

ACAI NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Up On The Rooftop ...

Fort Lauderdale, FL (November 2007) -- There is a group of under-the-radar professionals who make a substantive yet unrecognized contribution to this special holiday time of year. As we get closer to month's end, be sure to raise a glass of eggnog to architects. Why so? Simple! Because of their applied roofing expertise, Santa is able to safely touch down his loaded sleigh on millions of roofs throughout the world!

"While the central purpose of a roof is to protect a building and its contents from the effects of weather, as architects we do have to keep in mind the weight-bearing effects of a sleigh laden with gifts, nine domesticated reindeer, and one plump, jolly old man," states Adolfo Cotilla, AIA, with tongue firmly planted in cheek. "Addressing these elements demands attention to detail," says Cotilla, president of ACAI Associates, an award-winning, full-service architecture firm with offices in Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties. "Not only must the roof withstand the landing and take-off under cover of darkness, the once-yearly visit must be accomplished without causing leaks, eliminating any liability concerns for Saint Nick."

As licensed architects, ACAI's professionals understand all aspects of building construction, enabling the South Florida-based, project-tested team to analyze and design roofing and waterproofing systems as they relate to an entire building or structure. ACAI's roofing projects -- from design to full replacement -- have run the gamut from major sports venues to governmental and healthcare facilities of all sizes (both public and private) to schools and office structures.

"In one roofing project," notes Cotilla, "we value-engineered our work and saved the owner an amount equal to our fee, enabling them to repaint the entire facility and add several very nice enhancements to the building."

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The logo for ACAI, featuring the lowercase letters "acai" in a bold, red, serif font.

Roofing consulting has been a mainstay for ACAI since the firm's founding in 1985. The ACAI Roofing Division has more than two million square feet of roofing design experience, with specific involvement in all types of membranes and systems (e.g., coal tar pitch, modified bitumen, built-up, single ply, standing-seam metal and liquid applied).

Moreover, the ACAI team's high standards for outstanding, functional design embrace the construction industry's new challenges and benchmarks tied to precise "green" factors such as water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, material and resources, indoor environmental quality, and, of course, innovation and the overall design process. This certainly includes roof design and theory.

"The roof and the building design play a major role in the thermal efficiency of a building," states Cotilla. Due to roof decks' perpendicular location in relation to the sun, roofing in South Florida, in particular, receives the brunt of the sun's heat and ultraviolet rays. "Shading a roof through architectural elements and use of highly reflective and highly emissive products, such as white membranes, combined with the proper amount of roof insulation, offers a roofing system that significantly reduces heat gain into a building."

"In the broadest sense, an architect is a person who translates the user's needs and wants into a physical, well-built, functional structure, but, as with anything else in the building industry, there is no such thing as a small detail. From the ground up to the roof, our professionals shine at identifying strategies that work together in a 'whole-building' approach to exceed expectations and stated criteria in terms of economics and environmental sustainability," states Cotilla.

Aside from structural integrity and efficiency, another key focus that often comes into play with ACAI's reroofing projects is keeping a business running during roof repairs and related construction. It's a focal point on which ACAI excels. "With very few exceptions, we are able to arrange for most of our reroofing efforts to be phased in order to work around the day-to-day operations of a building's users," says Cotilla. "This requires a commitment from the design/build team, including the owner and user groups."

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Among pertinent roofing/architectural accreditations, ACAI is a member of the Roofing Consultants Institute, the National Roofing Contractors Association, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the United States Green Building Council, and, of course, the American Institute of Architects. “It’s important that we, as professionals, stay abreast of the newest trends, products and education. It’s the whole package that helps us make solid value-engineering and cost-control calls,” says Cotilla. ACAI is also a multidisciplinary firm, registered and licensed to perform both Architecture and Construction. “That enables us to look at each project from the perspective of both architect and contractor, giving us a leg up on addressing potential field problems earlier on in the design process. Our familiarity with industry trends and our in-house expertise increases production effectiveness and helps maintain a project schedule by keeping it on track.”

Keen architectural scrutiny also plays a major role in anticipating the December actions of the jovial gentleman clad in a red suit with a proclivity for soot, white facial hair, pipes and chocolate-chip cookies and milk. “We’re not concerned with naughty or nice,” concludes Cotilla. “Just the integrity of the rooftops. Of course, in January, we’re also busy looking into the trustworthiness and design of some of the chimneys Santa has pointed out to us as problematic.”

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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.