

AIA Top Ten Green Projects: Special No. 9 House
by
Howard Hershberg, AIA



Completed House - Exterior

SOURCE FOR ALL PICTURES: John C. Williams Architects



Detail of aluminum panel on front porch



http://www.jcw.com/complete-house

Screen Detail and Completed House - Interior

The American Institute of Architects (AIA)¹ Committee on the Environment (COTE) has named the year's top ten examples of sustainable architecture and green design (Top Ten). Many of the new buildings were awarded, or are expected to earn, LEED Platinum Certification, the highest level in the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program. The Special No. 9 House, located in New Orleans, Louisiana, was one of the projects. The full case study appears on the AIA website <http://www.aiatopten.org/hpb/>.²

This residence, "The Special No. 9 House," was designed for the Make it Right Foundation as a prototype for the 150 homes the Foundation plans to build in the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans in the near future. It was designed by John C. Williams Architects, AIA. The house, built in New Orleans after the vast devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, is a specially designed home, code compliant architecturally, structurally, mechanically, and electrically. It is energy efficient, as well.

Many of the buildings comprising the AIA, COTE top ten sustainable buildings employ energy saving measures and energy efficient equipment, such as, geothermal heat pumps, daylighting, shading, natural ventilation, and passive solar heating. The winning designers also employed energy efficiency technologies, such as, radiant heating and cooling, cool roofs, energy efficient appliances and equipment, evaporative cooling with reclaimed water recycled materials, and green roofs. Several of the winners generate renewable energy with Solar Panels. One of the Top Ten features roof-mounted wind turbines.

Definitions of Terms

Green Building: A green building is a building that is located and constructed in a sustainable manner that allows its occupants to live, work and play in a sustainable manner. This means building in such a way that we don't use up or deplete our resources, that is, has the least environmental impact possible. The less the environmental impact, the "greener" the project.

LEED: Stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. LEED certification measures how well a building or a community performs as "sustainable" across the following metrics:

1. Sustainable siting
2. Water efficiency
3. Energy and atmosphere
4. Materials and resources
5. Indoor environmental quality
6. Innovation and design process

¹ For 150 plus years, members of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) have worked with each other and their communities to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings and cityscapes. By using sustainable design practices, materials, and techniques, AIA Architects are uniquely poised to provide the leadership and guidance needed to combat climate change.

² AIA press release, "The American Institute of Architects select the 2010 COTE Top Ten Green Projects," (<http://www.aia.org/press/releases/AIAB082801?dvid=&recspec=AIAB082801>).