**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Vanessa Cornell

[vanessa.cornell@smithgroupjjr.com](mailto:vanessa.cornell@smithgroupjjr.com)

312.641.6769

Tara Hoeksema

[tara.hoeksema@smithgroupjjr.com](mailto:tara.hoeksema@smithgroupjjr.com)

248.808.8789

**Three SmithGroupJJR-designed buildings are nationally recognized by the American Institute of Architects as exemplary learning and research environments**

September 19, 2017 – [SmithGroupJJR](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/), one of the nation’s largest integrated design firms, was recently recognized by the [American Institute of Architects (AIA)](https://www.aia.org/) for their laboratory facility design at University of Illinois, University of Pennsylvania and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

The AIA’s [Committee on Architecture for Education](https://network.aia.org/committeeonarchitectureforeducation/home) granted the University of Illinois’ Electrical and Computer Engineering Building and University of Pennsylvania’s Stephen A. Levin Building—both designed by SmithGroupJJR—with [2017 Education Facility Design Awards](https://network.aia.org/committeeonarchitectureforeducation/home/awards). These advanced facilities were recognized for their place-making contributions in their respective campuses as well as integration of state-of-the-art sustainable features.

This awards program recognizes sophisticated learning environments, including early childhood, K-12, alternative, community and technical colleges, schools of higher education, corporate or other specialized training centers, and non-traditional learning environments such as community centers, museums, libraries, nature centers and interpretive centers. SmithGroupJJR was the only design firm to be recognized for two projects in this award program.

The [AIA’s Academy of Architecture for Justice (AAJ)](https://network.aia.org/academyofarchitectureforjustice/home) honored the SmithGroupJJR-designed Senator Daniel K. Inouye Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency Center of Excellence as a recipient of the [Justice Facilities Review awards program](https://www.aia.org/resources/145621-justice-facilities-review-2017) for its demonstrated quality of form, functionality, and current architectural responses to complex justice design issues.

The Justice Facilities Review program offers examples of a broad range of design strategies and depicts the latest trends in the design and construction of justice facilities in the United States, including the implementation of sustainable justice principles.

“To have our work recognized in these top-tier award programs is an honor to our clients, our firm and to all the teams involved,” says [Mark Kranz, FAIA, LEED AP](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/people/mark-kranz), vice president and design director for SmithGroupJJR. “These three projects represent the transformational design innovations happening in higher education and research facilities across the country.”

**Additional project information:**

The $95 million, 230,000-square-foot [**University of Illinois Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Building**](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/projects/electrical-and-computer-engineering-building#.WbGJxciGNaQ) is one of the nation’s highest performing teaching and research facilities. The net-zero ready facility, located in Urbana-Champaign, acts as the new home for the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. At 230,000-square-feet, it houses all of the department’s instructional labs, some of which have adjoining classrooms and room for faculty members and teaching assistants to stage equipment and test out concepts without occupying valuable lab space. ECE was named the [2016 Laboratory of the Year by *R&D Magazine*](https://www.labdesignnews.com/news/2016/05/academic-buildings-take-top-honors-laboratory-year-awards?__hstc=20249895.523d1d44623096593cfe51aea33e5b05.1504807999034.1504807999034.1504807999034.1&__hssc=20249895.2.1504807999035&__hsfp=3404604552).

[**University of Pennsylvania’s Stephen A. Levin Building**](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/projects/stephen-a-levin-building#.WbGJ4siGNaQ)is a 78,000-square-foot facility that acts as a center and connector for interdisciplinary programs including psychology, biology and behavioral sciences. It houses dry research laboratories, wet-bench teaching facilities, a 180-seat lecture hall, faculty and graduate student offices, and spaces designed for interactions to foster socializing and collaboration. The iconic south-facing facade helps define the campus’ life sciences precinct but also blocks 50% of solar radiation, while still allowing enough daylight to illuminate the interiors. Prior to designing the Levin Building, SmithGroupJJR provided master planning and programming for the precinct.

[**Senator Daniel K. Inouye Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency Center of Excellence**](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/projects/defense-pow-mia-accounting-agency-s-forensic-identification-laboratory#.WbGJpciGNaQ) is a new $89 million laboratory that will aid in the investigation, recovery and accounting of Americans lost during the nation’s past conflicts dating back to World War II. The 136,497-square-foot facility consolidates operations that were previously dispersed on three military locations on Oahu, Hawaii. The new three-story facility demonstrates the unique function and mission of DPAA by providing advanced investigation laboratories, a highly sustainable and flexible working environment for staff and appropriate spaces for the families of the deceased. SmithGroupJJR served as architect, MEP engineer and laboratory planner and programmer of the new facility, which is the world’s largest forensic anthropology laboratory.

SmithGroupJJR ([www.smithgroupjjr.com](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/)) is a recognized integrated design firm ranked as the 7th largest in the U.S. by the 2017 Giants edition of *Building Design + Construction* magazine. With 1,100 employees in 11 offices, SmithGroupJJR is a national leader in sustainable design with more than 420 LEED professionals and 167 LEED certified projects.