

# STICKING TO THEIR ROOTS

THROUGH NATIONAL GROWTH, JLG REMAINS COMMITTED TO COMMUNITY

**J**LG Architects has spent the past 33 years creating dynamic destinations that give back to the communities they're proud to call home. With over 170 employee-owners across 10 offices, including Bismarck and Williston, this is a firm that takes pride in designing for people over place. With every business, K-12 school, museum, university campus, medical center, sports arena, and wellness center, they take the path that most won't bother to explore. Beyond everyday walls and windows, JLG seeks to elevate purpose and passion, setting their sights on building stronger communities that inspire people and transform tradition, one Main Street at a time.



## JLG'S NOTABLE PRO BONO PROJECTS

- The Midland Continental Museum
- 4-H Camp
- Rugby Lyric Theater
- Bismarck's Abused Adult Resource Center
- Make-a-Wish North Dakota
- Veterans Memorial Park – Al Palmer Visitor Center



**ERIC HOFFER**  
Architect, Bismarck Market Leader



**JENNIFER JACKSON**  
Practice Studio Leader

## WHO THEY ARE

With a focus on building stronger communities, JLG has established itself as a trailblazer in the progression of a more resilient workforce throughout Western North Dakota and the United States. By prioritizing human needs balanced with the needs of our local economy, they inspire industry change, connect communities, and provide enhanced opportunities for youth. Furthermore, they value design excellence that empowers positive and lasting impact that uplifts our communities and helps residents, leaders, patients, students, athletes, and businesses thrive.

JLG is committed to giving back to the Bismarck-Mandan community in more ways than one. Whether it be through pro bono projects that support the efforts of local organizations, projects demonstrating environmental stewardship, or mentorship of young professionals, their team has earned quite the reputation across the Midwest.

"One of the biggest things I believe we can offer to every community we work with is the ability to elevate design across the board. Most of our clients have limited budgets, but we take pride in doing 'more with less' by offering thoughtful, functional, and beautiful design solutions to projects of all scales and typologies." Eric Hoffer, Architect at JLG Architects, said.

"We do this by trying to innovate and elevate through creativity. We give back to the local community through our design services, often including complimentary work for non-profits. Everyone in our office is a meaningful part of this community and gives back in their own beautiful ways. For instance, one of our other JLGers, Helen White and I are both directors for the Welcome House Homeless Shelter in Bismarck," Jennifer Jackson, Practice Studio Leader at JLG Architects, said.



**COMING SOON!**

Bismarck Public School District Career & Tech Ed New Facility



Rendering by **BNDRY Studio**

**A STRONG, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY**

JLG is dedicated to maintaining a strong community within the Bismarck-Mandan area. With that goal, the company emphasizes its firm-wide efforts in sustainable building practices that reduce carbon emissions, reduce energy and water use, and lower operating costs for healthier, more financially resilient businesses. "We're working hard to implement cost-efficient ways to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels to power buildings," Hoffer said. "We model every building we work on to test various mechanical, electrical, and exterior systems to maximize performance while understanding upfront costs and long-term payback periods."

"Our growing knowledge of sustainability has allowed us to provide more data and financial projections for owners. This helps leaders make

better decisions. Right now, we have a key client that's asking us to provide a less common sustainability certification, one that only 15 other projects have achieved, called the Living Building Challenge," Jackson said. "The philosophy behind this program is focused on the entire process. When you work on a design project, you engage with different jurisdictions, product manufacturers, people... it's the task of trying to make every single person you engage with think differently and try to elevate how they contribute. It's not strictly about what the final product's specifications are. The point is to force people to think differently and change what they're doing. How we're designing things is constantly in a state of evolution, and we're excited to see where it goes next."

“ We're grateful and excited to be a part of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora. We have strong connections to Western North Dakota and want the absolute best for those communities. This project is huge for our state, and we're taking in all the feedback that we possibly can to make the best possible solution and experience for everyone along the way.” - **Jennifer Jackson, JLG Architects**

**EMPLOYEE-OWNED**

JLG became a 100% employee-owned ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan) in 2014. At the time, many senior partners were getting close to retirement, leading the firm to look for an efficient way to transfer leadership, as well as a way to get others more involved and invested in the company early. The formation of an ESOP allowed JLG to be transparent and open about the performance of the company with employees at all levels. Furthermore, it encourages a culture where everyone feels as if they can contribute and be equally involved in the success of the company.





**DID YOU KNOW?** Since 2012, the JLGdna program has helped the firm grow by over 300% with a firm-wide retention rate of over 92%.



JLG has worked with many regional schools, including Bismarck Public Schools and Bismarck State College, to broaden their Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by helping students explore careers in industrial, mechanical, agricultural, culinary, advanced technology and nursing programs, to name a few.

"BPS is taking a unique approach to CTE by exposing students to a wide variety of subject matter at the middle school level. This allows them to narrow their focus during high school and ultimately graduate with a huge advantage in finding meaningful, high-paying work right here in Bismarck. We're very excited to be working with BPS to help them realize this long-term vision," Hoffer said.

"CTE is helping students explore in-demand careers and gain valuable experience. JLG is focused on creating a hands-on educational environment that transforms the way we live, learn, and do business. Today, CTE is leading the way as a direct solution to workforce shortages—creating streamlined pathways to employable skills many Western North Dakota businesses and industries need."

"We recognize the need to keep talent local, and we're able to do that as a firm by giving people the best of both worlds – a small town atmosphere with exciting opportunities to work on national scale projects, without relocating out of state," Hoffer said.

"Just like businesses are finding value in partnerships with middle school and high school CTE programs, JLG values partnerships with local universities. These partnerships and our mentorship program leverage North Dakota's greatest assets – our people, values, and strong work

ethic— reminding students of the limitless opportunity in our own backyard." Since the founding of the firm, developing the region's young professionals has been a part of their "DNA." JLG empowers emerging architects by investing in the Midwest's talent base through the JLGdna (Developing New Architects) mentorship program. Here, students learn, develop, and grow in a collaborative program that supports and celebrates their individual strengths. JLGdna partners with local universities to mentor, educate, and provide unlimited opportunity to students alongside peer relationships.

"It's a big differentiator for JLG; in each office, there is an active group of folks who are committed to the growth and development of our young professionals. JLG does firm-wide meetings to talk about specific, technical subjects that allow our newer staff to be exposed to things that they need to gain experience for licensure. We hear from countless potential and recent hires that they aren't seeing this intense focus on licensure in any other architecture firm. It's been an amazing recruitment tool and it's really great for us to be investing in our own people," Hoffer said.

This program has been monumental in expediting students' path to licensure and leadership, as well as retaining the region's top talent. JLG has also committed to accepting interns each year, building partnerships with regional schools, and instilling their sustainable design approaches in today's learning environment. In managing an accelerated leadership development program to fast-track students into positions of leadership, JLG is further enhancing the industry with responsible design and environmental stewardship.

## KEEPING TALENT

## LOCAL



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