

# The 2009 Student Design Competition

NOTES FROM A CHAIR...

— U. SEAN VANCE, NOMA AIA DIRECTOR & EXTENSION PROFESSOR, NC STATE COLLEGE OF DESIGN / CENTER FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN

RARELY ARE THERE COMPETITIONS THAT ADDRESS THE VARIETY AND DIVERSITY INHERENT IN THE HUMAN CONDITION AS CLEVERLY AS PROPOSED BY THE 2009 STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION. UNIVERSAL DESIGN AS AN APPLICATION FOR ADDRESSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVIDES A MEDIUM BETWEEN THE EXPANDING TRENDS OF THE CURRENT HOUSING MARKET AND RESPONSIBILITY TO THE RISING NUMBER OF PERSONS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING INDEPENDENCE AS THEY AGE, MANY OF WHOM FACE DISABILITY. THE NEXT GENERATION OF HOUSING DESIGNERS WILL NEED TO THOUGHTFULLY APPROACH FLEXIBILITY IN USE AND ADAPTABILITY FOR EQUALITY ALONG WITH OTHER UNIVERSAL DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS, WHILE ASSESSING AFFORDABILITY AND THE ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CONSTITUENT PARTS.

The goal of this competition—to challenge the education of the next generation of architects in logical thought processes and pursuit of human interactive possibilities—enhances and advances the rigor in which they examine residential systems and programs. The results of the competition produced successful and dynamic opinions on how to approach diversity in housing, and in particular diversity in urban housing. The variety of iterations, produced by the student submissions, adapted to small site conditions with constraints commonly found in more dense urban environments, yet each student team showed their capability to present ideas as a showcased facade and internal program relationship, applicable in non-urban conditions, offering a positive reflection of the significant education provided at their respective institutions. I applaud the student teams and their mentors for the manner in which they equally evaluated accessibility for persons with varying physical abilities and their manipulation of the contextual architectural character to produce aesthetically pleasing interpretations which function within the urban setting. It is my hope that these ideas will not remain opinions, but will, in some form, become proposals—and maybe even a means for considering changes in policy, rewarding these students far beyond the purview of this competition, helping them to express their ideals and see themselves as influential proponents a healthier built environment.

**1ST PLACE ENTRY - GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY** The winning entry creatively used gallery space as a transition space between floors, thereby eliminating the need for an elevator; the designed ramp is used instead. They maximized the program on the site to resolve the issue of getting from floor to floor. The integrated program of artists space and typology of family works seamlessly into a design solution. Thorough presentation of specifications of design (sustainability, affordability, and environmental impact) was well-executed.

**2ND PLACE ENTRY - UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA** The 2nd place entry is a well-designed project. It is a well-nurtured design solution which presented many facets of the city. While jurors were slightly discouraged by the project's turning its back to the most prominent urban feature, they were impressed that it still created an engaging facade, which still helped make a compelling entry.

**3RD PLACE ENTRY - WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN SAINT LOUIS** A clear programmatic relation between interior spaces and the surrounding site context made for a good entry. The jurors particularly enjoyed how entrants dealt with an urban pass-through contained as a relationship between the project and the neighboring site conditions.

**4TH PLACE ENTRY - CORNELL UNIVERSITY** Jurors appreciated the entrants' abstract consideration of ideas relevant to exposing interior program elements to changing ecological conditions and sustainable opportunities.

I would like to thank my fellow jurors, Chris Hinton, Lee and Michael Willis, for their inquisitive evaluation of the many presentations. Their perceptive questioning of the students' design processes and environmental benefits offered the students educational development and insight for conveying architectural thought, whether or not work ultimately placed in the competition. We all benefit from such responses as we continue to challenge the issues of our modern time.

Future competitions within NOMA will be even more successful by continuing to face the challenges associated with creating better solutions for housing around the globe, whether transitional, advance market rate, or disaster relief housing; mindfully ensuring that designers make it accessible and responsive to the human condition. By bridging the variety of social disruptions—culturally, physically, and cognitively—our future architects will spring forth from an appreciation of transitional human dynamics embedded within a design agenda that broadens this prospectus, rather than focuses on a particular user group. In particular, their positive perspective will benefit from the continued exploration of the growing needs associated with appropriate housing solutions, armed with the understanding that the largest percentage of waste in the built environment is related to the housing industry, and therefore, architectural participation in affordable, accessible housing has never been more necessary. ✕



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# Choosing Relevance Over Obsolescence



AT THE OUTSET OF MY TERM AS PRESIDENT OF NOMA, I DELIVERED A MESSAGE IN WHICH I URGED YOU ALL TO CHOOSE AN OUTLOOK OF HOPE OVER THE PREVAILING ALTERNATIVES OF "SHOCK, DISBELIEF, CONCERN, STRESS, AND OF COURSE, FEAR". ALMOST TWO YEARS LATER, THOSE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAIN TIMES MIGHT SEEM TO SOME TO RING HOLLOW. IF YOU HAVE LOST YOUR JOB, HOW CAN YOU NOT BE AFRAID OF MATERIAL LOSS? IF YOU HAVE MANAGED TO REMAIN EMPLOYED, DOES A DAY GO BY WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL SOME STRESS OR WORRY ABOUT SECURITY AND STABILITY?

If you are a firm-owner, well, I've been there, and so can attest to the burdens that accompany you every waking moment. And yet I would contend that some degree of fear can be healthy when harnessed and used as an engine to motivate us to action. If, on the other hand, we allow fear to pervade our psyche, then instead of keeping our attention focused on what lies in front of us, we can be too easily distracted by what is behind us. Indeed, what we have lived through since the time of my message of hope has been unprecedented in our lifetime. However, notwithstanding the impact that the economy has had on architects in general - and in particular, on architects-of-color, I remain upbeat and hopeful for what I see ahead on the horizon. I believe that our future wellbeing as a profession lies in our ability to exhibit flexibility and innovation based upon how we are uniquely trained to think and problem-solve.

So then, when the nation emerges from what has become an all-out economic crisis, where will we architects wind up in the order of relevance and importance to our fellow citizens? As our traditional clients have had to find ways to do the same, or more with less, we are left to wonder whether the value in all that we have contributed historically to the shaping of the built environment will be lost. The emergent economy will present a broad spectrum of challenges, including how to transform our country into a leader in environmental, economic, design, and by no means of lesser importance, social sustainability - challenges that will be best addressed by teams that include architects as key members. The question on an individual basis is, are you willing and able to evolve in how you view yourself as an architect and, or design professional? Convincing clients and others of the value we bring can be aided by expanding the proverbial box into which we have traditionally allowed ourselves to be placed, or even by climbing completely out of that box. The key to the survival, if not prosperity of our profession moving forward lies in our ability to redefine our role to have far greater relevance to the broader society than what we have limited ourselves to in the past.

I am not suggesting that the core of who we are as architects is flawed, or requires fundamental change in order for our profession to continue in a viable way. What I am putting forth is the notion that we find opportunities for empowerment in areas that fall outside the boundaries of traditional practice. By doing so, we will assure that architects, with our particular sensibilities and approaches, will shine along side of our collaborators. Through our particular way of engagement, we will display the power of who we are and how we think about our world.

Back to why I am hopeful: In a word, YOU are why. NOMA, while modest in numbers, continues to grow in the impact we are having on everyone from our young people and residents of distressed communities, to policy-makers and leaders within the mainstream of the profession. Our accomplishments have come solely as a result of the passion and commitment of members like you. As I near the conclusion of my two-year term as president of NOMA, I am humbled by my fellow members, and privileged to have been out in front during such challenging times. The fact that NOMA's numbers, as well as the recognition we have received for our deeds have only grown over this time gives me great satisfaction. What we have been able to accomplish in the midst of lean economic times serves to affirm that my service within, and advocacy on behalf of this great organization will continue beyond the end of my tenure as president. I want to encourage each and every one of you to join me in pledging to be active members of NOMA, as we play an increasingly important part in redefining the role of "the architect" to ensure greater relevance to all of our fellow citizens in all of our communities. ✕

— R. STEVEN LEWIS, NOMA, AIA

# NOMATTERS

## The New Tradition Of Service

— KIMBERLY DOWDELL, ASSOCIATE AIA, NOMA, LEED AP

THE 2ND ANNUAL NOMA SERVICE PROJECT CONFIRMED THE NOTION THAT OUR VOLUNTEER WORK IN UNDER-SERVED COMMUNITIES IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO BOTH OUR MEMBERS AND ALL OF THOSE WHOM WE SEEK TO SERVE. GIVEN THE FACT THAT WE FOUND VALUE IN THE FIRST SERVICE PROJECT AND CONTINUED OUR WORK FOR A SECOND YEAR, I AM PROUD TO OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCE A BRAND NEW TRADITION THAT NOMA HAS TAKEN ON IN RESPONSE TO THE GROWING NEED FOR DESIGN THINKING IN DISINVESTED COMMUNITIES.

Initiated in 2008, the annual NOMA Service Project was intended to make better use of our collective time in each of the cities where the national NOMA conference is hosted. The question was posed, “Why isn’t NOMA doing more to have a meaningful impact on these places beyond simply spending time and conference dollars?” With that in mind, we developed a plan to renovate a building that houses an after-school tutoring program on Washington, D.C.’s SE side, during our 2008 conference. NOMA partnered with HOK, Howard University, Capital Property Development and Greater DC Cares to deliver a renovation that made the tutoring facility a more inspiring, productive and safe environment for student development. Building off of the successes and lessons learned from that experience, we continued the tradition of service in St. Louis the next year.

In 2009, NOMA’s Service Project was slightly different than our inaugural project because we identified a new need to be addressed in St. Louis. The South Side Day Nursery (SSDN) had ambitions to build a new facility to house their early childhood education program. They were also in need of master planning services for their site, which spanned two city blocks on the South Side of St. Louis. In response to this expressed need, NOMA assembled a team and again partnered with HOK (led by Jaki Jefferson) to organize and host a design charrette. The project involved gathering SSDN stakeholders to better understand their vision as well as their specific needs in relation to the facilities challenges that they are facing. The charrette also included 3rd-year architecture students from Washington University of St. Louis, led by their professor and HOK architect, Valerie Greer. The academic perspective and the thoughtful input of the students added a very enriching dynamic to the discussions. Overall, the project was about challenging SSDN to use design as a tool for thinking about how to optimize their programs and plans for expansion. NOMA was honored to be apart of their process and all participants learned from the experience.

Why does it matter that a group of outsiders annually converge on a different neighborhood in an effort to leave a positive imprint through design service? I’m glad that you ask - it matters because this group is equipped with a unique set of skills coupled with a strong commitment to serve under-resourced communities and the environments in which they live, work and play. This group is NOMA. Our efforts matter because we have the opportunity to set the stage for community improvement projects everywhere we convene. As we continue the tradition and prepare to deliver a third service project for the Boston NOMA Conference, we realize that while our work is not of substantial size, our aim is to really plant the seeds for substantial impact in the future. ✕

# NOMA

## Design Excellence Awards

— RENEE KEMP-ROTAN, URBAN DESIGNER, NOMA

IN 2008, WHEN I SERVED ON A NOMA PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AWARDS COMPETITION JURY, THE NOMA CONFERENCE WAS IN DISNEY WORLD AND I ALMOST DID NOT MAKE IT BACK TO THE CONFERENCE HALL TO HOST THE DESIGN AWARDS. I HAD GONE TO CIRQUE DUE SOLEIL TO BE INSPIRED AND WAS ESCORTED TO THAT EVENT BY THE ONLY AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE ARCHITECT AT THE CIRCUS. HE WAS DAPPERED DOWN IN A TUXEDO AND I WAS IN A BALL GOWN. (HE KNOWS WHO HE IS.)

Some in the Cirque audience may have thought we were part of the act, but we had really dressed for one of the biggest design award banquets in the nation—the NOMA Professional Design Awards. We came from the circus mesmerized by Cirque’s imagination, but knew full well that someday NOMA would sponsor a category for ‘Design Visionaries’, so that African American architects could play, color and paint outside the lines of the typical client contract. In 2009, we got our wish.

In 2009 the NOMA Design Jury of Robert Theel, AIA (GSA); David Harmon, NOMA, AIA (DKA) and I would be inspired by a host of fantastic projects and a brand new NOMA Professional Design Awards category...that of design Visionary. That new Visionary category allowed jurors to examine both ‘the memorable and the mystical’ as our best talent showed its ability to create new environmental landscapes using new media in highly interpretive ways. NOMA’s increased attention to environmental issues this time also meant that many NOMA submissions now boasted: Leed Silver; Leed Gold; FEMA Earthquake Resistant and FEMA Flood Resistant responses with one project fully describing water conservation and energy challenges throughout its entire program and site.

NOMA brass also decided that jurors could vote for the following: built, unbuilt, urban design and interior design projects that truly celebrated the breadth and depth of minority talent in the design arts. In 2009, eighteen submissions were judged on their relationship to context; neighborhood impact; relationship to site; responsiveness to program/use; clarity of spatial organization; evidence of cultural identity and expression.

Please also note that NOMA DESIGN AWARD submissions are always identified by number and not by letter. Thus, NOMA DESIGN AWARD submissions are anonymous and the NOMA Jury gets no titles of firms or names of principals. Submissions are reviewed by project type, only. So, during the course of one day, three jurors judged eighteen projects that ranged from community centers, reading centers, student centers, libraries, train stations, monuments, museums, urban design, interiors, new construction, adaptive re-use and eco-buildings to built and un-built competition entries. Projects included: a Center for Human Rights, a Museum for Buffalo Soldiers, a National African-American Museum, a University Athletics Center, a Firefighters Hall; a Circus Marquee and Lobby; an African Burial Ground and many other projects that captured our imagination. Read on to find which projects were selected and what the NOMA Jury really had to say... ✕

2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE CITATION  
Un-Built Category

NOMA

## Center For Civil And Human Rights

FIRM // MOODY NOLAN, INC.  
PROJECT // CENTER FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS / DESIGN COMPETITION  
LOCATION // ATLANTA, GA

THE CENTER FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA—IS AN UN-BUILT COMPETITION ENTRY THAT DID NOT WIN; BUT, FOR THE NOMA JURY, “IT EMERGES AS A LITERAL ‘GROUNDWELL’ IDEA.” THIS HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER HAS OUTDOOR GREEN SPACE THAT STRETCHES ACROSS ITS SURFACE AND INTERIOR CONFERENCE SPACES THAT TUCK NEATLY BENEATH ITS EARTH-BERMED LIPS.

It oozes across the natural landscape as one single organic tissue that drapes itself over a man-made underground museum. Though ‘force and counter-force’ were once political descriptions applied to the civil right movement, this entry speaks, ecologically through a well-organized matrix that describes the ‘forces and counter-forces’ of wind, sun and site orientation.

This bold proposal pushes and pulls itself across Atlanta’s landscape to come lovingly to rest between some of Atlanta’s most gargantuan icons of culture. It wedges its own complex program between the new 200,000SF Georgia Aquarium and the \$200 million dollar Philips Arena. It nestles itself on the lap of the Atlanta’s central business district where it ‘parks’ full stop to come to rest near Atlanta’s Olympic Park..

It is a park within a park. Indeed, if ‘green is the new black’ then this civil rights site proposes a series of quiet sanctuaries that protect it from the elements and a bevy of underground galleries that manipulate subterranean rays to illuminate its, dark corners, most brilliantly. This building’s thoughtful “mountain-high, valley-low” urban design appeal presents new eco-opportunities for energy efficiency. Its attention to ecological detail is evidenced through its many ‘process’ drawings that make ‘sustainability in the public realm’, the new civil right. ✕



2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE CITATION  
Built Interior Design Category

NOMA

## Cirque Du Soliel “Criss Angel BellEve”

FIRM // HAMILTON ANDERSON ASSOCIATES  
PROJECT // CIRQUE DU SOLIEL - CRISS ANGEL BELIEVE- AT LUXOR HOTEL AND CASINO  
LOCATION // LAS VEGAS, NV

THE NOMA JURY ‘FLEW’ FROM ATLANTA TO LAS VEGAS TO ‘ENVISION’ THE NEXT WINNING ENTRY. THIS PROJECT IS THE RE-DESIGN OF AN ENTRY SEQUENCE IN AN EXISTING THEATRE AT A FAMOUS LAS VEGAS HOTEL AND CASINO IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEBUT OF THE NEW-EST PERMANENT PERFORMANCE ART PRODUCTION INVOLVING MYSTICISM.

The \$3.5M project began in October 2007 and opened for the public in October 2008. Project scope includes a 6,000 SF Box Office and Retail Store; a 14,500 SF Bar/Lounge and pre-function Area.

This submission was merely an entrance sequence to a major theatre event with box office, entrance lobby and marquee. Simple enough. But this design team made grand thematic impact by creating a multiple series of “looking glasses” that refracted and reflected images to jumpstart your admission to a major Las Vegas show: The Cirque du Soliel Believe Show with Chris Angel.

The narrative of the production parallels Lewis Carroll’s classic literary work, “Through the Looking Glass,” as both works of art follow a protagonist’s journey into a whimsically absurd alternate reality. Thresholds between levels of certainty as a literary premise inspired the architect to consider a similar perception when designing the tangible space of journey into the actual theatre experience.

The NOMA Jury was amazed at the number of media interventions that reinforced the thematic story line. Magic was everywhere...the use of ‘smoke and mirrors’ up and down the hallway walls; the use of color in the red and purple haze; double exposed photographs of both Chris Angel and the Magic Circus Rabbit. A real vision for a virtual Alice in Wonderland experience from entry to marquee. ✕

NOMA MAGAZINE



2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE CITATION  
Built Category

NOMA

## Marcus Garvey Houses Community Center

FIRM // CAPLES JEFFERSON ARCHITECTS PC  
PROJECT// MARCUS GARVEY HOUSES  
COMMUNITY CENTER/  
LOCATION// BROOKLYN, NY (BUILT 2009)

KUDOS TO A NEW COMMUNITY CENTER IN THE MIDDLE OF EXISTING 1970'S HOUSING PROJECT IN BROOKLYN. THIS BUILDING IS INFILL TO AN EXISTING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT THAT TRANSFORMS A FORMER HARD DIRT COURT AND DOG RUN INTO A NEW AND SECURE COMMUNITY SPACE. WITH A CONSTRUCTION BUDGET UNDER \$4 MILLION THIS FIRM MANAGED TO DESIGN A COMMUNITY CENTER WITH MULTIPURPOSE ROOMS FOR EXERCISE, COMMUNITY GATHERINGS, CLASSROOMS, OFFICES AND KITCHEN.

Outdoor space includes protected inner courtyards for safe play, a basketball court, planted groves, seating for seniors, and linear playground space for toddlers and children with walkways for through-block pedestrian traffic. To provide security the protected interior spaces are a series of inner and outer courtyards both separated and defined by the building's glassy corridors, a safe and welcoming structure that provides a well programmed anchor to a troubled neighborhood.

A real jewel nestled in the bowels of a 1970's public housing project. A small building. Tiny but noble. Rarely does an architect put this much passion and quality into low-income environments with such success. Thoughtful praiseworthy-- a building that offers much love for design and much love for community. ✕



2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE CITATION  
Built Category

NOMA

## 125 Mason Street Apartments

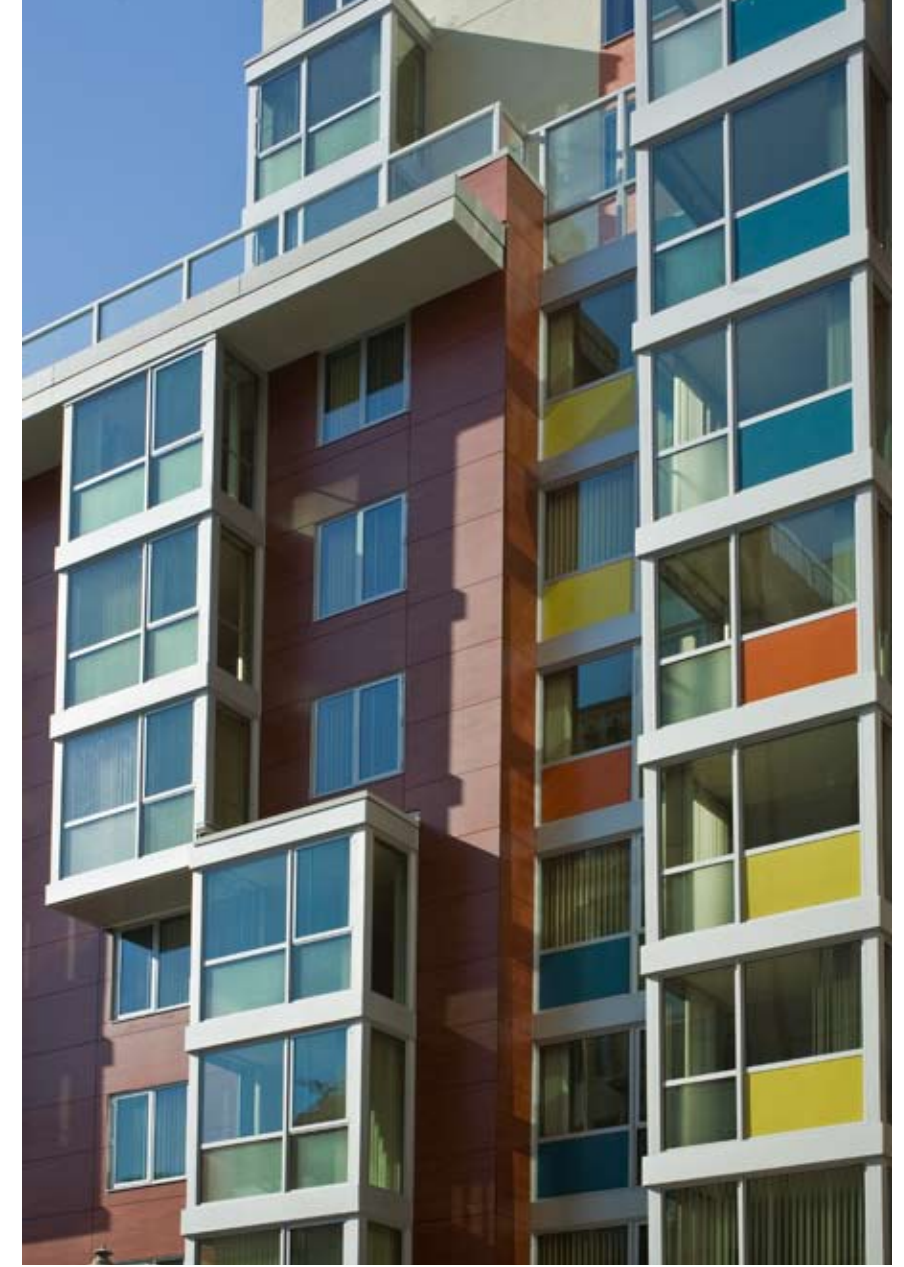
FIRM // MICHAEL WILLIS ARCHITECTS  
PROJECT// 125 MASON STREET APARTMENTS  
LOCATION// SAN FRANCISCO, CA (BUILT 2008,  
NEW CONSTRUCTION)  
DOWNTOWN HIGH RISE WORKER HOUSING

BECAUSE DIGNITY IN THE AMERICAN DREAM HAS ALWAYS MEANT "HOME OWNERSHIP", SOMETIMES JUST SOMETIMES THE AMERICAN DREAM NEEDS TO BE RE-THOUGHT. THUS, THIS PROJECT IN SAN FRAN CLEARLY BLASTS OUR TRADITIONAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING... ALL WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES NEED ADEQUATE HOUSING AND A DIGNIFIED HOME. AS CHINUA ACHEBE WOULD SAY, "IF WE DO NOT HONOR THE BUILDING OF FAMILY FIRST —'SOON THINGS FALL APART'.

TheNOMAJury thanks this team for housing a work force community in such a vital and dignified manner. We thank you for housing a nonprofit sponsor that serves meals to 75,000 people per year. We thank you for housing efficient use of materials to provide top-flight rental homes in such an affordable way. We thank you for housing "the upgrade" for 81 families, in one bedroom to four bedroom units, providing 260 units of housing per acre!

We thank you for housing four high rise towers that have 'good sense enough' to step back from the street. We thank you for stepping-up the dialogue about housing the low-income worker.. We thank you for your robust commitment to affordable housing as an essential component of the public realm.

This project brings beauty and dignity to the rental housing market for the average worker. This project brings program costs down, too. So, we thank you for your use of recycled materials; for the 92% efficiency in hot water heating for energy conscious appliances; and for recycling 90% of the waste from the construction site. Even today after decades of subsidized private homeownership, publicly owned rental housing forms a small but important portion of the all-American housing market. We need to celebrate that reality with the design of more cutting- edge, affordable housing such as this, nationwide. ✕



2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE CITATION  
Built Category

NOMA

## Bishop James A. Griffin Student Center, ODU

FIRM // MOODY NOLAN, INC.  
PROJECT// OHIO DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY  
BISHOP JAMES A. GRIFFIN STUDENT CENTER  
LOCATION// COLUMBUS, OH

THIS NEW 82,000 SQUARE FOOT STUDENT CENTER PROVIDES A NEW ICONIC GATEWAY FOR AN EXPANDING CAMPUS. DESIGNED TO BE THE UNIVERSITY'S NEW PUBLIC FACE, THE NEW STUDENT CENTER PROVIDES THE VISUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CAMPUS, THE COMMUNITY AND NATURE. THE NOMA JURY CALLED THIS ENTRY—"PEEK-ABOO-STREET".

The building has formal and visual interest as it satisfies the interior building program but connects grand volumes of space through its use of transparencies, vistas and dazzling sculptural forms that can be appreciated by viewers on and across campus. This building was planned to resonate with energy and to heighten intellectual curiosity about what buildings are and what they can become. This building is meant to "see and be seen" by passersby and thus can be filled with students and surrounded by them as well. The building is a fortress that becomes its own defensible space as students chat, workout, eat, study and look out for one another at this home away from home.

Upon entry, the eye can see through gathering spaces, past lounges, across cafes, beyond the terraces to the ravine outdoors. The open nature of the floor plan combines with the natural light from clerestory windows to allow continuous connection between the interior and exterior.

A series of communal gathering spaces and the connection between the student center and alumni hall lends great spatial opportunity for large crowds at speaking engagements and graduations. The articulation of the architecture and the use of glass connections between these two massive buildings make transition easy on the feet and easy on the eye. For students working out and going for the gold, this building is a hit. On campus, this building is the first to achieve a rating of LEED GOLD. ✕



2009  
DESIGN EXCELLENCE HONOR  
Built Category

NOMA

## The African Burial Ground Memorial

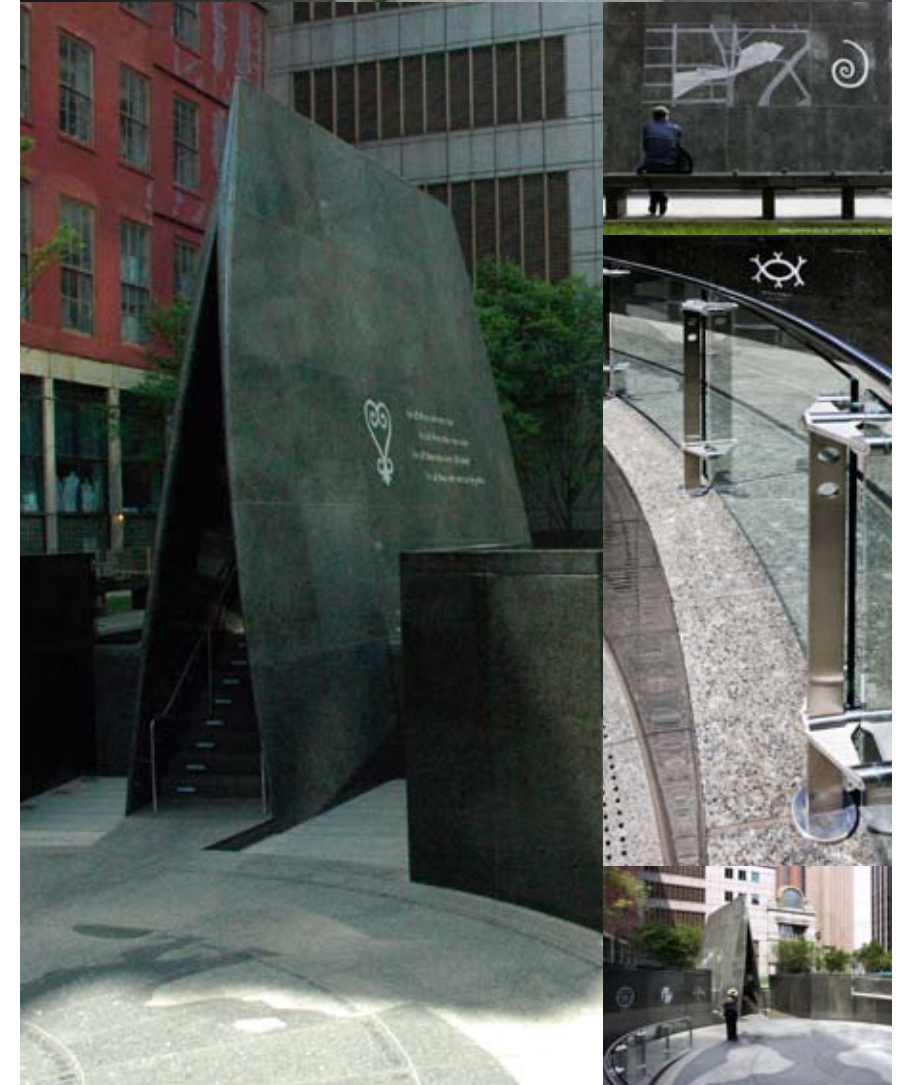
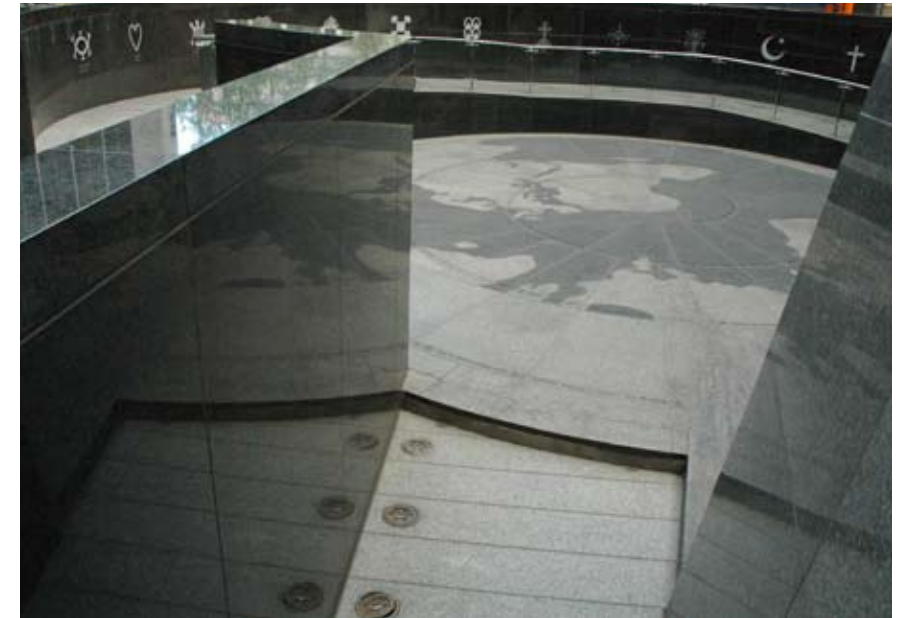
FIRM // AARRIS ARCHITECTS  
PROJECT// THE AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND MEMORIAL  
LOCATION// NEW YORK, NY

IN 1991, WHILE THE US GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION WAS PLANNING TO BUILD A FEDERAL OFFICE TOWER — HUMAN REMAINS WERE ACCIDENTLY UNCOVERED. THE AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND IS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS OF THE 20TH CENTURY. IT IS THIS COUNTRY'S OLDEST AND LARGEST URBAN AFRICAN CEMETERY AND THE FINAL RESTING PLACE FOR MORE THAN 20,000 ENSLAVED AND FREE AFRICANS.

The design was chosen from a pool of 61 entries determined by National Competition in 2005. Rodney Leon, was the spiritual guru behind the design thinking; and Aaris Architects provided the construction drawings.

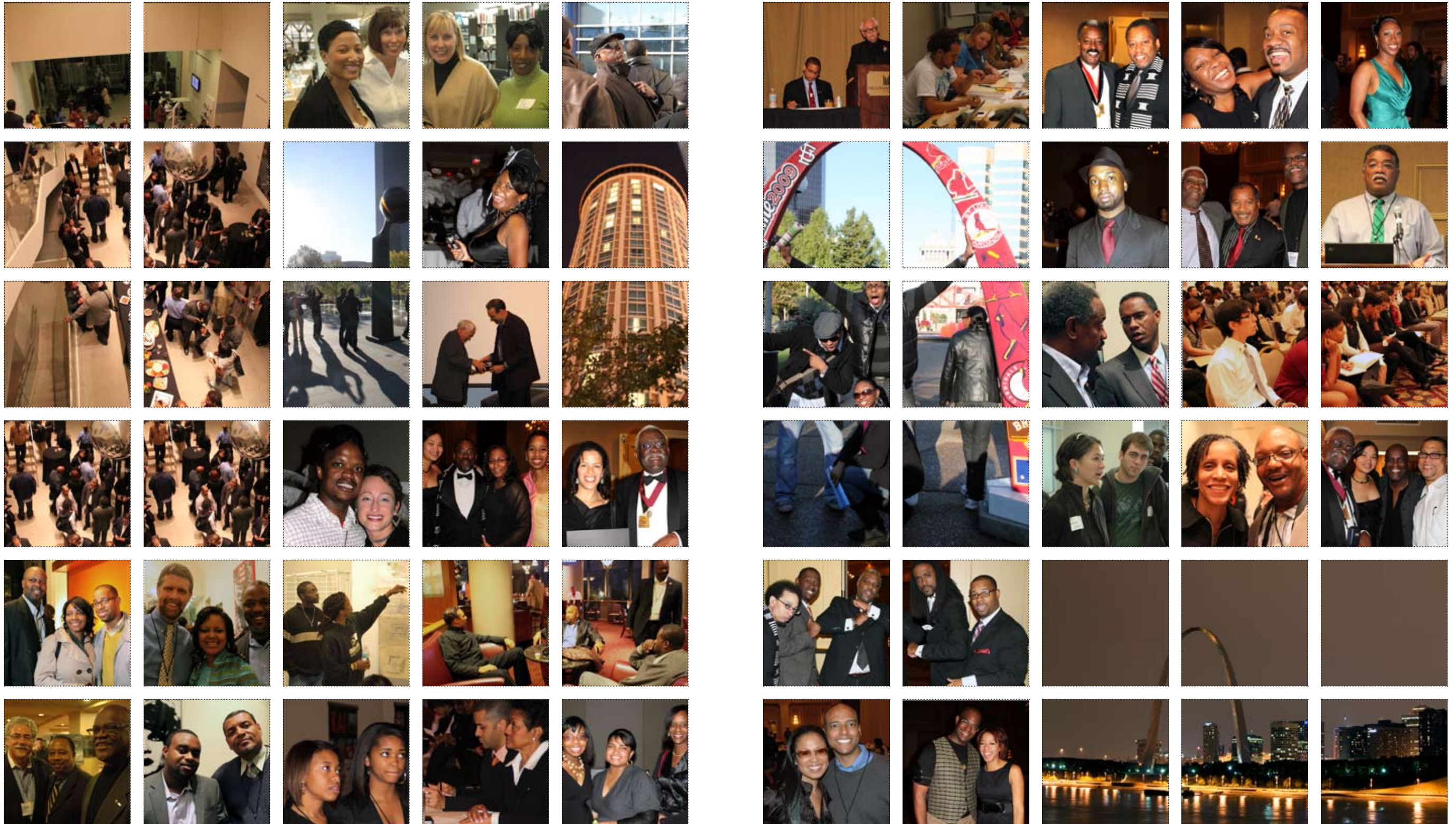
For the jury, this submission fully activated the poetics of culture, with beauty beyond language, in lyrical mystical ways that transformed and transcended simplicity. This classic monument with its wall for remembrance, its zone of interment, its memorial wall, its ancestral chamber, its circle for the Diaspora; its libation court; its prevalence of ritual —transcends all words and many worlds.

The Memorial is a monument to be reckoned with and touched. It is a place to act out, pray in and offer up. It encourages silent reflection and physical engagement. It transcends the symmetrical through its syncopated manipulation of the plan. It is at once-juju, gumbo, voodoo, jazz. It awakens our 'soul' portals to suggest that: 1) The ancestors are not sleeping; 2) The ancestors are always with us. 3) We shall always give praise to our ancestors for this memorial to 'blood memory'. Ashay. Ashay. Ashay. ✕





# Creating New Ideas To Bridge The Gap — 2009 NOMA Conference, St. Louis, MO



THE 2009 NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MINORITY ARCHITECTS (NOMA) CONFERENCE IN ST. LOUIS, MO WAS ONE OF THE BEST EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE. AS CORNY AS THAT MAY SOUND, I SINCERELY MEAN IT. AS A FIRST TIME ATTENDANT OF THE CONFERENCE AND A FIRST YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDENT, I WENT FROM A SPECTATOR TO A NATIONAL BOARD MEMBER WITHIN A MATTER OF HOURS AND MY LIFE HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE.

Fall of 2008 was the first time I heard of NOMA. My school's chapter, at Cornell University, won first place in that year's student design competition at the Washington, DC conference. The school was so proud of this accomplishment. The school's architecture department printed out 3' X 8' posters that covered an entire hallway displaying photographs of the work from the conference. I was amazed by the work that was completed by my fellow classmates and decided to join the following year.

In the fall of 2009 I joined the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS) as I was in the process of changing my major from Urban and Regional Studies to Architecture. This was my most academically challenging semester and being part of NOMAS made it even more challenging. However, after attending the conference in St. Louis and participating in the student design competition, all of the sleepless nights were well worth it.

Being at the conference was a bit overwhelming because it felt like I was being propelled out of Urban Studies and into Architecture without any preparation. However, at the conference I was able to see the world of architecture beyond the studio because I was able to meet other students, attend workshops, and hear practicing architects speak about their various experiences.

The student design competition was one of the biggest highlights of the 2009 conference. There was a great competitive spirit between the students from the various architectural institutions. It was great to see how one prompt could generate so many different projects. Each group approached the scenario of designing a home for an immigrant family migrating to St. Louis, MO from Colombia and every entry tackled this scenario in a unique way. I was fortunate enough to present my school's project along with two other members. I had never presented at a design competition before but I had previous public speaking experience. It was nerve racking but exciting to present the work that we had toiled over profusely for weeks. It was extremely rewarding to present our project because it meant that my fellow members respected me and felt that I was a great representative for my school.

The other big highlight of the conference is when I was chosen to be the new Co-Student Representative for the NOMA National Board. It has almost been a year since I have served as a student representative and I attended board meetings and events in New Orleans, LA, Atlanta, GA, and Miami, FL. Between traveling throughout the United States and acquiring new leadership responsibilities I have learned so many lessons about the field of architecture and more importantly myself. My love for architecture has grown stronger and my appreciation towards NOMA increases everyday. Being part of NOMA has allowed me to experience the pedagogy, practice, and business elements associated with architecture. These are valuable lessons that I may have never learned if I hadn't been associated with this organization. ✕



SECOND

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



THIRD

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN SAINT LOUIS



FOURTH

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Casa de Espacio Chispa  
The Move and the Moment

in creating a home for the Cordoba family, we sought to show the culture of INSPIRE and TRANSFORM the program. Consideration is given to the family's history, the location, the climate, and the program. The project is a cultural reference for a Colombian family who moved to St. Louis. They lived there for multiple generations leading to a home that must respect and honor its roots in the culture, the grandparents. With the grandfather being in a wheelchair, it was important to make the entire home accessible while creating an architecturally relevant and sustainable dwelling. The solution was to transform the existing structure into a large open-plan space—the SPARKSPACE—for the Cordoba family. By decompressing individual spaces and reorganizing the shared spaces, we created the new element—the spark space—that allows the family to be together, SPARK ideas, and strengthen relationships.

