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Tsoi/Kobus wins IIDA award for Johnson & Wales' Cuisinart Center

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Tsoi/Kobus & Associates (TK&A) has won the 2011 International Interior Design Association, New England (IIDA NE) Best Educational Design Award for its design of the Cuisinart Center for Culinary Excellence at Johnson & Wales University.

The Cuisinart Center for Culinary Excellence supports 27 teaching labs and classrooms, including kitchen labs for food ranging from charcuterie to chocolate, wine, micro-brewing, and mixology labs, various types of instructional facilities, administrative offices, and three instructive dining rooms. TK&A's design emphasizes sustainability and the building has been recognized with LEED Gold status by the U.S. Green Building Council.

The IIDA award recognizes the entire project team, which includes Odeh Engineers Inc., Stephen Stimson Architects, Richard D. Kimball Company, Woodard & Curran, and Paramount Restaurant Supply.

The design of the Cuisinart Center partners functional solutions with distinguishing design features. Notable elements include:

- * Kitchen classrooms are linked via a single loaded corridor with exterior views and interior windows that bring daylight into the labs and provide visitor observation areas.
- * Instructional spaces are designed to express their unique specialty and function—from three dining rooms featuring ascending degrees of formality to a wine lab modeled after a wine tasting cellar. Tile patterns throughout are inspired by Southern France and Tuscany and introduce color to the classroom labs while recalling the culinary influence of the regions.
- * Ample secondary corridors ease circulation with lockers and displays integrated into the architecture rather than added as separate elements.
- * The dean's suite is designed as a glass box lined with wine bottles that hovers over the main lobby.
- * Main corridor walls are illustrated with graphics featuring food ecosystems, the art of culinary preparation, and the sustainable features of the building.

"Designing this landmark building for Johnson & Wales University posed many appealing challenges," said Rick Kobus, senior principal at Tsoi/Kobus. "But paramount was the need to create a sustainable facility with cutting-edge classrooms, labs, and kitchens that could both articulate and facilitate the school's world-class culinary education experience. Working with our talented team partners and the staff at JWU, we're proud to have done so."

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