

ACAI NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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LPI Building Meets Challenging Goals

Fort Lauderdale, FL (December 2007) -- When Raul Victor-Leyva and his partners of LPI Realty, Inc., went searching for a trusted, experienced architect, they had a bold project and challenging goal in mind -- find someone who would not only design and construct their vision of a four-story, 20,000 square-foot headquarters on a very tight site, but also get in, get out and allow for occupancy of the new building in a one-year time frame. And do it all on a relatively tight budget.

Enter ACAI Associates.

Under the direction of Adolfo Cotilla, AIA, ACAI Associates was able to deliver on all counts ... and then some. A full-service South Florida architecture firm, ACAI's team designed a harmonious, elegant commercial building that combines innovative technology and sustainability principles. ACAI's one-stop shop allowed them to fill the role of construction administration for the challenging project, including expediting and mediating with local permitting agencies in an effort to seek reimbursement of a substantial portion of permitting/impact fees levied on "the Owners of LPI Realty, Inc." The building's grand opening, set to occur in January 2008, is right on target.

Monies were also saved in design on several levels, starting with ACAI's longstanding commitment to environmentally sustainable building and site design. "Whether institutional, commercial or mixed-use projects, as architects we embrace the challenge of creating spaces for our clients that are beautiful, functional and inspiring. But we also always strive to design buildings that are environmentally sustainable and with a thorough appreciation for long-term operating costs, minimizing energy consumption and incorporating renewable resources," says Cotilla.

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The LPI building is well insulated and is raised in free-standing column supports -- pilotis -- to free up the site, allowing for on-site “covered” parking and providing better overall circulation. The security-conscious design (via a one-lobby access) is necessarily compact and minimizes use of materials through its striking, curved design. The structure uses local and durable materials (concrete), creating further savings, and promotes the use of daylighting through a system of multicolored, blue-glass panels that comprise the facade of the building. This curved “glass wall” facade also brings front and center the critically important byproduct of enhanced natural lighting. In addition to promoting a healthier, more upbeat environment, studies show that daylighting produces enhanced productivity from employees -- and the LPI building’s Mondrian glass-panel design “clearly” shines the light on these worthwhile objectives. Lastly, the building has also been designed to accommodate a wireless environment.

“We have been impressed with Adolfo and his team from the get-go,” states Levy and his partners. “You can see just how much they value a collaborative process. The creative design strategies that ACAI identified in this whole-building approach have really come together. I certainly now understand that architecture is a very far-reaching profession and not just a bunch of people sitting around drawing!”

“The LPI building was challenging in that monies and space were tight,” stated Cotilla. “But we were confident that, through ACAI’s team-based management approach, any planning, design and construction issues we encountered would be systematically resolved, and that we would bring the project in on time, on budget and in an attractive, functional design.”

Cotilla goes on to explain that, with General Contractors on the ACAI staff, his team has the luxury of looking at each project from a Master Builder perspective, enabling the firm to address potential field problems earlier on in the design process. This familiarity increases production effectiveness and helps maintain the project schedule by keeping it on track. “Additionally, we partner with experts to help solve complex or highly technical issues, and we closely coordinate the services of consultants we may bring in for electrical, mechanical, plumbing, structural, facade, geothermal, fire-protection, communications, data or landscape expertise. It’s a process that generally pays big dividends to our clients,” states Cotilla. “With every project, you’re going to encounter hiccups, but with the right team, proper focus and good communication, the plan usually comes together in fine fashion, as it has with the LPI building.”

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“Our expectations have been exceeded at virtually every turn,” concludes Levya, and his partners agree. “We wanted a signature building -- a drop-dead gorgeous headquarters -- and that’s exactly what we are getting.”

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ACAI is an award-winning, full-service architecture firm with offices in Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties. Founded in 1985, ACAI’s project-tested architects, engineers and construction professionals consistently deliver innovative, functional, sustainable and cost-effective design solutions. A minority-business enterprise, ACAI has built a longstanding reputation for excellence in the planning and design of universities, schools, local and state government buildings, healthcare facilities, industrial and commercial businesses, and private and public corporations. To learn more, contact Sandra Smerkers, LEED AP, ACAI’s director of marketing, at 954-484-4000, ext. 38, or ssmerkers@acaiworld.com.