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Anderson Anderson and Triumph Modular earn design awards: modular classroom system at Harvard University

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Anderson Anderson Architecture and Triumph Modular Corp.'s classroom system at Harvard University recently won an Honorable Mention at the 2010 Boston Society of Architects Honor Awards for Design Excellence and an Energy + Sustainability Merit Award from the American Institute of Architects San Francisco Chapter.

Anderson Anderson Architecture of San Francisco designed the innovative 5,700 s/f facility that Massachusetts-based Triumph Modular built and installed in just six weeks on the campus of Harvard University. For 18 months, this modular school building will first house the Harvard Yard Child Care Center, and then the Oxford Street Daycare Cooperative, while their respective permanent locations are being renovated. The building features a variety of green, sustainable features to achieve the highest-quality, healthy environment for children. A focused design and construction plan for maximum energy efficiency includes solar tube skylights to maximize natural light use, sustainable "Green Guard" insulation, high-grade sealants, and a white rubber roof that reflects solar heat. Coordinated sensors and electronic control of the lighting system turns lights off when there is no activity in the room. Other features of the Child Care Center include exterior sun shades that shield the interior of the facility from the sun and reduce the need for air conditioning, recycled materials for the interior walls and carpet tiles, and a state-of-the-art HVAC system that regulates and brings in air from the outside as needed.

"Children's needs and environmental goals overlap," said Sarah Bennett-Astesano, assistant director of the Office of Work/Life at Harvard University. "Air quality was a major concern for us as we considered using a modular building, as were the availability of natural light and operable windows. Other characteristics of 'green' buildings, including the ability to regulate the temperature in each class room, are also a good fit for child care."

The project earned an Honorable Mention from among the 116 projects reviewed as part of the Boston Society of Architects Honor Awards. "They all share intentionality, consideration, restraint and control," the BSA Awards jury stated in its formal declaration. "Every project that we honored was presented in a way that was beautiful, educational, and intelligent. We were surprised and excited to see such genuinely remarkable work."

The project also won an Energy + Sustainability Merit Award from the American Institute of Architects' San Francisco chapter. "We were very impressed with the high level of performance achieved in a remarkably short time," said the awards jury.