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## Compelling, meaningful architecture drives Salgado

by Jennifer Hayes

In creating spaces for her clients, Tania Salgado aims to design compelling and meaningful architecture.

But, most of all, Salgado, a design principal for RNL, is committed to designing spaces that foster success and elevate the experience.

"The biggest reward is having a client walk into a space and say it is exactly how they pictured it," said Salgado. "If the client is successful and happy, so am I. It's not my project, it's ours."

Salgado's Spanish grandmother first rooted in her the importance of architecture, which set the tone for Salgado's foundation in the industry.

"My grandmother from Spain led me to believe architecture was just as important as studying Spanish or math," said Venezuelan-born Salgado, who carried that belief with her growing up in Spain and Boston, and onto the University of New Mexico, where she started college at age 16 and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture.

Today, Salgado believes in creativity, sustainability, pushing the envelope and leading by example.



Tania Salgado, AIA, LEED AP

Her work includes public buildings, educational facilities, private residences, mixed-use commercial and retail projects, such as 1755 Blake St. in Lower Downtown Denver, the Martin Luther King Jr. Library and Municipal Services Center in Aurora, the Blue Cube residence in Cherry Hills, and currently Union Division, a transit facility in Los Angeles.

"My philosophy is to embrace the old and new," said Salgado. "I strive to create meaningful places. It needs to be of today, modern and has to be functional. And every successful project has innovation and sustainability."

In each of Salgado's projects, she relishes tackling the problem with the client and working collaboratively toward the solution.

Being able to find the solution, Salgado believes, stems from her emphasis on each and every project she undertakes.

"On a personal level, I approach every project with intensity and passion," she explained. "I root myself in the project and work very closely with the clients to find out what drives them, what they want to feel in the space.

"I've been very fortunate to have such varied experiences," Salgado continued, noting that her career wouldn't be as successful without her colleagues.

"I wouldn't be here without my peers and mentors. My partners at RNL help drive me to push boundaries and be innovative."

Salgado's drive also pushes her to reciprocate and give back.

"I have a deep commitment to be a role model to young architects and women," added Salgado, who is often a speaker at area schools and groups like Women in Design and does pro-bono work for nonprofits like the Arvada

Food Bank.

As well, Salgado is very active with the American Institute of Architects. She received the 2009 Young Architect Award by the American Institute of Architects National and currently serves as president-elect for the AIA Denver chapter, for which she served as a director for several years. She is the recipient of the Young Architect of the Year award for both AIA Denver and AIA Western Mountain Region.

Salgado also was a member of the Downtown Denver Partnership Leadership Denver program and was RNL's team leader for the Denver Art Museum's Design After Dark fundraising project.

Even in her free time, Salgado still has an eye toward architecture. Even her husband accepts that their love of travel can sometimes become consumed with studying the architecture of a culture.

Yet it all comes down to the passion Salgado has for creating spaces.

"I approach every single project as the ideal project and I work for it to be the very best it could be." ▲