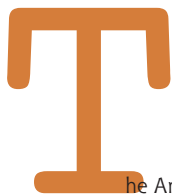


# Reign Change at ASID

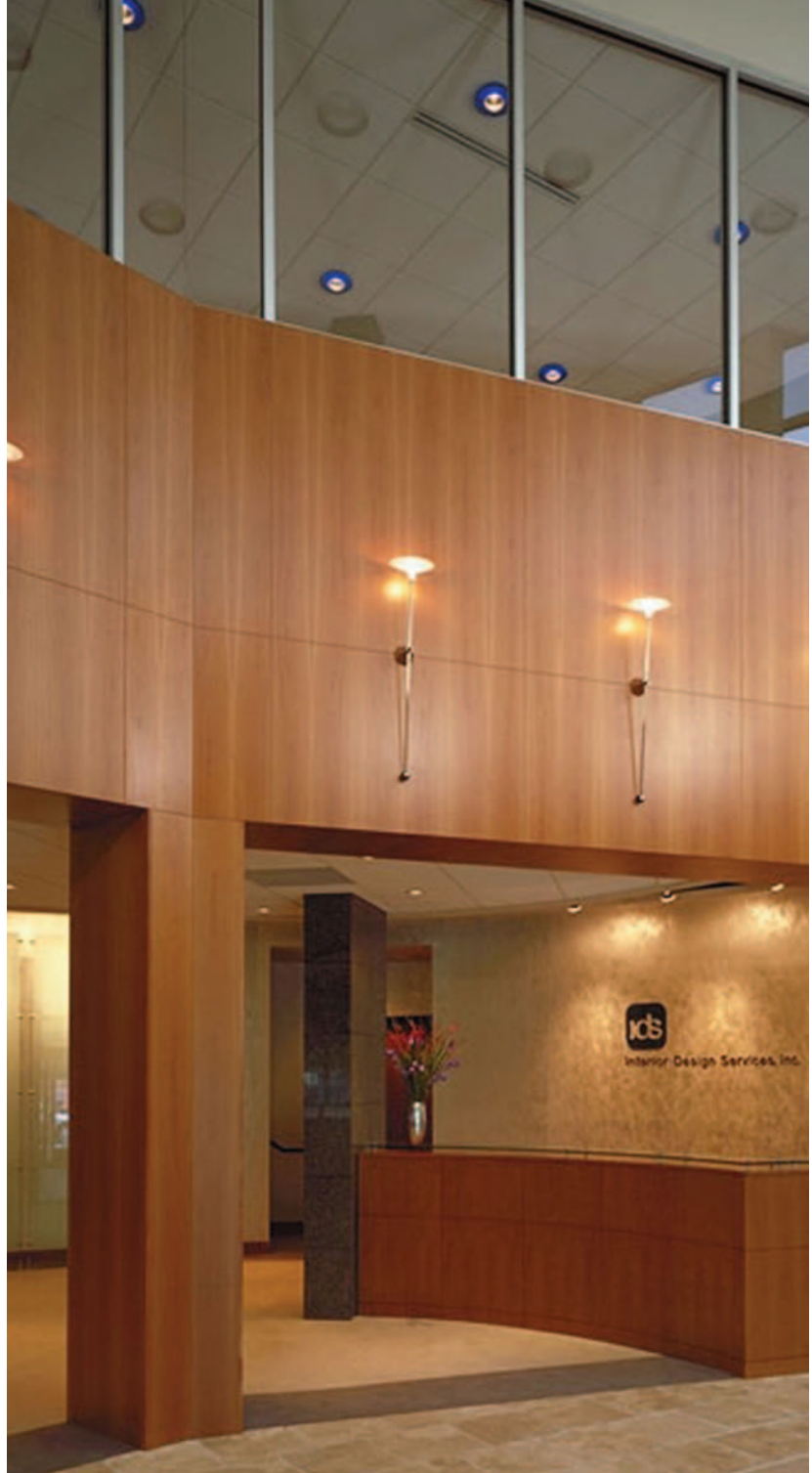
BY CARMEN WALSH



The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) has a new president: Anita Baltimore. An award-winning commercial interior designer, Baltimore has been a professional member of ASID for more than 25 years. Her presidency, which started October 1, follows a one-year term as president-elect and more than a decade on the board of directors, in addition to her roles on various councils and leadership positions in the Tennessee chapter. In 1998, Baltimore was made a Fellow, ASID's highest honor for an individual member.

Baltimore is a founder of Interior Design Services (IDS), a commercial design firm in Nashville. She and three other design professionals started the firm in 1980 to provide services that included interior design, architecture and the sale and installation of furnishings.

"At the time, this type of holistic approach was brand new for



An open teaming area is surrounded by individual work environments (left) at Interior Design Services, where Baltimore is a founding partner. A recent renovation of the IDS entry introduced limestone floors, wood panel walls and an integrated reception desk (above).

PHOTOS: ROBERT AMES; COOK/COURTESY: IDS



At IDS, waiting guests can enjoy refreshments in the serving bar (above) adjacent to the lobby. Custom pivot doors (left) open up the board room for larger events.

Baltimore collaborated on the design of the Nashville Predators National Hockey League team headquarters. The presentation room (right), is a key part of the Predators' organization as it is where they promote the team and entertain sponsors. Staff interaction is encouraged upstairs with an open work space and an employee break area (below).

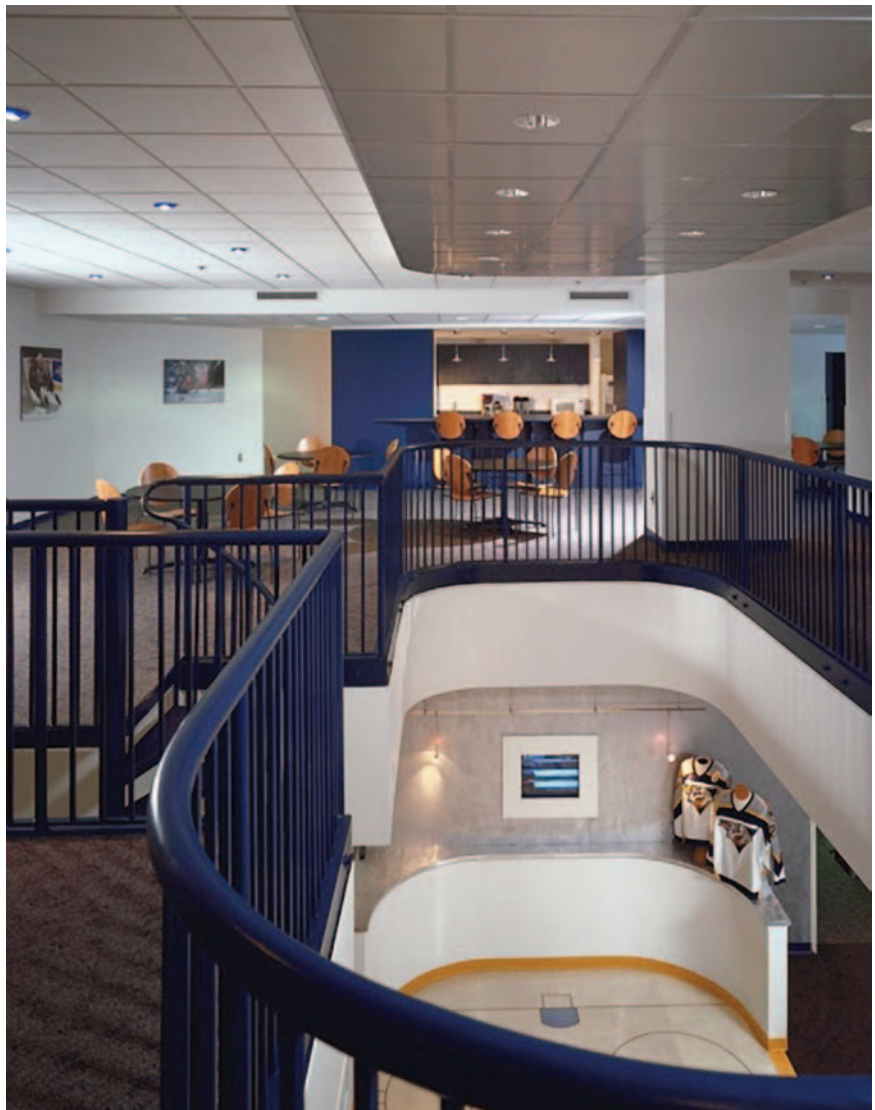


the Nashville area. It was a great marriage of architecture, space planning and interior furnishings. We put all of the elements together on one team, so clients would not have to work with three or more entities." As part of IDS, Baltimore has contributed to major projects such as the Gaylord Entertainment Center and the Tennessee Titans' Coliseum, both in Nashville. She has also collaborated on projects for clients such as Belmont University, the Renal Care Group and Vanderbilt University.

Now, after helping to build IDS from its initial four-person team into its current size of more than 100 employees, Baltimore has stepped back. "I'm still a consultant, working on a few projects, and I plan to continue my affiliation with IDS for the foreseeable future." But for the next three years, she will devote most of her time to the ASID presidency.

So what does Baltimore have planned for ASID? Don't expect any drastic changes, she says. ASID isn't set up that way.

"Many of our initiatives are on a two- or three-year plan. They carry over, making transitions in leadership more seamless." The focus of interior design itself does continue to shift, however, Baltimore says. "When I started, interior design was just about aesthetics and space planning. Then in the '90s, it became more about money: productivity, efficiency, ergonomics. Then the big issue was





Glass walls throughout the Renal Care Group office, another Baltimore project, maximize views of an adjacent park.

indoor air quality. Now, it is about quality of life."

Currently, ASID has two major platforms. The first is sustainable design: making sure that materials are durable and environmentally responsible, from "birth to earth." The second is in response to today's diverse workforce. "For the first time, we will have three or four generations working together in an office. For the older workers, we need to make the environment safe and comfortable. But at the same

time, for the younger workers, we need to accommodate the newest technology and provide a stimulating, team-oriented environment." To focus on this issue, ASID created the Aging in Place Council earlier this year.

"We want to do everything we can to help our members do a better job and enrich their lives." That means keeping them informed. ASID obtains much of its research data from industry partners. Manufacturers of everything from carpet to lighting fixtures to furniture keep ASID abreast of current practices and research. ASID then takes that information and educates its members through various channels, including its Web site ([asid.org](http://asid.org)) and its magazine, *Icon*.

To further its educational efforts, ASID recently embarked on a partnership with the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City. This

summer, ASID participated in the museum's Summer Design Institute, a hands-on introduction to art-related careers. The society sent Stephanie Clemmons, an ASID member and Colorado State professor to talk about how design can be used to instruct. Next, Baltimore and ASID's past president, Linda Smith, will attend an invitational symposium being organized by the museum in partnership with Haystack Mountain School of Crafts. "Our intent is to continue to participate in their programs and collaborate on educational events as we find opportunities."

ASID has also formed a partnership with the University of Minnesota, funding its *InformedDesign* research initiative ([informedesign.umn.edu](http://informedesign.umn.edu)). According to Baltimore, *InformedDesign* has proven to be a valuable tool for interior designers. "Designers think anecdotally. They believe, for example, that a certain color creates a certain effect, but sometimes they want research to back up that belief. The *InformedDesign* site provides that type of data."

ASID also conducts independent research. Last year, the association published *Interior Design Profession: Facts and Figures*, the first comprehensive report providing North American data about design practice, legislation and education. Later this year, ASID will release new research on lighting in office design. Also in the works are updates to previous research on topics such as privacy, sound and productivity in the workplace.



According to Baltimore, today's challenge is keeping up with the speed of information.

"There's a renaissance of interest in interiors. Everyone wants to know how the environment impacts them and how it can change their lives. We do 'environmental scanning' to keep track of what's going on, but we're trying to find faster ways to turn information around and channel it out to our members."

To help them meet this challenge, ASID created a new council, composed of professionals who can report on the latest trends and innovations from hot spots around the country. Baltimore believes that the yet unnamed council (currently referred to as the "Cool Stuff Scanning Squad") will "shape and add dimension to future directions, research and education for the society and its members."

Of course, design is not limited to the United States. Baltimore and Smith were recently invited by *Vicenza Qualità*, a consortium of Italian manufacturers, to see the quality of manufacturing operations in Italy. Baltimore believes that building relationships with trade organizations from other countries can only help the organization — especially as the economy becomes more global.

"I hope to provide more accessibility across countries, to learn about global practices. I'm always so excited when I return from one of these trips. I can't wait to tell people and try out new ideas." W

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## ASID By the Numbers

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) is a nonprofit organization that represents the interests of the interior design community. Led by an 11-person board of directors and a small operational staff in Washington, D.C., ASID serves more than 36,000 members, including approximately 20,000 practicing designers, 11,000 students and 5,500 partner members representing around 2,100 companies. Of the practicing designers, approximately 80 percent are dedicated solely to commercial design or work on both commercial and residential sites. To find a designer, visit ASID's referral site: [interiors.org](http://interiors.org).

—C.W.

ASID headquarters in Washington, D.C.



COURTESY ASID