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## **AI DESIGN GROUP AND PROGRESSIVE AE ANNOUNCE MERGER FIRMS EXPAND ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN CAPABILITIES, GEOGRAPHIC REACH**

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – July 27, 2016** – Charlotte, North Carolina-based ai Design Group and Grand Rapids, Michigan-based Progressive AE today announced they are merging to create a stronger, more diverse full-service architectural and design firm. The combined organization will have active work in all 48 contiguous states, a team of 200 professionals and over 65 years combined history as leaders in architecture and design.

“This partnership is an opportunity to combine experience, increase diversity of thought, expand our geographic reach, and share best practices to enhance the delivery of services to our clients nationwide,” said Bradley Thomas, President and CEO of Progressive AE. “It also comes at a time when both of our firms are in a position of strength, allowing us to accelerate our momentum together.”

The combined organization and joint ownership structure will offer clients access to expanded capabilities and a deeper bench of highly specialized experts. Collectively, the firms will now offer expertise in community, healthcare, housing, industrial, learning, retail, senior living, motorsports, hospitality, worship, mixed use and automotive. Additionally, the joint teams create an especially strong workplace and interiors group with a unique combination of knowledge and experience.

“Our two firms are very much aligned, both culturally and strategically,” said Wesley Jones, Principal of ai Design Group. “We’ve invested in the best talent, we share a client-centric approach based on relationships and customer service, and we’re both highly committed to our local communities. It’s a natural fit and a great move for our staff and the regional and national clients we serve.”

Both organizations have been honored with numerous regional and national awards for their work and boast a long list of respected projects. Examples include:

- Progressive AE: Mary Free Bed YMCA (the world’s first universally designed building, certified by the Global Universal Design Commission), Grand Rapids Downtown Market, DeVos Place Convention Center, Grand Rapids Art Museum (first Gold certified LEED art museum in the nation), Frederick Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, as well as over 20,000 student housing beds.
- ai Design Group: Headquarters for MetLife’s U.S. retail division (365,000-sf LEED Platinum upfit), Sonic Automotive and Babson Capital Management; Landmark mixed use retail developments Ballantyne Village and RedStone; and motorsports facilities across the country including Las Vegas Motor Speedway’s Media Center and Charlotte Motor Speedway’s Z-Max Dragway.

The companies will continue to be housed in their current offices, headquartered in Grand Rapids, and the leadership structures of both organizations will remain intact. Both firms will retain their current names and ai Design Group will be identified as a Progressive AE company.

**About Progressive AE**

Progressive AE has provided its clients with innovative and sustainable architectural and engineering services for 50 years. Our work has been guided by a fundamental and forward-thinking philosophy that spaces and environments should serve as strategic contributors, not static places and their success has been achieved through a workforce that is a unique blend of creative people who think strategically and strategic people who think creatively. Progressive AE is a privately held, employee-owned company based out of Grand Rapids, Michigan and practicing throughout North America. For more information visit [www.progressiveae.com](http://www.progressiveae.com).

**About ai Design Group**

Based in Charlotte and working for clients nationwide, ai Design Group, founded in 2003, is a collective of design professionals who place equal emphasis on architecture and interior design. With clients ranging from Fortune 500 companies to startups, the firm prides itself on genuine, long-term relationships and believes engaged clients and clear communication produce great design. ai Design's diverse portfolio spans many industry and market sectors including: Office, Sports & Entertainment, Automotive, and Mixed-Use & Retail. ai Design Group's offices are located nearby on the top floor of the Chamber Building in uptown Charlotte. Learn more at [www.aidginc.com](http://www.aidginc.com).

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