

BLRB architects

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BLRB Architects acquires Ascent Architecture and Interiors

Move expands firm's local design resources and service capacity

Bend, OR - In a move that will enhance the range and depth of architectural resources available to Central and Eastern Oregon clients, BLRB Architects announced today that it has acquired Ascent Architecture and Interiors of Bend, Oregon.

Ascent, helmed by owner and principal, Seth Anderson, AIA, has served private and public clients in Bend and Central Oregon since 2014. Named 2018 *Architecture Firm of the Year* by the Central Oregon Builders Association, Ascent has completed several visible and award-winning commercial, housing and hospitality projects including Bethlehem Inn Homeless Shelter, Worthy Brewing Expansion and Observatory, Madras Vision Source and Lake Place mixed-use.

Specializing in architecture for public use, with a focus on educational and civic facilities, BLRB is a regional firm with a significant portfolio of housing, hospitality and commercial projects in Bend and the surrounding region. Ascent's focus on commercial, medical, hospitality and senior housing projects represented a natural complement to BLRB's vision for its practice in Central Oregon. The firm opened its Bend office in 2011 and employs a local team of 12 with 80 team members firm-wide.

The acquisition of Ascent will expand local staffing to 27, and significantly increase the professional resources and service capacity available to clients of both firms. Anderson will serve as principal of BLRB's Bend office. Employees of both firms will remain in their current offices for the short term and integrate into new office space this Fall.

(MORE)

“Joining BLRB represents an amazing opportunity for the Ascent team,” said Anderson. “Our team will have access to a very deep well of specialized expertise and technology resources. We’re also excited to have an expanded team of colleagues, both regionally and locally, with whom to create and collaborate.”

“Seth and I worked together years ago and we knew that we had shared values and a similar outlook on design, service, workplace practices and organizational growth,” said BLRB’s managing principal, Greg McCracken, AIA. “I respect and admire Seth’s work and what he and the team at Ascent have accomplished, so as this idea evolved between us over the last year, it seemed like a natural fit for both firms.”

Founded in 1953, BLRB Architects is a full-service architecture firm specializing in planning and design for educational and other public use facilities. The firm’s local projects in process include the new North Star Elementary School that will open September 2019; the phased reconstruction of Pilot Butte Middle School and 210 Century, a multi-story mixed use commercial/residential project opening Spring 2020. BLRB served projects totaling more than \$750,000,000 in aggregate construction value throughout Oregon and Washington in 2018.

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Frequently Asked Questions

BLRB Architects acquires Ascent Architecture and Interiors

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ASCENT AND BLRB?

BLRB Architects has acquired Ascent Architecture and Interiors in a move that expands existing capabilities, resources and market reach. All Ascent employees will become employees of BLRB Architects and, Ascent owner, Seth Anderson, will serve as principal of the combined Bend office.

WHAT WAS THE MOTIVATION FOR THIS MOVE?

Leadership of both firms recognized a strategic opportunity to expand specialized service offerings, refine project processes, diversify their portfolio and gain a competitive advantage. Existing synergies between values, culture and vision were intentionally considered and underpinned the acquisition process, making this a natural and exciting fit.

HOW DID THIS IDEA TAKE SHAPE?

BLRB's managing principal, Greg McCracken, and Ascent owner, Seth Anderson, were former colleagues and maintained a professional relationship grounded by a shared approach to design, service and operations. A chance meeting in the Redmond airport last year led to a series of conversations revealing synergies in the two firms' approach to architectural planning and design, client service and workplace culture that culminated in the decision to unite under one roof. Both firms put client-driven design at the heart of their business models and shared a vision of becoming a regional resource and innovative design leader for clients across the region.

WHAT'S THE LOCAL INDUSTRY IMPACT?

This move positions BLRB Architects as one of the largest firms in the Central Oregon market with a deep bench of talent and capabilities. Every practice area from K-12 to housing, public agency to brewery, product manufacturing to restaurants has been enhanced by the infusion of additional team talent with an emphasis on client-focused design and responsive service.

HOW WILL THIS AFFECT PROJECTS AND CLIENTS?

Clients of both firms will experience a seamless transition and will benefit from this expanded bench of staff and capabilities. Existing project teams will remain in place so that momentum, knowledge and team synergy are carried forward and maintained. Clients will benefit from staff access to new resources and technologies, and will continue to experience excellence in service, engagement and the design product.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Staff at BLRB Architects and Ascent will remain in their locations for a short time before bring operations under one roof later this Fall. Watch for more acquisition news and what it means for the architectural landscape in Central Oregon over the coming months.

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