



Vira joins BL Companies as director of design

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James Vira, AIA, LEED AP, has joined BL Companies from VIRALINE Architecture. As BL Companies director of design, Vira will lead BL's architectural project design and development team. Vira's experience strengthens BL Cos.' design presence in the metropolitan area, and provides his existing clients with an expanded source of multi-disciplined services and resources.

"James brings more than 20 years of architectural design experience to the table and his professional expertise and project diversity in building a successful architectural firm will help move our core business model forward," said Rainer Muhlbauer, director of architecture for BL Cos.

Vira's diverse portfolio includes projects such as new buildings for the NYC School Construction Authority, renovations for charter and private schools, post disaster provisional housing for the NYC Office of Emergency Management, laboratory buildings for the University of Pennsylvania, the master plan for the University of Colorado medical campus, and the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Texas.

Prior to successfully developing his own firm, Vira was an associate with Cooper Robertson & Partners in New York City.

Vira is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture. He is a LEED accredited professional and is licensed in the State of New York. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects.

"I am excited to join such a diverse and highly regarded employee-owned company. In my new position as the Manhattan lead and Director of Design, I will have a greater ability to offer expanded services to the successful client base developed under VIRALINE," said Vira.

Engineering News Record historically lists the 100% employee-owned BL Cos. as one of the Top 500 Design Firms in the country. "We've built our reputation on attention to detail, dedicated professional excellence, and commitment to the total satisfaction of our clients," said Robert Celata, BL Cos.' director of Architecture and Building Engineering. "James shares these same principles."

BL Cos. currently has 250 employee-owners in offices in Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas.

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