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For immediate release

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Excellence Beyond Design Shown in AIA Minneapolis 2015 Merit Awards

MINNEAPOLIS, MN -- The Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Minnesota (AIA Minneapolis) awarded five Merit Awards to projects by AIA Minneapolis architects that tell a story of excellence beyond design, reflecting the variety of forces that shape a building. Unique in its approach to creating a jury, the Merit Award encompasses the views of business professionals, real estate developers, community advocates, and academic leaders, as well as architects.



The five 2015 AIA Minneapolis Merit Award recipients include:

Locus Architects and Isenberg Associates' **East Side Enterprise Center**, facility rehabilitation into *the* resource center for small, local, and entrepreneurial businesses on the East Side of St. Paul.

CITYDESKSTUDIO, Inc.'s **Peppers & Fries**, an urban restaurant emerges from a vacant and derelict Super America gas station, revitalizing the east end of Lake Street in Minneapolis.

Alliance's **Xcel Energy Hiawatha West Substation Enclosure**, an unprecedented Xcel Energy effort, driven by community feedback, to integrate public art with infrastructure in Minneapolis.

Shelter Architecture's **Dwan Maintenance Building**, a redesigned golf course maintenance building demonstrating the City of Bloomington's consistent commitment to attractive public spaces and high quality architecture.

BKV Group's **Schmidt Artist Lofts**, an adaptive reuse of a historic community landmark brewery into affordable artist lofts located on West Seventh Street in St. Paul. The Schmidt Artist Lofts receives the additional honor of the 2015 **Michael L. Schrock, AIA, Merit Award**.

In 2008 the **Michael L. Schrock, AIA, Merit Award** was created to honor Mike Schrock, AIA who tragically passed away in February 2008. This is an additional honor awarded within the context and structure of the AIA Minneapolis Merit Awards to one project that most embodies “Michael’s 7 Rules of Architecture”:

1. Know where you are from
2. Know who you are
3. Know why you are
4. Respect your benefactors
5. Honor the environment
6. Architecture must serve those who occupy it
7. There is beauty in functional, economical, safe, environmentally responsible, owner driven architecture

The jury included: Jeanine Christensen, Edina Realty; Richard Graves, AIA, University of Minnesota—Center for Sustainable Building Research; Matt Johnson, AIA, AIA Minneapolis President; Dick Niemiec; and Tracy Sides, Urban Oasis. The jury reviewed how well the entries achieved client/team satisfaction, technical innovation, environmental responsibility, budget/business success, community impact, and the architectural solution.

The awards will be presented at the AIA Minneapolis Chapter Luncheon on June 18, 2015, at International Market Square in Minneapolis.

Read more information about the awards and register for the event at

<http://www.aia-mn.org/about/chapters/aia-minneapolis/minneapolis-events/merit-awards/>

AIA Minneapolis is the largest chapter in Minnesota with more than 1,600 members. Centered in Minneapolis, the chapter territory includes the southwestern portion of the state. As a large chapter, AIA Minneapolis participates with other large chapters nationwide to focus attention on significant issues facing members. The chapter provides leadership, networking, and outreach opportunities for its members. Learn more at aia-mn.org/about/chapters/aia-minneapolis

The American Institute of Architects Minnesota, founded in 1892, is dedicated to strengthening our communities, improving our built environment and providing exceptional design. For more information on the organization and Minnesota architectural firms, reference our Web site at www.aia-mn.org and pick up a copy of Architecture Minnesota, the award-winning architectural magazine of the Midwest.