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Project of the month: Nitsch Engineering moves into LEED Gold space designed by Margulies Perruzzi Archts.

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Earlier this year, Nitsch Engineering, a Boston-based civil and transportation engineering, land surveying, and planning firm, moved into a new 18,000 s/f office space at Two Center Plaza. Designed by Margulies Perruzzi Architects (MPA), the new space has now achieved LEED Gold for Commercial Interiors certification from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC).

An award winning Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE) founded in 1989, Nitsch had outgrown its previous space at 186 Lincoln St. in Boston and preferred an open, single-floor layout to allow for greater collaboration and communication among its 80 employees. Completed in December 2012, MPA worked with Nitsch to design a space that enhances teamwork, allows for easy team realignments, and serves as a welcoming environment for clients, partners, and staff alike.

The design strategy features two zones: (1) a public zone at the front of the suite for reception, technology-enabled conference rooms, and training spaces that support educational employee and client events, and (2) a private work zone with interior-placed glass-fronted offices and low-walled workstations to draw natural light deep into the space. The main training space doubles as the primary office café, melding Nitsch's social hub with its primary training venue.

"The designers at Margulies Perruzzi Architects demonstrated their understanding of our business, our values, and how we work, and we were delighted to collaborate with them on the design of our new home," said Lisa Brothers, PE, LEED AP BD+C, president and CEO of Nitsch Engineering. "Our new location provides us with more space to grow, allows for more effective collaboration with our clients, and reflects our commitment to sustainability. We couldn't be more pleased with the results."

Sustainable design is an important tenet for Nitsch, as the firm is well known for providing sustainable site design consulting services on commercial/institutional development and transportation projects for more than 15 years. Brothers explained, "It was very important to us to not just 'talk the talk' about sustainability, but to really 'walk the walk.'" For its own sustainable workplace, Nitsch's office design features an energy-efficient LED lighting system that is kept intentionally low to take advantage of natural light, carpeting and ceiling tiles with a high level of recycled content, and refurbished workstations that reduce energy and material use. New furniture in private offices and throughout the suite is Green Guard certified. A feature wall made from bamboo wood, a rapidly renewable source, is the primary focus of the new reception area.

The landlord for Two Center Plaza is Equity Office Properties. Colliers International served as the tenant broker, working with MPA to help Nitsch evaluate the new site. Diversified Project Management served as the owner's project manager, Commodore Builders served as the construction manager, WB Engineers provided MEP engineering, RM Environmental Consulting

provided LEED consulting, and Sebesta Blomberg provided final commissioning.

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