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Nitsch Engineering honored by ACEC

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Boston, MA Nitsch Engineering has earned a national recognition award for exemplary engineering achievement in the American Council of Engineering Companies' (ACEC) 51st annual Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) for its role in the renovation for the Johnson Building at the Boston Public Library.

Nitsch Engineering overcame a host of challenges, including only a quarter-acre of outside space, in the renovation of the 130,000 s/f Johnson Building. To protect nearby historic structures that were built atop wood piles, the site required a groundwater system that recharged the first inch of rain from each storm into the ground, reducing runoff to the city's sewers. The system also had to keep water away from the building's foundation and a Green Line subway tunnel beneath the site.

The project team's strategy combines slot drains, porous pavers, a system of underdrains, and tree pits to remove approximately 7,000 gallons of stormwater flows per storm from Boston's combined sanitary sewers. Along with addressing site-specific groundwater issues, the plan helps reduce the risk of storm-driven sewage discharges into area waterways.

The project is among 146 engineering achievements from throughout the nation and the world being recognized by ACEC as the year's finest examples of engineering excellence, and eligible for additional top national honors. Judging for final awards—known industry-wide as the "Academy Awards of the engineering industry"—took place in February, conducted by a national 36-member panel of built environment leaders, along with experts from government, the media and academia. Award criteria focuses on uniqueness and originality, technical innovation, social and economic value, and generating excitement for the engineering profession.

Recognition of all award winners including top commendations—20 Honor Awards, 16 Grand Awards and the prestigious "Grand Conceptor Award" for the year's most outstanding overall engineering achievement—took place at the annual EEA Dinner and Gala, a black-tie event to be held April 17, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

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