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## **LLB Architects expands - opens office in Worcester**

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Worcester, MA LLB Architects, Lerner Ladds Bartels, an architecture and interior design firm based in Pawtucket, R.I., has opened a branch office at the Stevens Block, 40 Southbridge St.

The history of LLB Architects is rich and varied. The firm was founded in 1936 in Providence as an engineering practice by Samuel Lerner, a structural engineer and professor at Brown University. In 1976, his son, Steven Lerner, AIA, became a principal upon his architectural registration and the firm was incorporated as Lerner Associates to reflect the multidisciplinary practice. Ten years later, the firm moved into a Victorian house on Hope St.

In 1984, Christian Ladds joined the firm becoming a partner in 1990 and the firm name changed to Lerner Ladds Architects. Kathleen Bartels began her career with the firm in 1996 and became a partner four years later. The firm's name changed to Lerner Ladds + Bartels.

Drayton Fair joined the firm as principal in 2003 with over 20 years of public and institutional experience.

In 2011, the firm moved to the Design Exchange in Pawtucket after Ladds and Bartels purchased and developed a mill building in Pawtucket. That same year, the name of the firm was streamlined to LLB Architects, honoring the firm's history and emphasizing its profession. The firm currently has nine registered architects and half of the employees are LEED accredited professionals. Serving clients in the municipal, institutional, educational, and commercial markets within New England, the firm focuses on designing buildings with sustainable practice and environmental consciousness; contributing to the contextual fabric of a place and creating a positive impact on the surrounding community.

The decision to expand into Massachusetts and the selection of the Worcester as the location for the branch office was inspired by the level of development activity within the city and surrounding areas. The firm hopes to contribute to the further revitalization of the city through both the work for clients as well as the development of another Design Exchange within Worcester itself. Additionally, this concentration of municipal, institutional, educational, and commercial clients provides a great opportunity for LLB to contribute to the growth of the area.

LLB Architects is currently working with the Worcester Public Library, and was the project architect of the recently completed the Fidelity Bank Worcester Ice Center.