

Beloit College Powerhouse: Wins two international awards for Studio Gang's innovative design

Posted on Thursday, Oct 7, 2021

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BELOIT, WIS. (October 4, 2021) – The Powerhouse at [Beloit College](#) has been awarded two prestigious design awards: *Fast Company's* [2021 Innovation by Design Award](#) in the [Spaces and Places category](#) and Italian publication [The Plan's Award 2021](#) in the Renovation category.

Ten years ago, Beloit College President Scott Bierman had an idea to transform the decommissioned Blackhawk Generating Station on the Rock River into a new student center connecting the College with the broader community.

The College tapped world-renowned Chicago-based architecture firm [Studio Gang](#), known for transformative and site-specific architecture which foregrounds the relationships between people and with their environments. The resulting Powerhouse transformed the former power plant, bringing together a new student union, fitness center, and conference space into a 120,000 square-foot, cutting-edge facility that creates new connections to the city and the riverfront.

“We are honored that the Beloit Powerhouse has been recognized by both *Fast Company* and *The Plan* for its state-of-the-art design,” said Scott Bierman, Beloit College president. “We take pride in our bold innovations, and the Powerhouse exemplifies true integration of this strength. We would not have been able to complete this project without Studio Gang’s valiant vision and partnership.”

Beloit College and Studio Gang adapted the historic facility by strategically carving openings in the existing structure to create a collection of spaces for students and the community to interact, while expanding the building to include a new field

house, an athletic amenity with ample natural ventilation that proved key to the college's success during the past year. The project is particularly unique in that it incorporates new architecture and materials while continuing to preserve and even landmark the vast majority of the power plant, including some of the large-scale equipment and infrastructure. The Powerhouse opened to students in 2020.

"Unsentimental and unpretentious, the Powerhouse is frugal and resourceful, yet bold and beautiful. To me, those are the best American characteristics," said Studio Gang Founding Partner Jeanne Gang.

Fast Company's Innovation by Design awards honor the people, teams and companies that transform businesses, organizations and society through design. Jeanne Gang is featured on the cover of *Fast Company's* October issue, celebrating the tenth anniversary of Innovation by Design awards. Jeanne Gang was featured on the cover and was the first architect on *Fast Company's* cover in more than a decade. "Construction and related activity account for nearly 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions," *Fast Company* writes in the cover story. "Studio Gang's competition-winning design preserved and adapted elements of the century-old plant's industrial past, while targeting LEED Silver certification."

The Plan Award is an annual international competition that recognizes excellence in the fields of architecture, interior design, and urban planning, attracting over a thousand entries worldwide. Winners are selected by a [jury of internationally-respected professionals](#) from the world of architecture and beyond.

To learn more about the Powerhouse or Beloit College, please visit www.beloit.edu or follow Beloit College on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#). Learn more about *Fast Company's* Innovation by Design [here](#) and The Plan Awards 2021 [here](#).

About Beloit College

Beloit College is a private liberal arts college in Beloit, Wisconsin, recognized for its longstanding commitment to curricular innovation, as well as hands-on, active learning and international education. The Beloit College community is diverse and noted for its passionate engagement with ideas and the world; its students are from nearly every state as well as 44 nations. Beloit College offers more than 40 majors, 30 minors, a number of dual-degree and pre-professional programs, 100 study abroad programs, and several domestic study away programs.

About Innovation by Design Awards

The 2021 Innovation by Design Awards honor the designers and businesses solving the problems of today and tomorrow. The competition, now in its 10th year, has featured a cross section of blue-chip companies, scruffy startups, and hungry young talents. It is one of the most sought-after design awards in the industry. There are 37 categories, and the judges include renowned designers, business leaders from some of the most innovative companies in the world, and *Fast Company's* own writers and editors. Entries are judged on the key ingredients of innovation: functionality, originality, beauty, sustainability, user insight, cultural impact, and business impact.

About The Plan Awards

The Plan Award 2021, the seventh edition of the annual international competition that recognizes excellence in the fields of architecture, interior design, and urban planning. The first round of selections are assessed by a specially formed jury made up of leading international professionals from the world of architecture. The Plan Award 2021 also includes the Wish List Special Prize, awarded by the public, as well as the Overall Future and Overall Completed awards, judged by two live juries made up of respected professionals.