

Denning House
Stanford University

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ENNEAD ARCHITECTS COMPLETES DENNING HOUSE

HOME OF THE NEW KNIGHT-HENNESSY SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

New York, NY, February 28, 2019 — Ennead Architects has completed Denning House, the new home for the Knight-Hennessy Scholars Program at Stanford University. Working with the University and the Denning Family, Ennead Design Partner **Richard Olcott** developed a design that supports the ambitious goals of the program, which brings together an international cohort of future global leaders to address complex challenges through collaboration.

Denning House is intended to be a gathering place for a community of graduate scholars across diverse disciplines, a place for them to share ideas and to develop as leaders. The new building offers a variety of meeting, classroom and dining spaces, formal and informal, large and small, both inside and outside, suitable for individual study, small gatherings or large events.

The site, at the edge of Lake Lagunita, is an unusual one: formerly a parking lot, it is surrounded by a dense forested landscape of California oaks. The building's design takes advantage of this site condition by inverting the program, placing the large public spaces including dining, classroom and lounges on the second floor, where they take full advantage of the spectacular view. These surmount the administration, conference, and back-of-house facilities on the ground floor.

One approaches the 18,000 square foot building via a gently curving, sloping boardwalk, which gradually leaves the ground and delivers one to a "front porch" and lobby space. From here, the sequence is further attenuated with a gracious stair, which one slowly ascends, gradually revealing the expansive view, until now totally hidden. A gently sloping ceiling rises above the stair, opening the facade towards the lake, creating a continuous flowing space that moves from intimate to grand. The major spaces here are arrayed along a shallow arcing façade, giving onto a continuous deck along the lake.

Through these devices, and the use of Douglas fir wood structure and surfaces throughout the interior and cypress cladding on the exterior, the building feels like a treehouse, far removed from the campus around it, hidden in the trees but looking out at the iconic California landscape beyond.

"We were charged with creating a space that would establish a true home for the new program," said Olcott. "We wanted to create a special retreat—a place that feels secluded though is still at the center of campus life, where these students can come together and be inspired."

Denning House Executive Director Jeff Wachtel said, "Denning House has met and, in fact, exceeded, our expectations as a warm and inviting space in which our scholars can share experiences both informally and formally. Richard Olcott and his Ennead colleagues worked masterfully with our team to think about the needs of our program in the short term and well into the future."

A gift from Roberta Bowman Denning, former chair of Stanford's Arts Advisory Board, and Steven A. Denning, former chair of Stanford's board of trustees, made the building possible. As the arts are integral component of the Knight-Hennessy Scholars experience, Denning House has selected works by acclaimed contemporary artists displayed outside and throughout the building, including Ursula von Rydingsvard's large-scale sculptural installation *MOCNA*, located on the north side of the building.

Denning House reflects the Knight-Hennessy mission to effect large-scale positive impact in the world by integrating sustainable design strategies throughout the building. Nestled within a mature grove of live oak trees, the building form employs recessed footings to conserve and intensify native vegetation, restoring the habitat. A natural ventilation strategy is implemented on the upper floor to reduce the building's carbon footprint and maximize both energy effectiveness and user-comfort. Acknowledging the site as a major bird habitat, bird-friendly glass spans across on the south-side of the building along the deck to minimize bird collisions and improve solar performance.

"It is a very environmentally immersive site," said Emily Kirkland, the project architect and project manager. "The building was designed to respect and enhance the symbiotic relationship between visitor and nature, and by virtue of its minimal footprint, help to restore the native landscape."

Denning House is the sixth project that Ennead has completed on the Stanford campus, where the firm has been working since 1994. Ennead's work on campus includes: the Anderson Collection; Bing Concert Hall; the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts; Denning House; Stanford Law School William H. Neukom Building; Stanford Law School Crown Hall; as well as the forthcoming Stanford Chemistry,

Engineering and Medicine for Human Health (ChEM-H) and Wu Tsai Neurosciences Institute; and Bass Biology Building.

Ennead Architects

Ennead Architects is an internationally-acclaimed, New York-based studio with an office in Shanghai. Renowned for its educational, cultural, scientific and governmental building designs, which authentically express the progressive missions of their institutions and enhance the vitality of the public realm, Ennead has been a leader in the design world for decades. Recipient of the prestigious AIA NY Medal of Honor, the Smithsonian Institution- Cooper Hewitt National Design Award and the National AIA Firm Award, as well as numerous design awards for individual buildings, the studio has a portfolio that is diverse in typology, scale and location and includes new construction, renovation and expansion, historic preservation, interior design and master planning. Ennead's collaborative process is rooted in extensive research involving the analysis of context, program, public image, emerging technologies and a commitment to sustainable solutions.

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