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CBT Architects receives best in show for One Post Office Sq. at International Interior Design Assn. New England's Design Awards

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CBT Architects and Equity Office Properties won multiple honors in the New England Chapter of the International Interior Design Association's (IIDA) fourth annual Interior Design Awards, including the Best in Show award for its renovation and repositioning of the lobby at One Post Office Sq. The 41-story Class A office tower also received first place in the office under 30,000 s/f category. The leasing agent for One Post Office Sq. is Jones Lang LaSalle.

CBT and Equity Office Properties also placed first in the hospitality category for its work at Equinox Fitness in Boston's 225 Franklin St.

Located on Post Office Sq., the building is a signature 830,000 s/f office tower updated with an elegant new lobby, entrance, and enhanced façade at street level. CBT worked as partners with the building owner, Equity Office Props., to reposition the building and to transform the address into a Class A property. The strategy was aimed at decreasing vacancy, improving the building's perception and transforming the existing building into a higher value position for the market. The new lobby brings a fresh, light and aesthetically clean direction to the building.

The IIDA New England Interior Design Awards showcase not only the design of the projects, but it also recognizes the collaborative efforts of the entire project team. "A high degree of coordination and attention to detail by the design team, construction team, stone fabricator and stone layer was required to properly execute the lobby feature wall that depicts the Apennines Mountains," said Robert Brown, AIA, IIDA, LEED AP principal of CBT. "Using a computer, digital photos of each marble slab were arranged and placement was agreed upon by the designers as they attempted to recreate the unique experience in the quarry. Instructions were given for size and placement of each piece and the entire wall was laid out flat on the ground for review prior to shipment and installation. The result is the satisfying vision of valleys and ridges climbing through the clouds across the wall."

"In this challenging economy we decided dramatic alterations were a necessity to maintain the One Post Office Sq. elite status in the city. The opportunity was ideal to transform an underperforming asset into a prized property," said Andrew Maher, managing director of Equity Office Props. "The repositioning has proved to be highly successful and creatively reinventing the building has distinguished it from the surrounding competition. As a result of the upgrades and physical changes at One Post Office Sq., we were able to retain the property's flagship tenants: Putnam Investments and Sullivan & Worcester LLP."

The transformation of the lobby begins with a three-story Pilkington structural glass wall, framing the perimeter of the building. The original lobby, set back from the façade with a dark arcade, was increased by 30% in size by extending a glass enclosure beyond the building's exterior. The building, which connects to the Langham Hotel, is home to Putnam Investments, Sullivan &

Worcester LLP, Acadian Asset Management, Jones Lang LaSalle and Lahive & Cockfield.

Equinox Fitness is located at 225 Franklin St. in the financial district. The space was formerly used as a bank; in fact the existing basement vault of building was used for the locker rooms and inspired the design of the entire fitness club. The 32,000 s/f facility houses guest services including strength floors and cardio spaces, a group fitness studio, pilates studio, boxing studio, yoga studio, cycling studio, men's and women's locker rooms, a full-service spa, caf   and juice bar, and a retail shop.

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