

Growing bioscience cluster forms in University District

■ *This collaborative hub will unite individuals from diverse backgrounds, facilitating the discovery of talent and the development of partnerships.*

By **INDY DEHAL**
ALSC Architects

ALSC Architects is working closely with Greater Spokane Inc. and Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Cluster to design the new Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building, which will revolutionize bioscience in the Inland Northwest region.

The intention behind this project is to enhance workforce development and services to pharmaceutical and medical device companies, adding to Washington's robust life science ecosystem. This facility will serve as a catalyst for growth and innovation, focusing on academics, career development, and collaboration within our community.

The primary objective of the Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building is to provide space to conduct bioscience research, development, manufacturing, and talent advancement. Locating the innovation center adjacent to the University District, colleges in Spokane will have access to this facility, enabling space for collaboration and learning. Serving as a "think tank," the building offers a neutral ground for education, seminars, and mentorship opportunities to improve the skill set of the local workforce while aiding in the development of new products and medicine commercialization. Additionally, high schools will receive access to the facility to motivate and inspire the next generation of bioscience professionals.

The bioscience cluster aims to foster growth within our education system while playing a pivotal role in cultivating job opportunities within the local bioscience industry. This state-of-the-art facility will provide invaluable support for incubating cutting-edge research and innovative businesses in the field, thus attracting new companies to our region. As a launching pad for industry ventures, it will serve as a continuous source of support throughout the entire process, from start-up to sustainable growth.

By cycling organizations through this exceptional program and facility, individuals



Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building will serve as a catalyst for growth and innovation, focusing on academics, career development and collaboration within the community.
Images from ALSC Architects

will have the opportunity to gain invaluable independence and hands-on experience, thereby enhancing their readiness to seamlessly enter the workforce. With its nationwide visibility and impact, this facility will significantly enhance Washington's competitiveness in the bioscience sector. Access to this exceptional resource will foster a vibrant bioscience community in the Spokane region, leading to sustainable economic growth at both the local and state levels.

Although the infrastructure is important and a vital component, the main focal point of this facility is the people it is designed for. This collaborative hub will unite individuals from diverse backgrounds, facilitating the discovery of talent and the development of partnerships. This facility will lead the region in an effort to encourage entrepreneurship and drive greater industry partnerships. Relationships will be established, and ideas will be shared through group participation, sparking groundbreaking solutions.

By fostering research and advancements, the facility will create a culture that inspires the next generation of scientists and researchers. Collaboration will improve between members, researchers at colleges/universities, and private companies, opening the door for bioscience opportunities. Providing a space for collaboration and community will foster inspiration and creative ideas that will be shared and tested amongst peers, result-

ing in innovative and nuanced discoveries.

Spokane is quickly establishing itself as a bioscience development market. With the help of the Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building, cutting-edge research and groundbreaking work will solidify Spokane as a leading force within the industry.

The site selected for the facility is located within the University District at 690 E. Front St., Spokane. Although there is no formal agreement to purchase the site as of now, the organization has made this selection to initiate design work and solidify funding. The proposed 77,000-square-foot Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building includes 55,000 square feet of leasable space across four stories. Wet lab space and equipment, medical device manufacturing, office areas, training/workforce space, and research and development areas will be included. The layout of the building is a major focus for the Evergreen Bioscience team, consultants, architects, and others involved. They aim to balance leasable space and common areas to ensure the building's economic viability. The goal is for 75% of the designed space to be leasable. ALSC Architects, a Spokane-based firm, has conceptualized and designed the initial renderings for the building, with an estimated construction value of \$65 million.

The Evergreen Bioscience Innovation Building will be a collabo-

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Providing spaces for collaboration and community will foster inspiration and creative ideas.



Collaborative space can also be found in the designs of the building's terrace.



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A park is at the entrance to The Podium.

Photos by Lara Swimmer



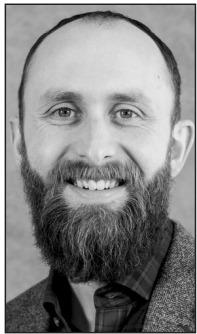
BCRA has designed several clinics for Indigo in the Puget Sound and Spokane areas. This clinic is in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Images by Aaron Locke Photography

The Podium builds Spokane's community through sports

■ The venue connects and expands connectivity of the city core by attracting tourism, driving economic growth, and creating a new gathering space for the broader community.

By DAN SNOOK
Integrus

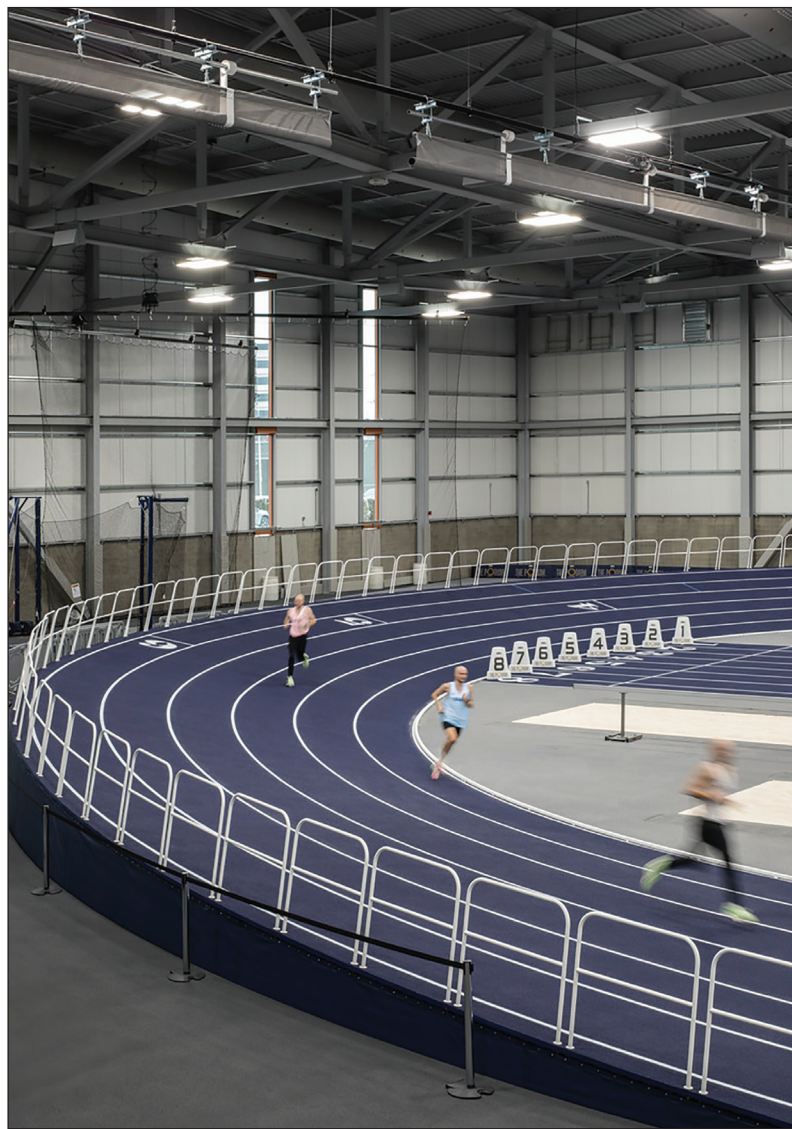
Across all three Integrus offices, we are proud to strengthen our communities through design. Our recent work on The Podium is a notable example of how we partner with others to build toward project goals that create great architecture while stretching beyond to its surroundings. The Podium does exactly this, it is a world-class sporting facility that connects and expands connectivity of the city core by attracting tourism, driving economic growth, and creating a new gathering space for the broader community.



Snook

The dream for what became The Podium started decades ago with Spokane looking for ways to build upon its existing reputation as a sports destination. A goal for a marquee indoor venue that would attract regional, national, and international events while providing world-class facilities for local activities, was identified. Feasibility studies began in the 1990s and through a sustained partnership between the city, county, state, and local sports organizations a plan was formed to build and fund a new multipurpose facility in the heart of Spokane. In 2016, the "three-legged stool" of partners emerged with Spokane Sports, the Public Facilities District and Spokane Parks developing a public funding model that would incorporate lease exchanges on adjacent land with the Parks Department.

Integrus partnered with Lydig Construction to form a progressive design-build team to deliver the best value for project stake-



Inside, a 200-meter banked track is hydraulically controlled to allow it to store flat.

holders. This team assisted in clarifying project vision, creating proformas for different sports to assess viability, helping to perform cost analysis reports on ROI while taking into consideration funding sources, feasibility studies to assess viable locations, making recommendations on property purchases, and managing regulatory groups. Getting the full team aligned on project goals and then proceeding with transparent communication and collaboration leveraged everyone's expertise in the same direction.

The site is key to this project's success. The building sits on a dramatic basalt cliff overlooking the north bank of the Spokane River and the recently revitalized downtown Riverfront Park.

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Spokane's grit inspires BCRA to set up shop

■ The design firm was also impressed by the area's strong community connections.

By MELISSA FREY
BCRA

BCRA, a Tacoma-based design firm, was eager to expand to Spokane in 2019 for the same reasons that the city is drawing people in droves: high quality of life, diverse cultural experiences, affordability, and community connection.

It's this connection to community that the company — and its locally based team — appreciate most.

COMMUNITY AT THE HEART

"Spokane and the surrounding area offer several elements that we value as a company. It's a genuine, relationship-oriented city, and that's important to us," says Nicky Poole-Duris, a



The Spokane office is led by, from left, Zac Crum, Nicky Poole-Duris and Amanda Sellsted.

Spokane-based senior associate. "Here, you can show up and give your time or resources where it matters. You can see the impact."

As soon as she arrived, Poole-Duris aimed to build a network of professionals to help make the transition to a new area more enriching. She quickly connected with Executive Women International (EWI) of Spokane, a professional organization focused on connection, career, and community building.

"The organization has had a profound influence on me. I've been able to look to these mem-

bers for guidance and support as we continue to build a presence for BCRA in Spokane. EWI gave me a home when I needed it most," she shares.

Poole-Duris also serves on the board of the HUB Sports Center in Liberty Lake. The HUB is a 501c3 nonprofit community-based regional sports venue for youth, adults, and seniors. As a working mom with sons in sports, Poole-Duris says the organization's mission to create a

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Bioscience

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rative hub, propelling bioscience forward in the greater Spokane region. This facility will play a pivotal role in advancing local bioscience while inspiring future generations to pursue careers within the industry by providing a space for academics, fostering workforce development, and bringing like-minded individuals together. Through its commitment to research, education, and collaboration, the cluster seeks to position Spokane as the hub of a world-class, thriving, sustainable life and health science contract service industry in the ever-evolving world of bioscience.

Indy Dehal, CEO of ALSC Architects and member of AIA Spokane, is a talented architect known for his ability to create timeless and client-centered designs, making a positive impact on classrooms, college campuses, and medical facilities across the region, including Gonzaga University, Spokane Public Schools, and CHAS Health.

Podium

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Although this site seems obvious in hindsight, it had to overcome some significant challenges to make it work. The site was part of the old industrial core but was bypassed by the cleanup efforts that created the riverside Expo 74 campus. It required working with significantly contaminated soils, blasting 30,000 cubic yards of basalt, vacating a street, and coordinating acquisition from five different property owners.

These obstacles were worth overcoming to bring top sporting events into the city core instead of pushing them to the outskirts as often happens with these venues. The dramatic site helps sell the location to event organizers and the proximity to walkable restaurants and hotels brings in tourism dollars from traveling teams into the local economy.

The full project team knew the building could not be a typical boring box but rather needed to be an icon to attract events and form an architectural edge for the park along the river. The budget, however, needed to focus on building functions and delivering for the athlete experience. To accomplish both goals, our design team prioritized the fieldhouse as the strong performance-focused box and then grouped the other spectator and training functions along one spine wrapping the edge of the building. Together, this creates an experience zone that efficiently stacks functions and brings in natural light and views.

The spine is wrapped in a terracotta-colored metal rainscreen that elegantly defines parts of the building and forms a dramatic entry experience. Our in-house structural engineers developed a bowstring truss system that has received national recognition for its innovative use of steel to create a 250-foot-long clear span over the fieldhouse while not obstructing views and reducing project costs.

The Podium opened in December 2021 and has already hosted record-setting events, becoming recognized as the “Best New Sports Venue in the U.S.” by Sports Travel Magazine. The building has brought in national track championships, regional volleyball tournaments, judo, wrestling, basketball and more. The featured 200-meter banked track is hydraulically controlled to allow it to store flat, and due to the strength of the system, it is the only facility in the country that can hold other sporting events over the banked corners. In the building’s first year it played host to over 21,000 athletes, 2,000 out of town officials, coaches, and VIPs, with over 33,000 spectators.

The Podium has been a huge success as a sporting facility, but it has grown to be much more, becoming a place that serves the greater Spokane community. During construction, our team took advantage of the design-build process to make last minute changes to the building that allowed for a new occupancy classification. This opened the building to new revenue streams and community events such as high school graduations, without any added project cost. We were also able to add additional acoustical treatments allowing the big fieldhouse floor to become a concert venue, thus filling a gap in the regional music market. Where previously many bands passed over the Spokane area, increasingly more bands book The Podium and the community is able to use the building as their own.

The Podium’s success stretches beyond the building itself into the adjacent neighborhood and greater community. Before construction, it was estimated it would bring in \$11 million-\$20 million annually in direct tourism spending. In the first year alone, that number has been dramatically exceeded with an estimated \$45 million coming into the community from new events.

The Podium has also spurred renewed interest from investors and commercial real estate development in the nearby industrial North Bank neighborhood. An estimated \$36 million has changed hands in recent sales, with \$19 million in new developments and over two dozen renovations and remodels permitted, planned, underway, or completed, resulting in \$55 million in growth and development on the North Bank.

The community of project partners including the Public Facilities District, Spokane Sports, Lydig Construction, and Integrus, along with our many others, worked collaboratively to maximize success of The Podium. We are excited to contribute to the continued benefit emerging civic spaces bring to our community.

Dan Snook is an architect and associate at Integrus, focused on civic work and hospitality projects.

BCRA

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positive impact on youth and the community deeply resonated. “As soon as I heard about their mission to create a safe and positive environment for youth to thrive in our community, I instantly knew I needed to be a part of it,” she says.

Zac Crum, a senior associate within the civil engineering discipline, has rekindled connections to his alma mater, Gonzaga University, where BCRA has been attending career fairs for several years to forge connections with local students.

Amanda Sellsted is on the Interior Design Advisory Board for Washington State University, where she serves as a professional mentor for WSU interior design students through the School of Design and Construction. “I enjoy giving back to a community that is dedicated to teaching and inspiring local students interested in AEC and design,” Sellsted shares.

GRIT MEANS GROWTH

Grit is another factor that drew BCRA to open an office in Spokane.

With over half of Spokane’s downtown area listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, Spokane is a city that celebrates its roots while continuing to evolve — a mindset that aligns with BCRA’s philosophy as a company.

The Spokane-based designers operate out of the Washington Cracker Co. building at 304 W. Pacific Ave., part of the East Downtown Historic District. The choice of location was intentional and mirrors the Tacoma headquarters in the Horizon Pacific Center, a historic office building with similar aesthetics and history. Connecting with the city’s culture in the heart of downtown was an important goal for the local team.

Take the Spokane Inland Empire Railroad (SIERR) Building in Spokane’s thriving University District. BCRA partnered with the University of Washington to provide experiential graphics and a branded environment in the school’s new space within this historic building. The graphics celebrate the spirit of boundlessness embraced by the university — and by the city itself.

Over time, the city of Spokane has overcome fires, population booms and declines, and reinvention of its economic purpose. This ability to embrace adversity and continue celebrating uniqueness contributed to the decision to move the company eastward.

“We knew moving into the area would present challenges. Spokane is tight knit. It’s gritty and we must be gritty as well. We understand that it’s important to build a real foundation in this community. We want people to see that BCRA is serious about setting down our roots in the Inland Northwest,” Doug Oberst, managing executive, shares.

LOCAL TEAM, LOCAL WORK

While BCRA’s staff has been forming connections with local organizations, the firm has also been partnering with clients to deliver projects in the health care and retail sectors as well as public and private partnerships. The Spokane-based team is backed by more than 70 employees in Tacoma in the areas of architecture, interior and experiential graphic design, civil engineering, landscape architecture, and land use planning.

“It’s our vision to be true partners in the Inland Northwest and build things that matter — whether that is connections or projects,” says Poole-Duris. “And we’re looking to expand our team with like-minded local designers.”

Oberst adds, “Our business model is centered around relationships. Spokane has become a second hub for us, and we’re excited to further serve these communities and our clients out here.”

Poole-Duris agrees. “And just like Spokane has much to offer, our multiple disciplines allow us to provide a broad and cohesive design experience for our clients. We’re eager to form new partnerships with clients from whom we can learn and with whom we can grow.”

Melissa Frey, communications coordinator, provides marketing and communications support for all of BCRA’s markets and locations.