

GREEN BUSINESS QUARTERLY

FALL 2009

CONSUMER PERCEPTION STUDY

Sustainability remains priority to purchasers; businesses have opportunity to increase brand value

GREEN FRANCHISING

Redefining the traditional general store

Greening Your Office

Creating a healthy, productive,
and efficient workspace for employees

PLUS

CITY TO WATCH: BRADDOCK, PA,
TRANSFORMING A CITY HIT
HARD BY ECONOMIC CONDITIONS



The executive briefing center, in Times Square, New York City, was designed to evolve with Sprint's ever-changing technology and services. Sprint has tested a variety of its locations with hydrogen fuel cells, solar-powered back-up power, and a wind turbine.

ACQUILANO LESLIE INCORPORATED

Interior architecture firm creates LEED-certified office spaces for high-profile clients

BY JENNIFER KIRKLAND

DENVER IS HOME TO SOME OF THE MOST progressive green companies in the nation, so leading the way in terms of sustainability there is no small feat—it's big-fish-in-a-big-pond status. "Ninety-five percent of our staff is LEED accredited. I don't think there's any other architectural firm in Denver that can make that statement," says Owen Leslie, president of Acquilano Leslie, Inc. "It's a significant competitive advantage."

Leslie and his wife and partner, Donna Acquilano, joined forces more than two decades ago with the shared goal

of providing progressive interior architectural design. Prior to forming the firm, Leslie spent seven years working for a large Canadian commercial real estate developer and two years working for an international architectural firm; Acquilano's career began in 1986 in commercial interior architecture with a national firm. The two founders were subsequently joined by principals Scott Rigsby and Ralph Hellman, who had worked together previously at an international architectural firm. "As a small- to middle-sized architectural firm that is competing against the largest

firms, we are fortunate to be doing a lot of the exciting work that is going on in this town," explains Leslie. "We're doing it as a smaller firm, but with large-firm experience." The national-firm experience of the principals group gives the firm the advantage of offering a very high level of expertise on a more personalized level.

One of the ways this level of service is achieved is through proficiency with BIM/3D CAD modeling. "We are deeply committed to BIM technology. Everyone in the company is trained in

AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:
DENVER, CO

AREAS OF SPECIALTY:
INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALES:
\$2.5 MILLION+

EMPLOYEES:
14



Top: GH Phipps, one of Denver's largest, most successful construction companies, relocated to this current location where Acquilano Leslie assisted in improving efficiency and accommodating for growth at this new office. The LEED-CI Silver certification process for this location was led by Acquilano Leslie.

Bottom: GH Phipps' new office allowed for the company to successfully rebrand itself with a commitment to sustainable projects.

this software," says Leslie. "While some larger firms have the technology, they may charge higher fees for use of that technology, or they give that work to a subset of their larger group that has the training. In our case, everyone is trained, and all our work is done three-dimensionally."

Acquilano Leslie has achieved success doing ground-up architectural work and a fair amount of mountain ski resort projects, but commercial interior architecture has always been the heart and soul of the business. One of the projects the firm recently finished was for GH Phipps Construction, one of Denver's largest, most successful construction companies. "It was a commercial interiors project in a non-LEED pre-certified building, so we were dealing with some challenges in meeting a few of the prerequisite requirements for LEED certification," says Leslie. Still, the project achieved LEED-CI Silver certification.

A project currently under design by Acquilano Leslie, which has the potential to achieve Gold certification or higher, is the Frederick Ross Co. & Westfield Development offices. These companies will occupy space in Westfield's new, LEED Platinum high-rise in the heart of downtown Denver. "There is a definite awareness and interest in the corporate world in evaluating sustainable design opportunities," Leslie notes. "We're excited that these clients are committing to do that, and we're making it a big part of our design dialogue with them." Another current project is with the national law firm Polsinelli Shughart, PC; the firm is based in Kansas City but has a major presence in Denver.

"They're going into a LEED pre-certified building," Leslie explains. "They're committed to environmental stewardship, so they want to achieve LEED certification. And the selection of a pre-certified building makes certification of the tenant improvements more affordable."

Looking ahead, Acquilano is seeking steady, measured growth. Leslie says, "To some extent, we have avoided the temptation to become a really large architectural firm. As the principals, we commit ourselves to being engaged in

the project all the way. We like doing the design work ourselves, rather than just managing."

The company will also continue its commitment to green ethics. With major players such as Sprint, Lucent Technologies, Time Warner, and CH2M Hill as clients, Acquilano Leslie will increase the awareness of sustainable building practices. "Our vision is to stay focused on our special areas of expertise," says Leslie. "Certainly, we see sustainability as a big part of the future of this business, which is why we've made such a commitment to LEED accreditation on our staff. We are constantly promoting environmental stewardship to our clients, and even if they don't go for certification, they can still make decisions that have a positive impact on the environment. We are trying to overcome the myth that LEED certification is unaffordable. It's very affordable." GBQ



Owen Leslie, president.



Douglass Colony Group
LEED CI Silver



We Specialize

Interior architecture for businesses and government entities since 1986

A Philosophy of Resourceful Design

We focus on high-impact, high-function spaces
"Great design does not have to cost a fortune."

Our Full Range of Services

Interior architectural design, space planning, finish and furniture selection LEED consulting and sustainable design, construction drawings, project and construction administration working locally, regionally, and nationally

Commitment To Sustainable Design

We are LEED experts - 95% of our staff are LEED accredited professionals

LEED strategies that achieve the highest possible rating at the lowest possible cost

Our Goal

Designs that enhance productivity and morale and reduce real estate costs

We will make a positive impact on your business!



ACQUILANO LESLIE INC.
architecture interior design