

# HONORING DESIGN

## Awards for local projects from San Diego chapter of the American Institute of Architects come at a time of an improving development climate

By [Roger Showley \(/staff/roger-showley/\)](#) 5:08 a.m. Nov. 1, 2014

Winding up San Diego's first Archtoberfest celebrating local architecture, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects has handed out 31 Design Awards, to entries ranging from grand monumental landmarks like the new downtown Central Library to a modest infill lawyer's office.

Three outside jurors looked over 67 entries before bestowing five honor awards, five merit awards, three citations and 16 special-category awards to local architects active in San Diego, as well as in other states and countries. The awards were announced Thursday at the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union at San Diego State University.

Two individual awards also were announced — the young architect of the year, J. Antonio Garcia, and the patron of the year, JMI Realty, which oversaw the development of Petco Park and the ballpark district downtown.

Brian Dougherty, an architect with offices in Costa Mesa and Oakland and this year's president of the AIA California Council, said the jury focused on how projects adhered to the "program" or purpose dictated by the builder or owner.

"I was very impressed with the quality of design," Dougherty said. "I loved the diversity of scale and types of projects, and overall I thought especially the sensitivity to sustainability and creating buildings appropriate to their site was very high."

The awards come at a time of slow but steady improvement in the development climate after several years in the doldrums following the financial meltdown of 2008.

"I think everybody's is getting busy again, which is great," Dougherty said. "I think there's a whole new wave of new, young architects coming on the scene that are very energized and exciting" — including his daughter, who is a student at the NewSchool of Architecture and Design in downtown San Diego.

The other two jurors were Ted Hyman, a partner at ZGF Architects in Portland, and Edward Lifson, architecture and culture writer and lecturer and director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for architecture.

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