

Jackson Hole Green Design by Ward + Blake Architects Uses Low-tech Solutions

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Wyoming firm gets sustainability project funding for low-cost high-efficiency design



Newly constructed sustainable Teton County School District Central Administration Office designed by Ward + Blake Architects of Jackson Hole (photo courtesy of Ward + Blake). Jackson Hole, Wyoming – February 25, 2014 – Award-winning Jackson Hole architecture firm Ward + Blake Architects received special funding for its energy-efficient design of a new central administration facility for the Teton County School District in Jackson, Wyo. The Jackson Hole-based architects were recently named 2013 Firm of the Year by the six-state AIA Western Mountain Region, partly for their innovations in sustainable design. The new 8,600-square-foot Jackson Hole facility houses conference rooms, a large board room,

and office space, and was able to save money for the school district while meeting stringent county sustainable construction standards. More images of the green design project are available here.

“Coming in at 10 percent below the school district’s budget, we are really thrilled with the high-caliber, sustainable, and low-maintenance building we were able to design,” says Ward + Blake Principal Mitch Blake.

Ward + Blake Architects helped the Teton County School District apply for Jackson Hole Energy Sustainability Project funding to help offset the cost of some of the Teton County School District Central Administration Office’s innovative sustainability features, such as the natural gas furnace, intelligent building control system, and dimming sensors. In addition to high-tech sustainable design techniques, architects relied on more low-tech solutions such as daylighting to reduce energy loads and create an enjoyable work atmosphere. By placing “window boxes” around the copious windows, the design team minimized glare from the snow below and sky above while still flooding rooms with natural light. Similarly, architects included transom windows and an eight-foot roof overhang to effectively direct daylight to interior spaces.

“So often we as architects tend to rush to the most cutting-edge design innovations to achieve energy consumption goals – even though some of the most effective (not to mention foolproof) techniques are right in front of us,” Ward says of the administration building’s combination of high-tech and low-tech green design features. “Daylighting, thermal mass, and building orientation have been used by Jackson Hole Valley residents since the first homesteaders settled here.”

The building’s light-filled interiors are clad with birch and complementing light wood finishes, making for an airy working environment. Architects selected a dark red color for the low-maintenance galvanized metal on the exterior to reduce cyclic maintenance costs while also lightening heating and cooling loads.

Established in 1996, Ward + Blake Architects was built on a distinctive vision: to be provocative in thought, flexible in nature and disciplined in execution. The firm regularly earns recognition for architecture that is sensitive to its environment and successfully integrated with its surroundings. Ward + Blake creates buildings that are tactile, modern, bio-climatically responsible, honestly expressed, technologically sound and artfully crafted. Ward + Blake was recently honored as 2013 Firm of the Year by the AIA Western Mountain Region and 2012 Architect of the Year by the International Design Awards. For additional information, visit www.wardblakearchitects.com.

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