

Preserving A Washington Icon:

Ambassador Ischinger Receives Stewardship Award

by Mary Fitch, AICP

In celebration of the anniversaries of the German chancery and residence, the Washington Architectural Foundation presented Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger with its Stewardship Award. This award honors the ambassador for preserving distinguished architecture that makes a lasting contribution to Washington's architectural heritage.

Ischinger has not only preserved the embassy buildings, he has enhanced them in subtle ways to further their diplomatic mission. For example, he named the sixth-floor conference room, with its arresting view of the surrounding countryside, the *Prittwitz Saal* in honor of the German ambassador who served in Washington from 1928 – 1933, the only German ambassador to resign as a matter of conscience upon Hitler's rise to power. While naming the room does not change the architecture, it gives the room an additional purpose. Each person who enters the room learns something new about the history of the German diplomatic mission in Washington.

Similarly, in the embassy's residence, Ischinger and his wife, Jutta Falke-Ischinger, have made some changes that have helped to make the 19,000-square-foot building feel more like a home. The rearrangement of furniture and the addition of carpets and plants help soften the atmosphere of the reception area, the residence's largest room. Their most dramatic addition to the residence has been the "Berlin Bar," a colorful space designed in what was a former storage area in the basement. Mrs. Falke-Ischinger took control of this empty space and made it into an elegant, relaxed counterpoint to the more formal rooms upstairs.

The Washington Architectural Foundation congratulates Ambassador and Mrs. Ischinger for helping the embassy continue to play a significant role in Washington architecture and design. 🏛️



His Excellency Wolfgang Ischinger

Larry Levin for the German Embassy

Gensler Wins

First-Ever WAF Firm of the Year Award

by Mary Fitch, AICP

The Washington Architectural Foundation inaugurated a new award this year to celebrate the volunteer spirit of Washington's architecture firms. Its first recipient is Gensler's Washington office, ably led by Diane Hoskins. For the past five years, Gensler has given its time and talent to the Foundation. More than 400 hours of volunteer time have been donated to the Foundation's Architecture in the Schools program. The quality of service is of such a high standard that one former employee, Christina Hayunga, received a special commendation from the District of Columbia Schools. Of particular note was the great contribution that Gensler made to the development of the Leckie Garden Memorial, which was dedicated last year to the teacher, student, and two parents killed in the Pentagon attack. WAF needed 40 volunteers to teach in the classroom once a month for an entire school year and help build the garden. Gensler provided nine volunteers to this important effort. The Foundation thanks Gensler for its valuable service and hopes it serves as an inspiration to others throughout the city. 🏛️