

Eastern Avenue library named 'landmark' facility

Tory Brecht | Posted: Tuesday, May 17, 2011 2:00 am

The awards keep adding up for the Davenport Public Library's Eastern Avenue Branch.

The latest is a national accolade, with the nearly one-year-old library being named one of 20 "landmark" libraries in the United States.

The new Landmark Libraries program showcases buildings that feature innovative designs. A group of 16 judges — primarily library directors and architects — evaluated submissions sent in by libraries from across the country. Criteria included overall design and construction excellence, sustainability, functionality, innovation and beauty.

"We've now won state, regional and national awards," library director LaWanda Roudebush said. "I'm very proud of that."

In February, the library and general contractor Bush Construction garnered a Masters Award from the Master Builders of Iowa organization.

The building was recognized for its environmentally friendly LEED — or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design — components, including use of recyclable materials, large windows with floor-to-ceiling shades to help regulate light and temperature, and a geothermal heating and air-conditioning system.

The judges for the Library Journal also were impressed with those elements.

"Davenport's Eastern Avenue Branch Library has an open floor plan with green features such as natural sunlight, lighting sensors, geothermal heating and cooling system, a water garden, bioswale and infiltration pond," they wrote.

Joe Huberty, a partner with Milwaukee-based architectural firm Engbert Anderson, which designed the Eastern Avenue branch, said he just recently learned of the award.

"It was nice that Library Journal knew about the project and saw all the merits that they identified," he said. "It's nice to see that recognized by people who see a lot of projects."

Huberty said the list of amenities demanded in public-sector buildings, especially libraries, has grown in recent decades.

"It used to be they were single function types of endeavors — a place to store books — and now there are much higher expectations," he said. "They also require a lot more technology and an understanding that these buildings reflect on community identity."