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Westlake Reed Leskosky is big winner in Cleveland Chapter of American Institute of Architects design awards

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The jurors of the 2007 Design Awards for the Cleveland Chapter of the American Institute of Architects were in a generous holiday mood this year. Like Santa's helpers who wanted to spread as much cheer as possible, they handed out 18 awards in the annual design competition.

That meant that any one of the 52 projects entered in the contest had a 34.6 percent chance of winning some form of recognition. The Cleveland architects' group announced the awards Friday in a ceremony at the Akron Art Museum, recently expanded and renovated with an eye-catching design by Coop Himmelb(l)au of Vienna, Austria.

Entries in the Cleveland competition were judged by Pittsburgh architects John Martine of Strada Architecture, Roxanne Sherbeck of Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, and Douglas Devlin of Devlin Design.

Westlake Reed Leskosky, one of the most highly respected firms in Northeast Ohio, dominated the competition by winning six awards, including an honor award for the Bethel Woods Center for the Arts in New York, a concert stage and museum built near the site of the famous 1969 Woodstock concert.

The firm won merit awards for unbuilt designs for the Cleveland Clinic's Twinsburg campus, a proposal for the renovation and expansion of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, the master plan for the Phyllis Litoff Jazz Institute & Conservatory at Oberlin College, and a plan for the Naples, Fla., Jewish Community Center.

Westlake Reed Leskosky also won the Chairman's Award for the Peoria Center for the Performing Arts, completed earlier this year in Peoria, Ariz.

Bialosky + Partners of Cleveland won the urban design honor award for its strategic plan for the city of Cuyahoga Falls. The Cleveland office of URS Corp. won the interiors honor award for its Toronto Health and Wellness Center.

Thom Stauffer Architects of Kent won the Golden Detail award for the metal railing the firm designed for the Woodside House in Akron.

In a written comment, Martine, one of the jurors, said the railing is "an elegant and exciting tour-de-force solution, making the experience of using these stairs an everyday adventure. Architecture needs more of this."