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Going Green 2011 AWARDS

Architect:

Alamo Architects

By Rosalind Soliz

Alamo Architects has been incorporating eco-friendly design in their projects long before green was a household word.

Eco-friendly features are visible in their varied projects, ranging from The Shops at La Cantera to the parking garage at Northwest Vista College, and the Cevallos Street Lofts in Southtown.

Even the firm's studio is a recognized model of green design.

"Our office is what we take the most pride in," says Jerry Lammers, one of the company's five principals. The site at 1512 South Flores in the SoFlo (South Flores) industrial district is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certified. "It was a falling down warehouse," Lammers says.

The company kept the facility's metal frame, repurposed garage doors into partitions, transformed windows into guardrails, and used slabs from a concrete walkway to construct a courtyard wall.

On its own office project, Alamo Architects recycled 95 percent of its construction waste and added low-energy use and water reclamation features. The SoFlo office now is a case study in green design for architecture students. For its aesthetics and green initiatives, the site earned an award from The American Institute of Architects and multiple awards from the City of San Antonio.

"Today 90 percent of our clients want to see green designs," Lammers says.

The firm's work creating sustainable schools — both public and private — has earned it an A+ with academicians.

"Alamo Architects educated the educators about the green building," says Leroy San Miguel, executive director of Construction and Engineering with the Northside Independent School District.

The architects planned the NISD's first LEED Silver certified school, Jim Martin Elementary School. The school emphasizes big windows with awnings to admit natural light, offer outdoor views from every classroom, cut glare and reduce energy use.

Alamo Architects also has designed projects for the San Antonio ISD, Alamo Colleges, the City of San Antonio and other institutions. The firm was the lead architect on the \$80 million, 450,000 square-foot Northwest Vista College expansion, which is in the process of



applying for LEED certification.

“Sometimes it costs more to be green, and there’s not a return for the developer,” says REATA Principal and CEO Bob Barnes who has worked with Alamo Architects on several projects. But the bottom line is that it is better for the earth — a message with which many businesses want to be aligned.

“I have to look at my customer base, tenants and shoppers and make them both happy,” Barnes says.

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