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GWWO Wins Two AIA Baltimore Design Awards!

Baltimore, MD (October 13) – Last week at the 2014 AIA Baltimore Design Awards GWWO received two cultural/institutional honorable mentions for design of the Cade Museum for Creativity + Invention and the James & Anne Robinson Nature Center.

The awards jury praised the Cade Museum saying that “the design manages to pull off a circular plan by paying attention to the form volumetrically, as well as its organization of wayfinding. The assembly of pieces and parts is well composed. This unbuilt project is communicated cleanly and very well.” This new 45,000-SF museum/visitor center will be built in Gainesville, Florida and was conceived as a metaphor for the human brain. The design of the museum helps to fulfill its mission to create an educational, interactive, and collaborative destination that inspires creative thinking and purposeful invention. It is organized around one space – the main hall – where all experiences come together, with the individual wedge-shaped galleries growing organically from its core. An oculus to the sky opens the space to the universe and all that it holds, while a prominent link to a large outdoor gathering plaza forges a connection with the surrounding Depot Park. The museum will feature interactive exhibits, including “Neuroscience of Creativity,” “The Story of Gatorade,” and “Highlights of American Innovation,” as well as a traveling exhibit area, classrooms and a multi-purpose room, hands-on DaVinci Studio, tech lab, caterers kitchen, gift shop, offices, outdoor terraces, and gathering spaces for teaching and events.

The jury also admired the James & Anne Robinson Nature Center, commenting, we “appreciated that the design stuck to one idea with rigor; we like the storefront façade, and roofscape. The photography exuded a sense that this is a wonderful place to be, with a very strong connection to nature.” The James & Anne Robinson Nature Center, completed in 2011, is the first nature center facility in Howard County. The LEED Platinum Certified 26,000-SF multi-purpose/visitor building was designed to afford visitors a highly-immersive experience, both through its design and integration with the exhibits within. As visitors approach, they are at the level of the forest floor, literally walking on it. However, through the nestling of the building into the site topography, visitors transition to the level of the tree canopy. The transparent building enables visitors to see and feel this transition as they circulate down through the primary exhibit and continue to explore. This nature center features a reception area, exhibits, classrooms, 150-seat auditorium, a 33’ diameter domed “Naturesphere” theater, gift shop, administrative offices, storage and workrooms.

GWWO, Inc./Architects is a full service architectural firm that specializes in the planning and design of cultural and educational facilities, with an emphasis on quality design that is both inspirational and evocative. Current projects include a new Interpretive Center for Morven Museum & Garden in Princeton, NJ; a STEM Building at the Community College of Baltimore County Catonsville; the new Cade Museum for Creativity + Invention in Gainesville, FL; and the new Severna Park High School in Severna Park, MD.

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