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# AT HOME WITH RODWIN ARCHITECTURE + SKYCASTLE CONSTRUCTION

25 YEARS OF ELEVATING SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND COMMUNITY IN BOULDER

ARTICLE BY AVERY YOUNG | PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF RODWIN ARCHITECTURE

In the heart of the Rockies, a vast mountain range known for its picturesque peaks and divergent topography, exists a design/build firm with a company ethos prioritizing the integrity and apotheosis of the breathtaking landscape in which it exists.

Rodwin Architecture and their sibling company, Skycastle Construction, have been Boulder community staples for over two decades, celebrating their 25th anniversary this year. An agent for change within the sustainable design movement, Rodwin and Skycastle have accomplished numerous successes. The firms have completed multiple LEED Platinum homes, the top awarded certification under the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED program, and a feat described by the Department of Energy as “the pinnacle of green building.” In addition, Rodwin and Skycastle homes are typically built with net zero energy or even regenerative (net energy positive).

“Sustainability has been baked into our DNA since the day we started,” explains CEO Scott Rodwin. “It’s not that we’re responding to a trend in the markets or codes, but, we have been actively pushing

the sustainable design strategies, technologies, and values literally as part of our overall company values.”

Brandon David, President of Skycastle Construction, points to another key part of the firms’ philosophies, the Japanese concept of Kaizen, meaning “the constant practice of slow, intentional, and consistent improvements.” The team applies this to both their projects and processes.

Rodwin and Skycastle’s community outreach goes beyond building sustainable homes. They volunteer with local organizations such as the Veterans Community Project and Habitat for Humanity and provide pro bono services for Boulder’s Family Learning Center. “We love our community and giving back is a core value,” states Brandon. For several years, firm members have helped organize the Colorado Green Building Guild’s popular Green Home Tour. Shannon Wehner is a Project Manager at Rodwin and currently serves as President of CGBG.

The firms’ projects are excellent examples of how to optimally balance sustainability, beauty, and functionality. Scott used the firms’ projects as examples

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when he taught green building for Boulder County, Naropa, and nationally for the American Institute of Architects. Moreover, their achievements have been acknowledged with upwards of 50 awards for sustainable design and service excellence. “There is a quote that has guided a lot of our work,” attests Scott. “It’s by Thoreau and it says, ‘What is the use of a house if you haven’t got a tolerable planet to put it on?’”

While Rodwin and Skycastle are known and respected for their award-winning green homes, the firms have also completed a number of office, restaurant, school, and retail projects across the Front Range area. Currently, they are finishing two restaurants, a medical office, a yoga retreat center, and a church expansion.

Diversity has been a priority for Rodwin and Skycastle. In an industry that often lacks gender equity, 50% of the combined firms’ staff are female. “Women have been underrepresented in both of our fields... and because of that we feel it is really important to advocate for women being in positions

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of leadership and seniority,” adds Scott. Rodwin and Skycastle’s commitment to inclusion results in more responsive and appropriate architecture. “Creating a home or business space for someone requires being able to listen and understand who they are and where they’re coming from,” Scott says. “This is an essential aspect of creating good architecture. Having people from diverse backgrounds within our firm gives us greater ability to connect to our clients.”



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