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Orfield Design and Construction designed and built this screen-porch addition to a Minneapolis, MN home. Constructed of cedar and Trex Brasilia Cayane decking, the porch features a small recessed, covered area for waste bins, as well as storage below the porch. Photo: Joy Watson, Momento Images.



Orfield Design and Construction

Residential design-build contractor paints clear picture for each client, ensuring on-time, on-budget projects

BY JULIE EDWARDS

AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:

ST. LOUIS PARK, MN

EMPLOYEES:

6

AREA OF SPECIALTY:

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN-BUILD, ADDITIONS

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALES:

\$1.5 MILLION+

WHILE ORFIELD DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION MAY not be the least expensive design-build firm in the Twin Cities area, what the company does bring to the table is a level of service, experience, and expertise that more than makes up for any difference in cost.

The company started in 1978 when Ron Orfield, after working as an architect for 10 years, launched his own residential remodeling company with his brother, Henry (now deceased), in Edina, Minnesota. The team began by working with historical properties in St. Paul and, over the years, expanded within the Twin Cities and surrounding area.

Laura L. Orfield-Skriveth, co-owner, designer, and project manager for the company, decided to partner with her father in 2000 following several years working in the corporate world. With Orfield-Skriveth on board, the company continued to grow. However, she is adamant about

the company staying at the size it is now. "We like our size because we're not too small nor too big; we're able to give our clients the personal service and dedication that we've become known for," Orfield-Skriveth says.

And, after 30-plus years serving the Twin Cities area, this family-owned, award-winning firm has made its mark among homeowners, with almost 100 percent of its business coming from client referrals. Orfield-Skriveth says that the feedback it receives from clients underscores why the company has remained successful. The company even posts testimonials and useful financial-resources information to assist clients as well as a portfolio of its work on its Web site, www.orfielddesign.com.

"Our clients say the two things they appreciate the most is our commitment to communication and our level of personal attention," she says. "We are in contact with our



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—Laura L. Orfield-Skrivseth, Co-owner, Designer & Project Manager



customers several times a day during a project so we can tell them what's going on before they need to ask; we want to manage and fulfill their expectations so there are no surprises."

Orfield-Skrivseth adds that client interactions are honest right from the start. The firm consults with potential clients and compiles an in-depth bid for each project, "right down to the exact type of doorknobs we will use and their cost," she says. "We won't lowball or suggest unrealistic timelines. We are as upfront and exact as possible in our promises and projections."

"Our goal is to construct beautiful projects while, at the same time, being aware of budget, timelines, code/construction constraints, and resale values," adds Amy Brogan, a member of the company's all-female design team. "We want to be helpful both in our tasks of designing and in project management, keeping clients informed so they can make good decisions."

With its many years of experience, Orfield Design and Construction is willing and able to take on remodeling projects of any shape and size—from whole houses to a simple bathroom remodel—and works closely with homeowners to ensure their satisfaction.

"We take into consideration the style of the existing house as well as the homeowner's lifestyle and budget to create a design that is unique to their vision," Orfield-Skrivseth says. "We believe each project is a team effort between our client, our team's contractor and designer, and each sub-contractor or employee working on the project."

The firm's work has been recognized numerous times throughout the years by both local and national publications and industry organizations. Most recently, the company was awarded a 2009 Regional CotY (Contractor of the Year), 2008 Minnesota CotY, and a 2008 Chrysalis, to name a few.


The company also wins by overcoming less-than-ideal financial environments. During the recent economic downturn, the company held its own, a fact which Orfield-Skrivseth attributes to its longevity and loyal client

base. "When you've been in business as long as we have, you have established procedures and a solid customer base, and those factors become vital to helping you survive during tough times," she says.

For 2010, the company already has five projects that were slated for February, and plans to grow by remaining current on new codes and laws; keeping abreast of new trends, materials, and products; and educating its team and clients on new energy-saving opportunities.

But at the end of the day, "our goal is to always put our clients first," Orfield-Skrivseth says. "We look at the big picture and the details and figure out the best way to recoup the client's investment while making their home as unique and functional as possible." ABQ





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