



For Immediate Release
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Innovation, Sustainability, and Community Take Center Stage at AIA Potomac Valley's 2025 Design + Leadership Awards

Award-winning Projects Recognized for Redefining
Design Excellence Across the Potomac Valley Region

Bethesda, MD, October 28, 2025 – The American Institute of Architects Potomac Valley (AIAPV) hosted its 2025 Design + Leadership Awards, celebrating architectural excellence in the Potomac Valley region. This prestigious event, held in conjunction with Montgomery Planning's Design Excellence Awards, took place on Thursday, October 16, at Marriott International's Global Headquarters. The program honored outstanding architectural teams, their clients, and consultants who collaborated to enhance the built environment. The awards not only showcased the depth of services architects provide but also highlighted the vital role of architecture in shaping the quality of life through design.

The *Del Ray Passive House*, designed by CEDAR Architects, received the Gold Award as the "Best in Show" residential project at the celebration. *Bowie State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Communication Arts and Humanities*, designed by Perkins&Will, received the Gold Award as the "Best in Show" non-residential project. Additionally, *The Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center*, designed by DLR Group, received the prestigious PV Award for best achieving the principles of AIA's Framework for Design Excellence.

The *Bowie State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Communication Arts and Humanities* is an integral part of the campus experience, collecting and connecting students across various fields into a facility that is designed to encourage student self-expression and foster a collaborative environment for learning and creativity. The building equips students with, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated in his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, "courage to face the uncertainties of the future." The jury felt that this project was "A vessel for voice and memory, this center extends Dr. King's legacy into the future; where the power of speech, performance, and storytelling continue to shape collective dignity. Its architecture frames these acts—through auditoria, studios, and gathering spaces—so that the spoken word reverberates as built form, an idea that is also cemented in the rhythm of the facade."

The *Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center* is a new state-of-the-art facility focused on providing therapeutic recreational programming and serving people of all ages and along the full spectrum of physical and cognitive abilities. It is sited on forested National Park Service land in Southeast Washington, DC and is designed to take full advantage of this location to harness the therapeutic benefits of biophilic design for its users by establishing strong connections to nature. The jury was impressed with its highly articulated design that "maximizes solar gain, shading, and rainwater collection. The architect has created a sustainable, biophilic space with a unique roofline that enhances the community experience, blending environmental responsibility with architectural beauty."

Bowie State University's Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Communication Arts and Humanities and The Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center were also declared Honor Award winners by the jury. Three additional projects received Honor Awards, eight projects (including the Del Ray Passive House) received Merit Awards, and five received Commendation Awards. In total, 60 projects were submitted for consideration, and were evaluated by a jury of accomplished architects from across the globe.

PV Award

The **PV Award** honors the project that best aligns with [AIA's Framework for Design Excellence](#), aiming to contribute to solutions for today's most significant challenges.

- *Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center* by DLR Group

Gold Awards

Gold Awards represent the highest recognition in design, awarded to the "Best in Show" projects from the pool of residential and non-residential submitted projects.

- **Gold Award, Non-Residential**
Bowie State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Communication Arts and Humanities by Perkins&Will
- **Gold Award, Residential**
Del Ray Passive House by CEDAR Architects

Honor Awards

Honor Awards recognize projects with exceptional design quality and distinctive character.

- *Bowie State University, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Communication Arts and Humanities* by Perkins&Will
- *Flint Hill* by Gardner Architects LLC
- *Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center* by DLR Group
- *Montgomery College Math and Science Building* by SmithGroup
- *Saint James School Pohanka Fine Arts Center* by MSB Architects

Merit Awards

Merit Awards highlight projects demonstrating superior achievement in design.

- *A 15 Year Library for 10,000 Books* by McInturff Architects
- *Atworth* by WDG
- *The Braystone* by Winstanley Architects & Planners
- *Del Ray Passive House* by CEDAR Architects
- *Hillandale Pavilion* by Winstanley Architects & Planners
- *McKay-Scheer Studio* by Hill and Hurtt Architects
- *Torpedo Factory Arts Center* by Winstanley Architects & Planners
- *Union on Knox* by WDG

Commendation Awards

Commendation awards honor projects with distinctive features the jury felt deserved additional recognition.

- *Baden Branch Library* by Grimm + Parker Architects
- *Bullis Park Residence* by Carib Daniel Martin A+D
- *Ellen Ochoa Middle School* by Grimm + Parker Architects
- *The Leggett + Silver Spring Recreation & Aquatic Center (SSRAC)* by Kishimoto.Gordon.Dalaya PC (KGD Architecture)
- *Rosewood Townhouses* by Winstanley Architects & Planners

For more information on the winning projects and all projects submitted for consideration by the jury, please visit https://aiapv.org/2025_Design_Awards_Winners_Gallery.

Student and Emerging Professional Design Competitions

The 2025 Design + Leadership Awards also recognized students and emerging professionals through a design competition sponsored by the [Potomac Valley Architecture Foundation \(PVAF\)](#). Competition participants chose underutilized spaces within Maryland, Virginia, or Washington, D.C. with a goal of reimagine the spaces to better serve the community, enhance their aesthetic appeal, and promote environmental sustainability. Projects were evaluated on the following criteria: Creativity and Innovation; Sustainability; Contextual Integration and Site Sensitivity; Feasibility; and Visualization and Communication.

- [Student design competition winners](#)
- [Emerging professional design competition winners](#)

AIA Potomac Valley's 2025 Design + Leadership Awards were supported by sponsors Lee/Shoemaker, Grimm + Parker Architects, Macris, Hendricks and Glasscock, PA (MHG), and R.C. Fields and Associates.

AIA Potomac Valley provides leadership, communication, education, and advocacy in support of architects and their constituencies in the Potomac Valley region. We empower members to advance their roles in service to society; act as a collective voice to help cultivate the future of the architectural profession; foster innovation and sustainability in design; and are a knowledge resource to members and the public, raising awareness of the value of the architecture profession. The chapter serves roughly 700 members in Allegany, Charles, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, Prince George's and Washington counties in Maryland. For more information about AIA Potomac Valley, please visit <https://aiapv.org>

Founded in 1857, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) consistently works to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. Through more than 200 international, state and local chapters, AIA advocates for public policies that promote economic vitality and public wellbeing. For more information about AIA, please visit <https://www.aia.org>

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