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Thoughtful Renovations Win AIA Houston Design Awards

HOUSTON, TEXAS – Last night AIA Houston hosted their annual Design Awards presentation at the historic Petroleum Club in downtown Houston and Kirksey received two prestigious awards. The program recognizes design excellence in architecture, interior architecture, restoration/renovation, and urban design and the jury evaluates the quality of design, resolution of the program idea, sustainable responsibility, innovation, thoughtfulness and technique of submitted projects. The esteemed panel of judges recognized both Harris County Precinct Two Sylvan Beach Pavilion and Beth Yeshurun Day School Renovation as award-winning projects.

Sylvan Beach Pavilion is a local landmark in the La Porte community that was damaged by seven hurricanes, ultimately resulting in its closure. The design team's goal was to restore this gem to its former mid-century modern glory while updating it to meet current coastal windstorm requirements. By studying historic photos and original plans, the team was able to carefully restore the space. They replicated the original circular bar, restored existing hardwood floors, repaired the deck, and added a new egress ramp. The team worked with a manufacturer to custom-fabricate a window assembly that was tested for hurricane standard air and water infiltration and then reviewed by the Texas Historical Commission to ensure it met visual requirements. The result is a sympathetic renovation that empowers original mid-century modern design elements to shine while protecting the structure from future damage.

Natural light, color, transparency, materiality, sustainability, and movement are the design principles that guided the renovation of Beth Yeshurun Day School. While the adjacent synagogue references the proud tradition of the congregation, the design for the new school celebrates the future. Using a game of words and images, the team realized a shared vision to create a brighter more child friendly space and devised a strategy to tie these ideas into the way children learn and experience the school. Classrooms that did not have visual access to the exterior now have skylights, bringing natural light into those spaces. The existing beige palette

was brightened with colors that also act as way finding tools within the school. The classrooms are now organized around an interior courtyard in the new library. This common space is the heart of the school, both spiritually and physically, and light, colors and transparency attracts even the most reluctant reader.



Sylvan Beach Pavilion



Beth Yeshurun Day School Renovation

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Kirksey is a Houston-based, sustainable architecture and interior design firm with more than 27 million sf of LEED® projects in their portfolio. Team-based in structure, Kirksey serves Commercial, Collegiate, Community, pK-12, Government, Healthcare, Hospitality, Religious, Science & Technology, and Multi-Family Residential markets.