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di Domenico + Partners wins First Place in Newark Visitor's Center International Design Competition
Portal to the City on the Meandering Passaic

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The Newark Visitor's Center International Design Competition, led by the Newark & Suburban Architects Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) announced the first place submission, "Portal to the City on the Meandering Passaic," by di Domenico + Partners (dD+P) at its award gala last night. dD+P team members John di Domenico, AIA, LEED AP; Andrew Berger, AIA, ASLA; Kenji Suzuki, AIA; and Adam Mercier conceived and detailed the design.



The Newark Visitor's Center's form was inspired by the sinuous curves of the meandering Passaic River, which defined the city's edge and remained a constant witness to its evolution, evoking movement by its nature. Sited adjacent to the future Riverfront Park, the Newark Visitor's Center will serve as a threshold from the dense, high-rise, fabric of Downtown Newark, to many diverse neighborhoods, such as the Ironbound.

The Newark Visitor's Center is a dramatic landform that mediates the scale of Downtown and the Ironbound. Its shape includes a sweeping profile and sinuous lines of glazing. Contemporary in form, the transparency allows an onlooker's gaze to flow through the Center, from the City to the River. The center's curvilinear form promotes ease of movement. Just as the Meandering River erodes its edges and collects deposits, the Center's layout creates spaces for people to collect and gather. The program spaces are set back under a green roof and include an auditorium, gallery, store and café, but also include flexible spaces that can be reshaped as the need arises.

Outdoor spaces include overlooks of both Newark and New York City, a sculpture garden, open air café, an informal performance space, bike rentals, an open plaza with a water feature, an urban terrace of wood steps, and a tour bus / city bus drop-off and pick-up area. The green roof and ample glazing mesh indoor with outdoor, highlighting a landscape of natural beauty.

Nearly 200 submissions were submitted by architects from 31 countries. Newark-born architect Richard Meier served as the honorary chair of the competition and a juror.

dD+P recently completed the renovation of Newark Broad Street Station and Intermodal Plaza. The rehabilitation of this historic railroad facility included the raising and lengthening of canopies; new elevators, stairs, and ramps; and the restoration of the building's historic public interiors and pedestrian subway. The firm has also designed numerous buildings and open spaces in Hoboken, Jersey City and Trenton.

di Domenico + Partners, LLP is a 30-person, award-winning, design firm established in 1981, providing architecture, landscape architecture and urban design services. The firm's new "green" studio, designed by its architects, is located in Long Island City, NY. dD+P specializes in the design of public and public transit spaces; educational, commercial, and industrial facilities; as well as historic preservation and environmentally-responsible design. Partners John di Domenico, AIA, LEED AP and Andrew Berger, AIA, ASLA, are personally involved in each of the firm's projects.