

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) announced today that its Chicago office has been awarded LEED® Silver Certification for Commercial Interiors, an internationally recognized standard of sustainable design established by the U.S. Green Building Council and verified by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI).

Design Partner for the project, Ross Wimer, commented, "In the design of our own space, we were guided by the principles that inform our client work. A practical approach to sustainability drove the decisions we made." Principal of Interior Design, Jaime Velez, added, "Sustainability factored into every part of the design process, from specification of finishes to choice of lighting. For instance, we used a sophisticated dimming technology to maximize the quality and amount of daylight that enters the space—significantly reducing the amount of energy consumed on a daily basis."

SOM is a founding and active member of the U.S. Green Building Council and was an original contributor to the development of the LEED Green Building Rating System. "The strength of USGBC has always been in the collective strength of our leaders in the building industry," said Rick Fedrizzi, President, CEO & Founding Chair, U.S. Green Building Council. "Given the extraordinary importance of climate protection and the central role of architecture in that effort, SOM demonstrates their leadership through the LEED certification of their Chicago office."

With offices located inside the historic Daniel Burnham-designed Santa Fe building in Chicago, SOM decided to renovate the floors that it occupied rather than move to a new location. Within the landmark building, the design team created an adaptable, sustainable workplace that enhances the multidisciplinary collaboration central to the firm's design practice. The redesign was a proving ground for design strategies that SOM applies to projects worldwide. Specific benchmarks achieved include:

- 100% Full-time staff with access to natural light and views
- 100% Green power through renewable energy certificates to offset CO2 emissions
- 95% Construction waste diverted from landfills
- 90% Energy Star rated equipment and appliances
- 30% Reduced electrical consumption compared to pre-renovation usage