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Architecture awards salute designs in our midst

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Airport hangar



Dattels Residence



Corporate headquarters for cosmetics maker Oxygen Holdings, 1525 S. Congress Avenue, Palm Springs



South County solid waste transfer Station in Delray Beach

By [Carolyn DiPaolo](#)
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

What does a garbage transfer station have in common with an estate on Palm Beach, a historic aircraft hangar and a manufacturing plant?

They are all recipients of design awards from the Palm Beach Chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented last month at a ceremony at the Max Planck Florida Institute.

Excellence Award: Dattels residence, Palm Beach. Smith Architectural Group

Excerpt of judges' comments: The seven gabled volumes are highly refined and clearly modern. Each gable houses a function, bedroom, living room, kitchen, etc., which reinforces the basic design concept. The procession created from the virtually solid street façade opening towards the ocean view as one moves through the house and onto the porch is reinforced by the pool which begins within the house and moves outside to the patio. This concept enables a strong relationship between the house and the site. While this project is very expensive, the designer took great care to ensure that each dollar was used to create a wonderful place.

Merit Award: Oxygen corporate headquarters and plant, Palm Springs. RLC Architects

"The main concept design intent was to keep the spaces and building simple and bright," said RLC Principal Architect Juan C. Caycedo. "A cosmetic manufacturing company is synonymous with clean and delicate lines where natural light serves as a veil that washes each form, accenting the space."

Excerpt of judges' comments: There is a conscious effort to focus on the space created between the unfolding planes, and the designer carries the concept through the lobby in the ceiling and the spiral stair. The architecture gives a cue on how to move through the space. The relative thinness of the curving walls celebrates the tilt-wall construction.

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Honor Award: South County Transfer Station, Delray Beach. Stephen L. Boruff, AIA Architects & Planners, Inc.

The original assignment was to refresh the storm-damaged building. The project turned out to be a more substantial renovation of this “high abuse” facility. “We wanted the resulting design to be a good neighbor to surrounding properties and the community it serves,” said Robert Curto, who worked on the concept design. “We really tried to create a rhythm on the façade through the layering of materials and placement of the openings that would appear similar to a typical office or similar use,” Curto said of the translucent panels that let in natural light. The base and accents are painted with a punch of orange that complements the color palette of the heavy equipment used inside.

Excerpt of judges’ comments: The use of natural light in the work area ennobles the space. The use of “safety orange” to reveal the structural system and accent the exterior façade, simultaneously emphasizes the “hazard” warning and transforms it into a tectonic and playful expression. In so doing, the very nature of the building is revealed, which is to take that which is hazardous and convert it into something inert and harmless.

Excellence Award: Historic hangar at Opa Locka airport. RLC Architects

The hangar “serves as a reminder that architecture should be permanent and should not be designed as a disposable commodity,” Caycedo said. “It is our responsibility (as architects) to preserve valuable historic assets and improve upon them as we create the built environment.”

Excerpt of judges’ comments: The renovation builds on the strength of the original design and reinforces the primary architectural features. The decision to paint the structure white feels contemporary and yet is true to the renovation of the existing structure. It also lightens the space and allows it to frame the beautiful aircraft housed within. Foam fire suppression systems are often obtrusive and detract from the simplicity of any hangar. This system was designed as a grid of red painted objects supported between the trusses. The color expresses the nature of the system, and highlights the fact that it is a new addition to the building.

Recipients of Design Awards are:

Merit Award – R.L.C. Architects for their design of Oxygen Corporate Headquarters and Manufacturing Facility in Palm Springs.

Honor Award – Stephen L. Boruff, AIA, Architects & Planners for their design of South County Transfer Station in Delray Beach.

Excellence Award – R.L.C. Architects for their design of a historic hangar at the airport in Opa Locka.

Excellence Award – Smith Architectural Group for their design of Dattels Residence on Palm Beach.