the high impact from animal traffic. Red rubber flooring in the treatment and surgery area create a dramatic work environment. Extensive natural daylight and wood ceilings create a feeling of a natural environment for dog and owner.

LED deck lighting illuminate the wood cantilever at night, a beacon in the neighborhood.

Jury Comments:

- strong, simple massing
- great contrast of materials
- carved out exterior spaces brings the outside in while maintaining the strong massing
- unapologetically contemporary for this building type

Honor Award –Mullowney Residence

Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Architect: Barnes Architecture, Inc.

Project Summary: A new single family residence on an existing urban lot. The ‘program’ was:

- as small as possible
- as tall as possible (with a roof top terrace)
- secure and private
- an elevator
- maintenance free

Aesthetically the Client wanted it to be:

- minimalist
- modern
- industrial
- have an exemplary design quality

The functions are stacked to achieve the desired height and vertically zoned from public to private. All, including the roof top terrace, are accessible via a 4 stop commercial elevator. The main level combines the 3 primary public spaces in an open floor plan that allows the entertaining of large groups but is intimate enough that it can be inhabited by one. An abundance of windows visually connect to the exterior - capturing the views and providing a wonderful play of light throughout the day. Privacy is maintained through the location, configuration, and orientation of the windows as well as the use of parapet/ screening walls, fencing, and the landscaping.

With the exception of the front yard (and a small parking area adjacent to the alley) the site is fully fenced and secure. Solid east and west fence walls provide privacy, mitigate sound, visually extend the yard, and help create an enhanced microclimate. Native landscaping provides additional privacy, creates immediate views from the interior, eliminates all of the mowed lawn, and nestles the building to the site.

Jury Comments:

- masterful form/space composition
- does not present large face to the neighbors
- dynamic sectional quality
- a great contemporary house

Honor Award –Kodiak Community Swimming Pool

Location: Kodiak, Alaska

Architect: ECI/Hyer Architecture & Interiors

Project Summary: The Kodiak Swimming Pool was designed to meet a variety of community and school needs for the next 50 years. It is an important meeting place for locals and student competitors from all over the state. Located on the a steeply sloped site behind the existing high school, the facility is functionally comprised of a 6-lane, 25-yard competitive pool with a diving end; an adjacent shallow instructional and toddler area with ADA ramp access; retractable bleachers for spectators and instruction; and a generous lobby and greeting area with pool visibility for staff and visitors. Materials meld with aesthetics to be appropriately

suited for Kodiak's maritime climate, such as aluminum siding and an over-sized entry canopy to protect visitors from inclement weather. Interior finish materials of durable tile and perforated phenolic wood composite panels create a warm and acoustically attenuated space. Strategically arranged windows allow views and light while avoiding adverse glare issues. The building integrates the ventilation system into the exterior wall construction, eliminating ductwork from the ceiling. Underground ventilation utilidors provide supply air to the pool's perimeter; the air passes from the utilidors into flutes within the wall construction, thus providing fresh air into the pool at numerous high and low locations. The simple form, durable materials, and logical plan combine to provide a functional and aesthetic experience for the community users and staff.

Jury Comments:

- unapologetic industrial “parti”
- surface composition and proportioning superb
- inviting and warm main spaces
- not just a box
- good use of the site

Merit Award – Downtown Juneau Transportation center

Location: Juneau, Alaska

Architect: North Wind Architects, LLC

Project Summary: The challenge of this project was to carefully insert a parking garage on a prominent site serving Juneau's historic down town waterfront business and government district. Design was specifically guided by public concern; minimizing the bulk of a heavy concrete structure and creating a character that supports the surrounding community context. While the single story Transportation Building forms a prominent peninsula in the flow of traffic at the hub of downtown traffic, similar to a wharf in a busy harbor, the bulk of the main Garage is tucked into the face of a bedrock bluff partially blasted out during construction.

The street facades are broken up to respond to the adjacent historic urban scale. Steel and glass canopies define bays that mimic the familiar scale and rhythm of traditional storefronts and afford pedestrian protection from the elements.

Stainless steel mesh panels reinforce a smaller building module, and simultaneously provide both a transparent and secure enclosure while further dematerializing the concrete structure. These elements are topped by a pre-cast cornice which reinforces the varying scale and defines the upper edge of the structure in a manner similar to historic mining era buildings. Pedestrian routes and spaces are expressed by using warm wood materials that contrast the concrete and steel of the garage. Stair towers, canopies and waiting areas are clad with glass on the exterior and a combination of engineered and locally harvested wood on the interior, thereby reinforcing the sense of a pedestrian place versus space for cars.

Jury Comments:

- breaking down the mass of the parking garage in context to the city
- inviting public building
- strong formal composition

Merit Award – US Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic & Regional Offices

Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Architect: Livingston, Slone, Inc., SmithGroup

Project Summary: The VA Clinic is full-service facility that conveys a message of compassion, respect and thanks from a grateful nation to its 16,000 patients per year, originating from all five branches of the Military. Simple exterior forms, covered entries, heated walkways and thoughtful design support the holistic healing mission. The oversized vestibule slows cold arctic air from entering the lobby--a two-story light-filled “exhaling space” for visitor de-stressing and orientation. Lobby finishes include rich stone flooring, wood wall textures and local artwork. The lobby roof is supported by a stunning tree-form roof structure: exposed steel trusses support asymmetrical “branches”, evocative of native vegetation. Clerestory windows infuse natural light.

From the lobby, patients travel three main corridors to reach various services within the 165,000 SF facility. Each single-loaded corridor, lit by a window-wall showcasing views of the surrounding mountains, is visible from the parking lot, simplifying way-finding and orientation and reducing visitor stress. All waiting areas have abundant natural light and views, yet provide visual and acoustical privacy for patient confidentiality.

Spaces include a surgical suite, pharmacy, audiology, imaging, physical therapy, dental, administrative offices and a public canteen.

Long-life and attractive exterior materials include zinc, tile, phenolic wood panels, aluminum curtainwall and glass. Wide corridors, ample daylight, calming views of nature, comfortable waiting areas, accessible services and patient confidentiality/privacy make the facility welcoming for staff and patients. A secure, enclosed, 370-foot corridor between the new clinic and existing Elmendorf Hospital provides access for shared patient services, staff, supplies, utilities and medical storage.

Jury Comments:

- breaking down the mass of the parking garage in context to the city
- inviting public building
- strong formal composition

Merit Award – AVTEC Alaska Culinary Academy

Location: Seward, Alaska

Architect: Nvision Architecture, Inc.

Project Summary: On a small strip of glacial moraine wedged tightly between mountains and sea, Seward, Alaska has become a premier destination for students seeking vocational training and employable skills. AVTEC – Alaska’s Institute of Technology offers excellent practical training and has established itself as an industry leader in providing trained graduates for community needs. The AVTEC Culinary Arts Academy was teaching from antiquated facilities contrary to the progressive image they desired.

The design responds to an aggressive program incorporating three training kitchens with requirements to establish the facility as a local culinary destination. The school offers real world experience. While design was tasked to respond to the complex functionality of culinary relationships, it was to also respond to public entrance from two sides and at two different levels. Also, since AVTEC is located prominently on Seward’s only highway, it recognized the value in taking an opportunity to promote the school’s image. The demand was simple – Design a technically complex training facility that communicates the school’s progressive attitude within the context of one of Alaska’s oldest towns. Seward supports freight, fishing and tourist industries each of which offers unique contextual identity.

Design concepts embraced the potential for contextual identity. Seward’s wet weather demands a well protected outdoor experience. Residents instantly identify the school’s covered entrances with protected decks of fishing vessels and glacial tour boats. Metal siding on the building embraces the industrial character of local freight yards and the use of textured block emulates the glacial soils upon which the community stands.

Jury Comments:

- excellent conversion of an ugly building to a community asset
- vibrant use of materials
- looks like a fun place to work/study

Citation Award – Fairbanks Ambulatory Surgical Center

Location: Fairbanks, Alaska

Architect: kpb architects

Project Summary: Dr. Mark Wade, a talented, visionary orthopedic surgeon, identified a need in Fairbanks for first-rate facilities providing outpatient medical treatment with state-of-the-art technology and patient care.

Designed to meet patients’ needs under one roof, the multi-specialty Surgery Center of Fairbanks is a 38,541 square-foot single story building. An “L”- shaped configuration, separating the surgical wing from the office wing, at the vertex of the building, a two-story main lobby is the building entry/ visitor lounge. Also used as a community lecture space after-hours, it has a projection screen recessed in the soffit.

Facing southwest, the entry allows for maximum natural daylight into the building, a welcoming feature as winter months average four hours of daylight. Cable lighting with light fixtures shaped like birds take flight between the visitor lounge and surgery center entry.

Featuring the latest progressive surgical equipment, the 15,000 square-foot surgery center has two expansive operating rooms, with six private pre-op rooms for privacy during the intake process.

Following surgery, eight phase-one post-anesthesia care units offer maximum visibility between staff and patients during this critical recovery period. To limit traffic and noise within the area, six private phase-two recovery rooms are provided where family can reunite prior to the patient's departure.

With extreme temperatures below zero in the winter months, the design team developed a concept that would provide a warm and inviting environment for patients and staff. The concept is based on the contrasts between sun and snow, the natural environment of Fairbanks and the Northern Lights.

Jury Comments:

- particularly strong interiors and graphics
- spatial depth and layering works well given sterile medical materials
- efficient planning

Citation Award – Core Pilates

Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Architect: mayer satler-smith

Project Summary: Core Pilates Studio is located in a strip mall in south Anchorage. The interior of the 3,732 of studio space is used for Pilates classes, massage and circuit training. Natural daylight passes into the studio through large storefront windows on both sides.

The main design feature is a 13' tall transparent white curtain that separates the space in a playful way. The curtain allows flexibility in case larger areas are desired for different group activities. The curtain as an architectural element embodies a sense of transparency throughout the space; Light passes through suggesting silhouettes of movement behind yet provides privacy for the class participants.

The white fabric creates a vibrant, clean, restful and refreshing environment which when combined with the large custom light fixtures (PVC-stretched membrane) and natural daylight create a soothing atmosphere in which to work out.

The reception area is the "core" of the studio. It's Douglas Fir circular wood counter stands in contrast to the overall white interior. Together with the cylinder above it anchors the area in the otherwise open floor plan. Green accent walls and natural cork flooring give the space a refreshing and balanced feeling.

Jury Comments:

- inventiveness of the experience of the plan
- wonderful diaphanous, semi-transparent spatial quality
- spatial integration of ceiling plan and lighting

Citation Award – Kodiak Police Station and Jail

Location: Kodiak, Alaska

Architect: USKH Inc.

Project Summary: The Kodiak Police Station and Jail is designed to give almost complete separation between the police and jail functions, with total separation from public circulation. Office and multi-purpose areas are a major portion of the facility, as well as lobbies and other support spaces.

The materials used on and in the building were chosen based on their comparative economy and durability, but they are put together in such a way as to provide visual enjoyment to the occupants and visitors.

The major colors and design ideas for the spaces and building were presented to the users and city representatives. The group was asked to pick the colors from a selection of pre-designed matches. A similar presentation was made for the interiors.

The architectural design, which draws upon local architectural and geological features, includes mortarless masonry that recalls the geological banding in the earth and machined metal finishes and canopy frames that recall the industrial activity of the harbor.

The color palette for the building includes shades of gray that depict the color of the rocks in Kodiak, and bright "safety" colors that recall the industrial cranes and other features of the local Kodiak architectural vernacular.

Through the creative use of translucent walls, ceilings, and clerestory windows, interior spaces that are ordinarily windowless have access to daylight and views. These ideas support the concept that light and color is important in the dark Alaska winters. The building is the first LEED certified facility on Kodiak Island. Constructed on time and budget.

Jury Comments:

- vibrant use of materials
- playful use of opaque, translucent and transparent surfaces
- unusual design for this building type

“Member’s Choice” Awards

The membership of AIA Alaska that attended this year’s convention were also given the opportunity to vote on their favorite projects in four categories for the “Member’s Choice” Awards. Below are the results:

“Most Alaskan” – Camp Fire USA Resident Cabins (ECI Hyer)

“Best Overall” – Ravenwood Veterinary Clinic (mayer satler-smith)

“Best Residential” – Mullooney Residence (Barnes Architecture)

“Project Envy (...wish it were mine)” – Ravenwood Veterinary Clinic (mayer satler-smith)

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About The American Institute of Architects. For 150 years, members of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) have worked with each other and their communities to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings and cityscapes. AIA members have access to the right people, knowledge, and tools to create better design and through such resources and access, they help clients and communities make their visions real. The Alaska Chapter of the AIA was established in 1961.

Find more information at www.aia.org.

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