The 2016 GSA Design Awards marks a quarter-century since the U.S. General Services Administration first invited private-sector professionals to recognize recently completed buildings for acclaim. In 2000 I had the privilege of participating in this juried award, which was headed with incisive wit, intelligence, and passion by the late Charles Gwathmey. It is an honor to return to the Design Awards as this year’s chair and, with my fellow jurors, to expand upon the rich dialogue of the last 25 years.

Since the inception of the GSA Design Awards, its goals of achieving higher quality in the built environment and safeguarding principles of public building remain distinctly admirable. Government investments must maximize taxpayer value and provide community benefit, as well as strive for physical excellence, and the Design Awards allows GSA’s Office of Design and Construction to step back from everyday business and assess these sometimes contradictory charges. In addition to recognizing deserving efforts, the program sparks action. Previous cycles of the Design Awards have prompted multiple new policies that build on the successes—and stem recurring challenges—identified in awards deliberations.

Because the Design Awards establishes the road map by which GSA creates better places, our duty as jurors is to articulate GSA’s vision of excellence. Accordingly, we believe that the projects receiving awards in the 2016 cycle were conceived and executed in the best interest of the American people.

Several underlying criteria warrant mention here. We favored work that refuses to occupy a silo, and which instead shapes the experience of public space beyond disciplinary bounds. Unlike recent juries that reserved Honor Awards for interdisciplinary collaborations, however, we designated both Honors and Citations by discipline. That choice gave equal footing to more traditional, single-discipline commissions, and centered praise on the most innovative members of integrated teams.

Reflecting upon the 2016 submissions, the jury looked past stylistic preferences to determine a project’s merits. We also strenuously debated the criteria of the Construction category.
favoring the idea that the interface between constructability and teamwork—how a team’s construction expertise informed design outcomes and overcame unforeseen conditions—should be a minimum term for consideration.

This message would be incomplete without acknowledging projects excluded from our selection. We were intrigued by this cycle’s inclusion of multiple high-performance modernizations, many of which involved replacing or dramatically rethinking a building envelope. These upgrades represent a next-generation approach to historic preservation, combining respect for existing fabric with relevance through sustainability. Yet understanding a modernization’s success necessitates time-tested performance metrics, and we urge teams to reapply to the Design Awards as those statistics come available.

On a parallel note, GSA must sharpen its focus on interior workspace, so that the agency pays the same attention to occupant productivity and comfort as it does to a building’s cultural import and economic impact: architecture, landscape, and interiors must be cohesive. This greater emphasis will be reflected in the quality of submissions to the Workplace category in the years to come.

The 2016 GSA Design Awards saw the launch of a category that represents an agency-wide willingness to improve. The 10 Year Award illustrates how a great new project becomes iconic over time.

The inaugural winners of the 10 Year Award are Boston’s John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse and the Lloyd D. George United States Courthouse in Las Vegas. Not only have they stood the test of time; these buildings look and feel better
today than when they were brand-new. Although they represent very different cities, climates, and neighborhoods, both have improved with age precisely because they were designed with an eye to long-term public benefit.

The Moakley courthouse, on Fan Pier, catalyzed a wide-ranging neighborhood redevelopment that has bridged Boston and South Boston. The building reflects the traditions and aspirations of its home city, and has effected its transformation. Meanwhile, the design of the George courthouse takes no cues from the Las Vegas Strip, instead interpreting the strength of the United States justice system in a wholly modern way. This building expanded the possibilities of courthouse architecture in general, thereby turning the course of GSA’s Design Excellence Program. The jury lauds the George courthouse for engaging a different, more conceptual context, and for balancing that accomplishment with genuine concern for the urban sphere and people nearby.

Placemaking is a critical aim of GSA, and the Moakley and George courthouses prove the versatility and enduring positive impact of that work. The introduction of the 10 Year Award promises to further galvanize GSA and its stakeholders to create places that are innovative when they open, and timeless in their appeal. In defining this new category, the 2016 GSA Design Awards jury is proud to have helped shape the next quarter-century of award-winning designs.

Debra Lehman Smith
Founding Partner, LSM
2016 GSA Design Awards Jury Chair
Gordon Gill is a founding partner of Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture, which is defining cities of the future from studios in Chicago and Beijing. While he was an associate principal at SOM, Gill was responsible for the Pearl River Tower in Guangzhou, China, the world’s first net-zero-energy skyscraper. Since then he has designed the world’s first large-scale energy-positive building and the world’s tallest tower, as well as the Astana Expo 2017 and its sustainable legacy community. Gill’s designs have a keen awareness of local environmental conditions, capitalizing on them to maximize building performance. These ecological strategies are legible in projects’ architectural vocabulary, as well.

Debra Lehman Smith is the founding partner of LSM, a Washington, DC–based studio oriented for visionary workplaces and public interiors. The firm is particularly sought-after by corporate and legal clients for harnessing design in the service of organizational change, and LSM has earned widespread recognition for architecture and real estate strategy. The London-based European headquarters of K&L Gates won the British Council of Offices Best of the Best award in 2012, and both it and the Washington, DC, headquarters of Covington were recently recognized by Architectural Record magazine’s Good Design is Good Business program. Also notable is Lehman Smith’s collaborative methodology, which has underpinned multiple creative partnerships.

William Calhoun is vice chairman and executive vice president of Clark Construction Group. The company has earned more than 1,400 local and national awards for quality, craftsmanship, sustainability, and safety in its 90 years of service, and it currently employs 4,200 people across the United States. From Clark’s Bethesda, Maryland, headquarters, Calhoun leads national business development with a focus on new and emerging markets. He began his career with Clark in 1983. Calhoun is a board member of Georgia Institute of Technology’s College of Engineering, the A. James Clark School of Engineering at the University of Maryland, and the Construction Industry Roundtable.

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JUROR BIOGRAPHIES

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Theo Prudon leads the New York–based design practice Prudon & Partners, which specializes in preservation particularly of modern architecture. The practice has worked on significant buildings and projects across the United States, Canada, and the UK. As a longtime leader of DOCOMOMO US—the organization dedicated to the study of significant modernist buildings, sites, and neighborhoods—Prudon is a pioneering advocate of historic modernism’s preservation. Additionally, he is a founding partner of the design practice SC COLLECTIVE; author of *Preservation of Modern Architecture* (Wiley, 2008), which was also translated in Japanese and Chinese; and a longtime professor at Columbia University and Pratt Institute.

Judy Nitsch is the founding principal of Nitsch Engineering. Since 1989, the Boston-based firm has served as civil, structural, and transportation engineer on multiple high-profile projects, including Yale University’s ecologically innovative Kroon Hall and the Renzo Piano–designed expansion of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. It also performs land surveying, planning, sustainable site and green infrastructure consulting, and provides GIS services. Nitsch’s personal career in civil engineering spans four decades, and focuses on the design and management of site development and infrastructure-related projects. She is an overseer at the Boston Architectural College and a trustee of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and she served as 2014 national president of the Commercial Real Estate Women Network.

Vesela Sretenović is a senior curator of modern and contemporary art at The Phillips Collection. Upon her arrival at the Washington, DC, museum in 2009, she initiated Intersections, an ongoing series of art projects in which contemporary artists engage with the permanent collection and museum architecture and present or create new work. Additionally, Sretenović has organized solo exhibitions of work by Robert Ryman, Ellsworth Kelly, and Antony Gormley. Prior to joining the Phillips, Sretenović served simultaneously as a curator of the David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University, and professor at Rhode Island School of Design. She had previously worked at the University at Buffalo and Brooklyn Museum of Art.
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This construction project extends a legacy of visionary leadership that dates to 1855 when, upon Congress' establishment of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, the federal government used the facility to care for mental illness through pioneering techniques. The design of the campus counted among these treatment methods, as its weaving of revivalist architecture and park-like landscape was considered emotionally restorative—and boldly forward-thinking for the time.

Beginning in 1987 health services were consolidated to the east end of the St. Elizabeths Campus, and GSA took possession of the vacated western portion of the property in 2004. Since then, the agency has been redeveloping that site to consolidate the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Washington, DC-based workplaces. As the first new building of the effort, USCG headquarters permitted the relocation of 3,200 Coast Guard members and civilian workers to the government-owned building in October 2013.

The 2016 GSA Design Awards jury commended the wider redevelopment. Selection of the site promises to have positive economic impact on the Southeast quadrant of the nation's capital, and GSA has demonstrated utmost respect for the campus's existing buildings through preservation. Focusing on USCG headquarters itself, panelists noted how GSA's sensitivity to the landmark campus directly informed planning of the new building.
Indeed, its massing and configuration harmonizes with the smaller scale of the historic structures nearby. USCG headquarters is distributed into linked quadrangles hugging the 115-foot slope and, at the lower level of the site, the 10-story building scales down further, into finger-like volumes whose footprints interlace with a water feature. Landscaping camouflages the facility’s remaining visual impact, with vegetation sweeping over 400,000 square feet of rooftops—the third largest green roof in the world—and through the quadrangles’ various courtyards.

Jurors were particularly impressed by the care with which the courtyards were designed. Stepped in accordance with the site, they represent the region’s physiographic transition from the Blue Ridge Mountains and Piedmont Region to the lowlands of the coastal plain. The eighteen different plantings shade south-facing windows and pavers to mitigate air-conditioning loads and urban heat island effect, respectively, and to draw building occupants outdoors. The courtyards further enhance the workplace experience, by offering complementary functions like gathering space for casual meetings and events, as well as carefully oriented views to the Anacostia River. Yet perhaps their greatest benefit manifests beyond the property line: Because runoff is most responsible for the Anacostia River’s pollution, the courtyards work in tandem with the green rooftops and other stormwater retention techniques to reduce discharge into the waterway by 47 percent.
As national security has become more sophisticated, so the land port of entry has transformed from a small structure resembling a house or industrial shed into its own building type. Today, these robust facilities embody the unique demands of border crossing, and jurors singled out the 2-year-old Mariposa Land Port of Entry in Nogales, Arizona, for exemplifying how GSA has redefined the land port. The facility ensures security in a manner that is as efficient as it is humane, and which simultaneously celebrates regional landscape and national pride.

The 55-acre Mariposa campus comprises 240,000 square feet of buildings and inspection canopies. Zoned in the linear manner of a railyard, its master plan uses a central spine to separate incoming passenger vehicles from pedestrians and commercial vehicles. Highly visible primary inspection canopies reinforce this organization, by employing bands of red, white, and blue to distinguish between the traffic intakes.

According to the Design Awards jury, the project team deeply considered the comfort of individuals moving through the site. It fashioned durable materials into highly detailed trellises and light reflectors that, alongside lushly planted native vegetation, protect users from desert sun and emissions from idling cars and trucks. The architectural elements and foliage also work in concert with public art to engender a sense of oases among visitors, while maintaining clear sight lines for U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers. Meanwhile, sustainability strategies harness punishing environmental conditions to improve building performance. They include solar hot water, photovoltaic readiness, and a million-gallon cistern that stores mechanical system condensate and monsoon stormwater for irrigation.
The United States Courthouse Annex in Salt Lake City was completed in August 2014 to eliminate overcrowding in the Frank E. Moss Courthouse, which opened in 1905 as the first federal building in the Utah capital. Totalling 400,000 square feet, the annex includes 10 district and magistrate courtrooms, chambers for 16 judges, justice support functions, and other federal agencies.

The annex site comprises a gently rising city block bounded by the west elevation of the landmark neoclassical courthouse. A public terrace levels that gradient and connects the buildings. In a gesture of bridging old and new, it is finished in Sierra Nevada granite that approximates the Moss courthouse’s stone cladding.

The architecture of the United States Courthouse Annex similarly possesses continuity with its predecessor and departs from the past. Design Awards jurors cited the annex’s 10-story cubic shape as a classically inspired signifier of dignity and strength, for instance, yet they also observed how that volume contrasts the strong horizontality of the Moss courthouse.

Another example is the glass facade that integrates the daily life of the annex into the rhythms of the city, and which is mounted with extruded aluminum louvers to minimize glare and thermal gain. While the louvers evoke the fluted ornamentation on the Moss courthouse, they also produce a dynamic visual effect. Depending on time of day and weather conditions, the cube captures and reflects sunlight to seem bright white, steely gray, or largely transparent. Nor is this appearance uniform, as the louvers are widest where jury deliberation, judges’ circulation, and prisoner holding and movement take place, to shield them from public view.
In the treatment of the louvers, the jury saw an overarching idea at work. Whereas architects have traditionally revived historical style to impart federal courthouses with authority, the United States Courthouse Annex design team employed daylight as a symbol of the fairness, transparency, and intellect of the nation’s judiciary system.

In turn, the team incorporated sunshine into every aspect of its work inside the annex, sunlight flows through the oak slats and glass treads of an impressive spiral staircase in the triple-height public lobby. A skylight placed over the building core additionally transforms the elevator lobby into a 200-foot-tall atrium, and this atrium contains a full-height art installation by James Carpenter Design Associates that siphons daylight into the space (see p. 26). And courtrooms are located at the corners of the building, so that natural illumination can both enhance the productivity of proceedings and symbolize the enlightenment of American justice. Jurors lauded the project for realizing the daylight concept at all scales of execution, calling the United States Courthouse Annex a model for contemporary judicial architecture and a step forward for the federal government.
In Salt Lake City, light—from the sun hovering just above the horizon, or even from streetlamps—can strike the clouds to awesome effect. When clouds’ crystals are flat and hexagonal, that ice will reflect the light rays perpendicularly. The resulting shafts of vertical illumination are known as light pillars, and their appearance over Salt Lake City captivates observers without fail.

For the United States Courthouse Annex, Suspended Light Pillars by James Carpenter Design Associates recreates this natural phenomenon under manmade conditions. Using eighth-inch-diameter rods, the interdisciplinary design firm suspended 432 hexagonal prisms in nine fields over the full height of the 200-foot elevator lobby. As sunshine penetrates the lobby’s skylight, nine mirrors installed directly underneath the aperture reflect light farther down the volume to hit the atrium floor at noon each day. In that process, the daylight strikes the hexagonal prisms’ metal surfaces, and some of this reflection possesses a sparkle or a blue tinge based on the exact finish of the corresponding prism, prompting building users to look for the source of the variation.

Unanimously and without hesitation, the 2016 GSA Design Awards jurors agreed that Suspended Light Pillars beautifully integrates art and architecture. The installation is deeply respectful of the local landscape, and of the United States Courthouse Annex’s underlying design concept of expressing light as a symbol of American justice. Like the building itself, the artwork channels daylight into the facility’s interior while also manipulating it to poetic effect.
Upon its dedication in October 2016, the United States Courthouse currently under construction in downtown Los Angeles will support the United States District Court for the Central District of California and adjacent federal agencies. In the meantime, the project has the distinction of being among the only GSA Design Awards submissions to ever win an Honor Award in the On the Boards category. In the cubic geometry and pleated facade coming to life, jurors discovered solutions that are tailored to the building’s site, as well as underlying principles of urbanism, sustainability, and security which are applicable to federal courthouses nationwide.

Jurors particularly admired the relationship between the courthouse’s form and its important location near the Civic Center and Financial District. By cantilevering the 10-story glass cube well beyond its limestone-clad base, the design team created a band of shaded outdoor space for the surrounding plaza, supporting pedestrian use of the downtown streetscape. This shape also maximizes the construction and energy efficiency of the building perimeter, and embodies historic courthouses’ monumental presence in a forward-looking way. The technologies underpinning this concept are equally contemporary, and garnered further accolades. They include an earthquake- and blast-resistant structural system comprising a three-dimensional steel roof truss that cantilevers symmetrically beyond four robust building cores, as well as alternating ‘hot’ and ‘cool’ glass facade panels that are expected to reduce solar thermal gain by 47 percent without impeding views for building users. Respect for the occupant experience comes to the fore in multiple elements of the scheme, such as a secure outdoor courtyard that invites repose, a daylight-filled atrium where public circulation will take place, and double-height interior spaces that encourage interaction.
The National Support Center is a purpose-built facility that has served as the Social Security Administration’s primary and largest data center since July 2014. The complex comprises a 2-story office for 160 employees set perpendicularly to a 240,000-square-foot data center that bows slightly in plan. Front- and back-of-house functions are relegated to different freestanding volumes, to prevent human intrusion in the computing environment; overall, the highly protected data operation is responsible for delivering monthly benefits to 60 million Americans.

While data centers are synonymous with security, high environmental performance is rarely their priority. Yet the National Support Center is the first building of its type in the GSA inventory to earn LEED Gold certification. A 1-megawatt photovoltaic array occupies six of the site’s 63 acres to produce more than 2 percent of the facility’s annual electricity, and a dual-tank thermal energy storage solution, advanced building controls, and passive solar design lessen dependence on the grid. The two structures beat the ASHRAE 90.1-2007 standard for energy consumption by 41.95 percent and 43 percent.

The project conserves water equally dramatically. Rainwater harvesting and waste reduction eliminated potable water consumption for irrigation, and dashed total water for irrigation by 97.6 percent compared to a mid-summer baseline. Potable water usage in the center itself went down as much as 93.9 percent from the calculated LEED baseline. For balancing maximum performance with aesthetic expression and workplace productivity, jurors applauded the winning team for establishing a new benchmark of excellence for data centers generally.
During the Civil War, Clara Barton’s apartment in a Washington, DC, boarding house served as headquarters for the battlefield relief work that would lead to her founding of the American Red Cross. Between 1866 and 1868, Barton used it as a Missing Soldiers Office where she and her staff located approximately 22,000 Union and Confederate veterans.

On the eve of the boarding house’s demolition in the late 1990s, a routine final inspection revealed papers, clothing, and other artifacts related to these postbellum activities. Further review confirmed that the third floor, where Barton’s office and residence were located, had not been altered since the 1890s. The building was subsequently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and GSA aimed to preserve the apartment and its artifacts—first by selling the property on the condition that a museum operate on site, then researching conservation treatments for the easement spaces and securing the National Museum of Civil War Medicine to run them.

Full rehabilitation and restoration of the easement spaces followed, highlights of which included reproduction of Civil War-era wallpapers, installation of a digitally controlled lighting system that replicates flickering gas lighting, and concealment of new mechanical systems. The Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office Museum opened to the public in July 2015. Jurors were impressed by the meticulousness with which the museum was executed, and the ethical vision that originally elevated chance discovery into a campaign to safeguard American history. A passion for heritage, they agreed, differentiates extraordinary preservation and conservation work from standardized best practice.
The Works Progress Administration (WPA), which Franklin Delano Roosevelt launched in 1935 and operated until 1943, created more than 8 million jobs. Under the WPA’s Federal Art Project, that aid extended to painters, graphic artists, sculptors, and other talents who produced myriad civic artworks. While building-integrated murals and sculptures may be the most visible examples of the Federal Art Project, the program’s freestanding pieces are exhibited in galleries, hospitals, schools, and historical societies on loan.

Due to their portability, many of these treasures have gone missing or made their way into private possession since the New Deal. Through the New Deal Art Recovery Project it founded in 2001, GSA has located hundreds of missing artworks on behalf of the American people. In the spirit of the original Federal Art Project, the initiative also shares recovered work with museums and other qualifying institutions for display.

The paintings featured here—Airfield Stonington #25 by Archie Tillinghast, Urban Verticals by Robert Burkitt Sprague, and Unknown (Life Along the Mississippi River) by Clarence Millet—offer a glimpse into GSA’s remarkable recovery effort overall. The artworks were salvaged from an eBay sale, auction house, and high school, then underwent thorough restoration and documentation. They are now recirculating in public venues. The 2016 GSA Design Awards jurors premiated the three paintings as representative of the New Deal Art Recovery Project’s unflagging work, commenting that they felt humbled by the agency’s ambitious cultural stewardship.
After its successful recovery and restoration by GSA, *Airfield Stonington #25* by Archie Tillinghast was exhibited at the Mattatuck Museum, where it continues to be on loan (left); *Airfield Stonington #25* shown before, during, and after conservation treatment (right).

**OPPOSITE**


**RIGHT**

*Unknown (Life Along the Mississippi River)*, by Clarence Millet, before and after conservation treatment.
On average in 2015, U.S. Customs and Border Protection welcomed 1.05 million people to America through land ports of entry daily. A majority of inbound traffic originates from Mexico, but only one quarter of the nation’s 167 land ports are located on the southern border. This combination of traveler volume and port density converges on the San Ysidro Land Port of Entry, which processes 50,000 northbound passenger and commercial vehicles and 25,000 pedestrians in the San Diego-Tijuana corridor every day.

The jury was awestruck by the sheer magnitude of operations at San Ysidro, whose modernization is taking place in three phases. Fully operational since December 2014, phase one includes northbound primary and secondary inspection canopies that accommodate 36 lanes of traffic, as well as a northbound headhouse and the port operations buildings. Embracing logistics as its foremost concern, the design team sized and configured infrastructure and buildings to reduce wait times, budget, officer safety, and nonstop usage further informed master planning of the site, as well as construction phasing.

Jurors noted how the successful planning of the land port thus far has social, economic, and environmental dimensions, as speeding up border inspection also increases traveler satisfaction, facilitates commerce, and reduces air pollution. Phase one embodies these values in overt ways, as well. The Design Awards panelists deemed the new structures’ dynamic and unintimidating appearance a visual antidote to the anxiety of border crossing, for example, and extolled the project team for pursuing water-management strategies that protect a nearby watershed and estuarine wildlife refuge.
In Iowa’s 99 counties, courthouses share a common cause and design language. Most county courthouses anchor a central town square, and their interior atria serve as counterparts to the expansive public space outside.

Open since November 2012, the United States Courthouse in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, dovetails this vernacular to 21st-century federal service. The building encompasses district, magistrate, and bankruptcy courts, as well as appellate court judge chambers and ancillary facilities, in 260,000 square feet. Positioned at the southern terminus of an important downtown street, the volume and adjacent outdoor space affect a public square, and extensive glazing of the building’s north elevation reveals a six-story atrium where the public circulates among five courtrooms. Stone and wood harmonize with the glass curtain wall, and convey gravitas.

By paying homage to architectural tradition in the Hawkeye State in this way, the courthouse shapes perception of federal justice as approachable and participatory. It also yields functional benefits.

Flooding that devastated downtown Cedar Rapids in 2008 sped construction funding of the new United States Courthouse, and jurors praised GSA and its partners for raising the site nearly 9 feet before executing the project. The move not only prepares for future climate events, but also allowed more seamless integration of security and accessibility measures into the public square. By responding to the flood in this manner, the courthouse collaborators underscored a commitment to the vitality of downtown Cedar Rapids, and reinforced their project’s openness to the community.
Since opening in 1969, the B.H. Whipple Federal Building in suburban Minneapolis had not undergone a major upgrade to its mechanical, electrical, or life-safety systems until the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) allocated funding for comprehensive modernization. The ecologically responsible transformation that followed has beaten sustainability goals handily.

Success hinged on multiple upgrades, which most notably included the boring of 800 vertical heat exchangers, as well as installation of the nation’s largest array of evacuated tube solar collectors. Other examples of environmental stewardship include employment of photovoltaics, high-efficiency plumbing fixtures, a variable air volume handling system with optimized fan wall array technology, and energy recovery units. Phasing allowed 800 federal employees to remain in the building through construction.

The project team also coordinated individual green strategies to support each other. In one example of mutual benefit, insulation was added to wall and roof assemblies and existing windows were replaced with high-performing replicas to reduce heating and cooling loads on the geothermal system. Upon handoff to its fully trained operations and maintenance professionals, the renovated Whipple building reduced natural resource consumption dramatically. The design team predicted that systems would consume 48.5 kBtus per square foot per year—approximately half of code baseline already—while in the year following July 2014 occupancy, annual energy use intensity actually measured 42 kBtus per square foot.
In a gesture of local reinvestment and national solidarity, in July 2012 GSA signed a lease for the federal government to occupy 270,000 square feet of One World Trade Center in New York City. The headquarters of GSA’s Northeast and Caribbean Region was consolidated from larger offices in Lower Manhattan into two of these six floors. Finalized in December 2015, the new headquarters serves as a model for GSA’s tenant agencies and taxpayers, as it showcases spatial strategies for minimizing rentable square footage while encouraging collaborative, mobile work.

Here, the project team leveraged the architecture of One World Trade Center—namely, the glass tower’s distinctive chamfered corners—to achieve both efficiency and interaction. Reasoning that these signature spaces and their panoramic vistas belonged to all employees and visitors, the designers substituted corner conference rooms with open work areas and gathering places. The perimeter workstations are equipped with low partitions to preserve views, while inside the floor plate, offices and meeting rooms are outfitted with glazed fronts to ensure daylight penetration.

Jurors agreed that a democratic spirit underpins universal access to the chamfered corners. Hypothesizing that another workplace design might have concealed One World Trade Center’s ceilings and concrete floors, they also praised this interior’s exposed structural elements as an honest portrayal of the skyscraper. The panel urged GSA to continue embracing natural illumination and views in its workplace portfolio, and recommended that the agency consider utilization rates, activity planning, organizational culture, and architectural expression among the factors in tailoring future offices to their specific sites and tenants.
The Conrad B. Duberstein U.S. Bankruptcy Courthouse inhabits the former Brooklyn Post Office, which initially comprised a granite building with slate mansard roof and wood windows in 1891. Four decades later, an expansion was designed to match its forerunner, going so far as to employ terracotta cladding that replicates the original granite. Today the geometry and rich materiality of this landmark exemplify Romanesque Revival architecture, thanks in no small part to an extensive exterior restoration completed in January 2014.

Over four years starting in 2009, the most recent work on the Duberstein courthouse involved restoring approximately 75,000 square feet of granite and terracotta facades; replacing 15,800 pieces of terracotta, as well as 25,000 square feet of slate roofing, sheet-metal flashing, and gutters; and replacing or restoring 1,200 wood windows. Jurors observed that the tremendous scope of the project only seemed to galvanize high-quality craftsmanship. In particular, they noted the laser focus with which the terracotta was recreated, despite a limited availability of associated tradespeople in the United States.

Restoring the 1930s-era terracotta was indeed the project’s tallest hurdle, and its team had to devise various adaptations to this end in response to different embedded materials and structural systems. Jurors recognized that, in addition to individual craftsmanship, continual dialogue between contractors and across disciplines made these and other sensitive solutions possible.
Though conceived for downtown Indianapolis in 1902 by architects John Hall Rankin and Thomas Kellogg, the origins of the Birch Bayh Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse date to 1893, when Congress passed the Tarsney Act allowing government to conduct open design competitions with private industry. Birch Bayh is one of only 35 projects that resulted from the legislation. That year also saw the opening of the World’s Columbian Exposition, which positioned Beaux-Arts architecture as the prevailing style of public buildings, inspiring Rankin and Kellogg’s creation.

Inaugurated as a courthouse and post office, Birch Bayh has largely retained its Beaux-Arts character in spite of program changes and construction upgrades. Because systems had reached obsolescence and spaces posed barriers to universal physical access, in 2009 GSA allocated ARRA funds to renovate the building with an eye to sustainable high performance and continued deference to the enduring historic fabric.

In the two years following substantial completion in August 2012, Birch Bayh reduced its energy use intensity by almost one-third, to 31 kBtus per square foot per year. Jurors praised the project team for modernizing operations largely without impacting interiors’ scale and decoration. It filled gaps in archival records by documenting existing conditions and establishing baseline data from which to make decisions, and created training videos to ensure that newly hired craftsmen would choose proper tools and processes in a historic context. Consequently, sprinkler heads and fire-alarm devices are the only interventions visible in
the milieu of mosaic-tile ceilings, cantilevered marble staircases, and decorative artwork. In one instance, mechanical rerouting permitted removing a bulkhead and restoring the decorative plaster ceiling overhead.

Birch Bayh’s courtrooms epitomize the architectural proportions and surface ornamentation of Beaux-Arts architecture. In that vein, jurors said the conservation of murals in the Honorable William E. Steckler Ceremonial Courtroom powerfully illustrates the care with which the entire building was readied for the 21st century.

The Steckler courtroom features 23 murals, completed by artists Nicola D’Ascenzo and William Van Ingen to correspond with the building’s 1905 opening. Forming an upper-level frieze, the murals portray the 13 colonies, allegories of Indiana history, and representations of justice. In the years leading up to GSA’s recent reinvestment, they required extensive treatment to remove years of smoke and grime, and to undo previous partial conservation attempts that had been crudely executed. A team of conservators accurately inpainted the murals in their entirety and structurally repaired water damage, under taxing conditions that included working alongside crews executing the wider modernization. Birch Bayh was fully occupied throughout the renovation.
Simultaneous to the erection of USCG headquarters at the St. Elizabeths Campus (see p. 16), five of that property’s historic buildings underwent restoration and adaptive reuse. The 145,000-square-foot project lessens the environmental footprint of new construction, and it will serve multiple DHS entities as they occupy the campus. Forthcoming redevelopment phases include renovation of the historic Center Building as DHS headquarters, as well as construction of a central utility plant and a national operations center.

Just as the 2016 GSA Design Awards jury identified deference to existing campus architecture in the winning design of USCG headquarters, it noted the many ways respect for history manifested here, among them the planning of a visually unobtrusive subterranean gymnasium; careful restoration and matching construction in the dining hall; and adaptive reuse of relief quarters into a credit union. The panelists acknowledged that working in a landmark context often involves responding to discoveries that cannot be predicted. A significant number of construction setbacks accompanied the St. Elizabeths effort. Obstacles included a 12-week delay and expansion of scope to include a modular utility plant, in addition to more typical unforeseen conditions. While the scale and complexity of this work already made it noteworthy, jurors said that the timely handling of the additional concerns merited formal recognition.

Successful resolution depended on rigorous orchestration of people, they also noted. The project team divided management responsibility by discipline, such as structural modifications and scheduling, to ensure continuity across the five buildings. Value engineering offers another window into this intricate coordination, as multiple stakeholders collaborated on 39 different initiatives saving $2.9 million.
As a base to approximately 6,200 employees of 28 national agencies, Denver Federal Center represents the largest concentration of federal civilian workers outside of Washington, D.C. In turn, GSA regularly adds amenities to the 623-acre campus, such as a farmer’s market and event programming, and it tests sustainability technologies and other innovations on site for nationwide rollout.

Commissioned through its Art in Architecture Program and dedicated in September 2014, Planar Pavilion demonstrates GSA’s commitment to continually improving the Denver Federal Center. Andrea Zittel conceived this installation to foster social interaction across government and to prompt introspection about the places we feel at home. The artwork comprises a loose grid of eight simply fabricated pavilions set within the undulating landscape, which provides a linear contrast to the setting without appearing severe. Each pavilion is turned in a different direction, and features a single wall painted black on one side and rust on the other, to generate multiple visual effects.

The individual pavilions replicate habitation without being homes, per se, according to the jurors. And by avoiding reference to any specific purpose, they suit applications ranging from eating lunch to daily exercise, bringing together campus dwellers who share interests. These users may also occupy a pavilion differently over the course of a day or season, as shade and shelter vary with orientation and weather. In welcoming many functions, Planar Pavilion shuns the social distinctions imposed by one’s affiliation with a federal agency—not to mention the outdated notion that art is intended merely for display.
GSA completed a design-build modernization of the Mickey Leland Federal Building in Houston, Texas, in June 2015, as part of its ARRA portfolio of high-performance renovations. While this project accordingly focused on reducing the 22-story tower’s consumption of natural resources, it also enhanced its relationship with building occupants and the public. A rotunda constructed on the southeast corner of the site improves pedestrian access to the Leland building, and that lobby’s 30-foot glass wall showcases a pair of new public artworks to passersby.

One of the commissions is Leonardo Drew’s Number 123. Drew created the work by salvaging hundreds of individual objects and mounting them to the lobby’s north wall in a 34-by-45-foot assemblage, and jurors noted that the piece grasps the idea that public art needs to engage its host building without blending in to the architecture. The installation makes good use of the glass background to frame and sharpen its component artifacts, while still drawing viewers in to examine and assign stories to each part.

Such scrutiny will yield any number of narratives. The installation’s reused materials may represent a dialogue between the natural and the manmade, an injection of warm color and relatable texture in a sleek skyscraper, or an allegory for the Leland building’s total modernization. Drew, for one, embraced this openness to interpretation, calling the objects “hieroglyphics” for common life experiences in a prepared statement. Jurors hailed such ambiguity as the source of multiple meanings and enduring appeal.
Since its completion in September 1998, the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse has served as the Boston base of the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts and the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. The 760,000-square-foot facility includes 27 courtrooms, chambers for 40 judges, and offices for multiple federal agencies.

The Moakley courthouse required no introduction to the jurors, who had long admired the building’s thoughtful combination of architectural tradition and innovation. The design melds past and present in part by leveraging its waterfront location on Fan Pier in the Seaport District.

From the neighborhood, the courthouse appears as a 10-story, L-shaped masonry volume finished in brickwork, evoking historic warehouses in the former industrial zone. Meanwhile, it faces Boston’s Inner Harbor with an 88-by-394-foot conical glass wall that sweeps across the interior of the L, and which integrates daily courthouse business with activity in the adjacent Harborpark.

Although they were familiar with the Moakley courthouse’s contributions to architectural dialogue, jurors were pleasantly surprised by its influence on the local economy. The Seaport District has undergone major redevelopment, and today the courthouse counts office and residential towers, hospitality destinations, and the Institute of Contemporary Art among its neighbors. While public investment often sparks neighborhood redevelopment, the panelists determined that the courthouse amplified those outcomes by design: tracing the street grid on one side and creating public outdoor space on the other attracts urban energy toward the building, and the glass wall encourages civic interaction with the third branch of government. By ingratiating itself into the Boston community, the courthouse has catalyzed an expansive vision of its waterfront.
According to the jurors of the 2016 GSA Design Awards, the Lloyd D. George United States Courthouse is a milestone in the recent history of design—both repositioning GSA as a champion of contemporary architecture and shifting architects’ mindset about what was possible in judicial buildings.

The 437,000-square-foot courthouse, which is home to the United States District Court for the District of Nevada, was completed on the edge of downtown Las Vegas in June 2000. Its distance from the city’s famous Strip is psychic as much as physical, as the project team eschewed historical tropes for a radical reinterpretation of the American courthouse. In particular, the 8-story building substitutes the traditional colonnade with an enormous steel-and-aluminum canopy supported by a single, 175-foot-tall column: The gesture broadcasts the permanence of justice, while shading a raised plaza that also reinvents the processional staircase. Important interiors are expressed outside the courthouse, as well. The rotunda is a freestanding limestone cylinder whose cable truss-supported glass dome measures 60 feet in diameter, and the jury assembly room is a separate plaza-level volume.

In addition to possessing a formal originality that continues to inspire architects, jurors remarked that the George courthouse has increasingly benefited the public over time, effortlessly hosting school groups and city events and providing space for gathering and protest as an alternative to the commercial grounds of The Strip. The 10 Year Award acknowledges both the courthouse’s transformation of the design professions and its strengthening of civic life in Las Vegas.
PROJECT CREDITS

UNITED STATES COURT HOUSE URBANESQUE

HONOR AWARD IN ARCHITECTURE

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

UNITED STATES GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Carter Wormeley
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Nancy Witherell
Dawit Zena
Amit Datta
Tony Alonso
Nancy Weaver
Timothy Tozer
Gaftie Marlow
Edmund Newman
John R. Collins
Martin Troutman
Manish Kaul
Jason A. Curtis
Jim Van Houten
Karl Witbeck
Vinay Vanapalli
Corey Thompson
John Theiss
Tawney Farmer
Eric Weber
Deborah Roe
J Barry Moffitt
Kevin Jones
Rob Viergutz
Maria Salenger
Joanna Noonan
HONOR AWARD IN INTERIORS

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE ANNEX

HONOR AWARD IN ARCHITECTURE

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HONOR AWARD IN ARCHITECTURE

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE ANNEX

HONOR AWARD IN ARCHITECTURE
<table>
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