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## **Company of the Month: Allevato Architects is celebrating ten years and over 10 million s/f of retail development**

October 25, 2012 - Retail

In August of this year, the team at Allevato Architects celebrated their milestone anniversary of 10 years in business. The firm continues to be a leader in the industry of retail architecture and mixed-use development. Abiding by the mantra of "small firm size with big firm results," Allevato Architects continues to grow and achieve success with a talented and creative staff under the strong leadership of the founding principal, Lou Allevato, AIA.

Prior to attending Boston Architectural College, Lou concentrated on graphic arts. After receiving a free hand drawing assignment, which had him sketching the buildings along one of Boston's most notable street-scapes, Newbury Street, he realized architecture was the direction he clearly wanted to pursue.

After completing his degree in 1990, Lou's career brought him to work at a number of firms, gaining valuable experience in a variety of architectural genres. It was during his tenure at Sumner Schein in the early nineties where Lou was introduced to the world of retail architecture. With a fondness for shopping and a flair for retail design, Lou quickly embraced the high octane atmosphere and has never looked back.

After years of working within the larger firm structure, developing trusting relationships with the area's top commercial developers, and building invaluable relationships within the leasing community, Lou took a leap of faith and decided to venture out on his own. In 2002, Lou opened the doors to his own architectural firm in Franklin, Massachusetts. As a longtime Franklin resident, he has remained an active member of the community, having served as vice chairman on the local planning board, written the design review guidelines for the town, and acted as chairman of the Franklin Fire Station Building Committee.

Initially, the firm worked primarily on residential projects, but it was not long before the retail community came knocking on the door. Lou quickly found the firm changing direction to include retail and mixed-use projects. In this smaller firm setting, he could focus on building strong relationships and remain involved in all phases the projects. Believing that the most successful relationships begin by partnering with clients and understanding their development strategies, Allevato Architects has maintained the character and intimacy of a small firm, while continually producing results that rival the larger Boston based firms.

Building a team of the most talented architects in the area, Allevato Architects consistently demonstrates leadership, professionalism, and dependability. These attributes, together with the experience of the staff, enable the firm to reliably generate a superior product. Under the "hands on" direction of the firm's principal architects, Allevato Architects has become known for turning out responsive solutions that guarantee every project is successfully positioned in the marketplace, now and in the future.

Specializing in retail architecture, Allevato Architects has been involved in over 10 million s/f of retail development over the past ten years, including Northborough Crossing. Located in Northborough, Mass., this 600,000 s/f open-air retail center was part of a larger 1 million s/f mixed-use development. Featuring New England's first Wegmans supermarket, popular anchor stores, and specialty shops, the shopping center encompasses Allevato Architects' keen sense of contemporary design respectfully influenced by the New England character of the region.

The Wayland Town Center project, located in Wayland, Mass., captures Allevato Architects' grasp of New England design coupled with functionality and accessibility to consumers and tenants. With construction well underway, this new 372,000 s/f mixed-use development will feature a vibrant Main Street-style shopping hub. Local residents will benefit from a new grocery store, sophisticated shopping, and fine dining as part of the new town center environment.

In addition to a number of open-air shopping center projects, Allevato Architects is also involved with a few notable indoor mall redevelopment and renovation projects. Designed by Allevato Architects, the Warwick Mall in Warwick, Rhode Island will be celebrating the grand opening of the new mall expansion in November. This 50,000 s/f renovation includes the addition of a Nordstrom Rack store, a new mall connecting corridor, and a number of specialty retail tenants.

Always striving to be a leader in the retail architecture industry, Allevato Architects is not limited to the typical shopping experiences. Their wide portfolio also branches out to include several automobile dealerships in the area. Similar to retail development, the goal of a car dealership is to attract consumers and showcase a specialized product. Realizing this correlation, Allevato Architects is proud to have been involved with the design and construction of a number of local dealerships, including the successful Boch Honda West located in Westford, Mass. and Ferrari-Maserati of New England located in Norwood, Mass.

The team at Allevato Architects prides themselves on being a participatory force within the architectural community. They have active affiliations with the American Institute of Architects, the Boston Society of Architects, the International Council of Shopping Centers, and the local chapter of the Retail Design Institute. Participation in these organizations and their networking events has provided a unique platform to showcase their talents and solidify their client base. Attendance at the Global Retail Real Estate Convention, RECON, in Las Vegas has become an annual pilgrimage which has proven to be a successful event to strengthen valuable relationships while exposing themselves to new opportunities.

Looking towards a future filled with cutting edge retail projects and innovative design solutions, Allevato Architects is excited to see what the next chapter holds in their journey. Setting the trend in retail architecture by welcoming new and challenging opportunities, Allevato Architects will continue to distinguish themselves by their devotion and commitment to excellence and developing client relationships. The company has come a long way from the small storefront on Main St. They have attracted an extremely talented team of architects, a broad portfolio of successful projects, and a dynamic clientele. This "small firm" has repeatedly produced "big firm results" making it a pioneering and respected architectural firm within the retail architecture and mixed-use development community.