

DGTC
Rebranding:
Meet the
Team
ISD News
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When it comes to the project dubbed DGTC Rebranding, the architects and designers hired to give the David Glass Technology Center a new look want to make one thing clear:



The team (from left) includes John Mistretta, Junto architect; Bill Rapp, Junto architect; Angela Davis, Junto lead designer; Eric Nielsen, lead architect with Nielsen Architecture; Mike Duncan, Senior Director of Home Office Facilities; and Kristina York, Junto designer.

"This is a total reconstruction of your building, not just a rebranding," said Eric Nielsen, lead architect on the project. "This is a rededication to the David Glass Technology Center and the associates who work there."

Architects and designers from Nielsen Architecture in Bentonville and Junto Design Studio in Tampa, Fla., are collaborating to take ISD's physical home and make it reflect the associates who work here and the work that we do.

"We are taking an inside-out look from an associate's point of view and encapsulating everything about technology, culture, legacy and forward-thinking and manifesting that in a space that is exciting and fun," said Angela Davis of Junto and lead designer on the project.

Angela and Kristina York, another designer with Junto, said they want to create a work environment that reflects how each associate works in their roles but also gives them a sense of place. "ISD is a technology-savvy, high-tech place," Kristina said. "We don't see that yet."

Junto and Nielsen aren't strangers to Walmart. Members of their teams have collaborated on the Sam's Club Home Office and several smaller projects on the campus. That gave them some insider knowledge and perspective when they walked into DGTC for the first time a few months ago.

"It was what we expected because we've done a lot of work with Walmart," Angela said. "We could feel the excitement, energy and vibrancy of the people, but nothing about the building reflected that. You couldn't tell what division this building represented. This could have been human resources, the finance division a law division... you couldn't tell."

The associates at ISD deserve that sense of place, she continued.

"You're working for the best company," she said. "You're exposed to just about anything and everything in the world from a technology standpoint. We want to capture that vibe."

Junto and Nielsen arrived in early April to sit down with ISD associates and get a sense of how they work and how they collaborate with others. Throughout the first phase of the project, the architects and designers will end up interviewing or job shadowing more than a hundred associates. Angela said so far she has been thrilled with how open-minded ISD associates have been.

"It's almost a blank slate for us," Eric said. "There is a scope (based on a retail cost model) at some point of course, but right now we're just listening to associates."

Associates can expect to see the team a lot throughout the first year as they work to finalize their plans. In addition to getting to know the associates, they will have to spend a lot of time getting to know the building. Because of its age, DGTC could throw a few curve balls.

"At Sam's we only had a few surprises, because we could see everything," Eric explained. "This is going to have a million surprises."

The team will present a plan to CIO Rollin Ford this year. From there work can begin.

Within the first year, the team hopes to focus on making some changes in high-impact areas, like bathrooms and common spaces. Expect updated bathroom facilities and a new look for non-workspaces. This will allow them more time to focus on the more granular design of individual workspaces.

"Our big goal is to get our hands around the pod need and the pod design," Angela said. "That's going to take some time."

Mike Duncan, Senior Director of Home Office Facilities, is also working with the team and said eventually the team will have to get down to the minutiae. "We end up getting down to the individual needs of each associate," he said. "Eventually we are going to have to know your name."

In addition to the inside of the building, the team is looking at how it can revamp the exterior as well. They hope to make some big changes to the outside of the building early in the project.

"It's a pretty big splash piece..." Angela said. "And it lets the community know that things are changing, too," Mike finished.

The team acknowledges that undertaking a remodel is much harder than a new construction, like the Sam's Home Office. But with that is the potential for overwhelming rewards for the team's clients, ISD and the associates.

"The anticipation of knowing how much we are going to phenomenally impact their day-to-day life is overwhelming," Angela said. "Some of it is going to be easy stuff. There are some really great things that we can do from a design standpoint that will change how people think about going to work."

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