



HUGHES AGENCY

**For Immediate Release**

### **McMillan Smith & Partners and Pazdan-Smith Group Announce Merger**

Greenville, SC – Two award-winning architectural firms in the Upstate, McMillan Smith & Partners and Pazdan-Smith Group, announced that they will merge offices to form McMillan Pazdan Smith. Initial discussion of a merger began several years ago and progressed earlier this year, culminating with a merger on September 30, 2009.

"This was the right time to combine the depth and expertise of two prominent South Carolina architectural firms, strengthening our position as a regional firm with experience in diverse market segments," said Ron Smith, Principal at McMillan Smith & Partners. "Our combined skills in project management, our talents in the design process and expertise in core markets will provide greater value, service and knowledge in all areas of planning and design."

"We see this as an excellent opportunity to take advantage of the future growing economy to create a stronger firm and to grow our market share and reach throughout the region," said Joe Pazdan, Principal at Pazdan-Smith Group. "We are probably known more as a Greenville firm while McMillan Smith has its roots in Spartanburg and Charleston, when in fact, we collectively have projects reaching from Virginia to Georgia. Together we will be poised to further expand our reach and better compete on a regional and even national level."

McMillan Smith & Partners is headquartered in Spartanburg, South Carolina with two other offices in Greenville and Charleston while Pazdan-Smith Group is located in Greenville. McMillan Pazdan Smith will keep the Spartanburg and Charleston offices open and integrate McMillan Smith's Greenville office into Pazdan-Smith Group's current office by September 30, 2009.

"We are not expecting to lose any employee positions during the transition, and in fact, we feel that once the current economic climate turns around, we will be poised for growth within the company," said Brad Smith, Principal at Pazdan-Smith Group. "We believe that McMillan Pazdan Smith will be more competitive on a regional and national basis, which should also help us to recruit even more top-level talent to the Upstate."

Common personalities, cultures and guiding principles of Pazdan-Smith Group and McMillan Smith will make the blending of the firms seamless. And their shared philosophy on the

significance of community service and support of economic development in the Upstate and Charleston markets will continue to be a core value of McMillan Pazdan Smith.

“When you decide to grow your company through a merger, it’s important that the companies involved have common goals and values,” said Smith. “When Joe and I started Pazdan-Smith Group 16 years ago, giving back to the community was very important to us, both personally and collectively as a company. Ron and his group are extremely active in their communities and encourage all of their employees to be equally engaged. We feel there will be great synergy with the new McMillan Pazdan Smith, and we will continue to work toward a better quality of life for all of us in South Carolina.”

### **About McMillan Smith & Partners**

McMillan Smith & Partners Architects is an award-winning firm with three South Carolina offices supporting a southeastern clientele with resources in planning and programming, graphics, architectural and interior design, construction administration and sustainable design services. Significant commissions include public and private sector projects for education, healthcare, commercial and religious environments. The firm represents a collaborative group of dedicated and enthusiastic professionals that believe functional, beautiful and cost-effective are not mutually exclusive attributes for the built environment. Practicing since 1955, through acquisition and consistent growth, McMillan Smith has established a reputation for strong fiscal stewardship, effective project management and imaginative design solutions.

Under the leadership of Ron Smith, McMillan Smith has sustained a steady growth in staff, volume of work and complexity of projects. They are currently one of the largest architectural firms in the state, leading the design industry in sustainable design initiatives, technology advancements and awards for design excellence or team collaboration. The firm has received 30 awards in the past five years and has been published nationally on leadership, design trends and specific project case studies. Significant local projects include Hubbell Lighting, Palmetto Bank Corporate Headquarters, Dorman High School and the Milliken Science Building at Wofford College. McMillan Smith & Partners has been one of the first firms to embrace Building Information Modeling, an advanced modeling system for design professionals and has multiple projects completed using this technology.

### **About Pazdan-Smith Group**

Established in 1993 by Principals Joe Pazdan and Brad Smith, Pazdan-Smith Group is a studio-based design firm with special focus in Urban, Campus + Community, Retail and Healthcare design, serving clientele desiring creative, innovative solutions. Pazdan-Smith Group has completed small to complex and local to national projects, providing services including Master

Planning, Architectural Design, Construction Documentation and Interior Design. Their mission is to help our clients create environments which embody their personalities, enrich their lives and enhance their communities.

The firm's success was celebrated in 1999 with the advancement of Lisa Lanni to Partner and again in 2006 with Dave Ballard's advancement to Partner. In late 2003, Pazdan-Smith Group acquired a 40-plus year-old local architectural firm, JHM Architects, whose main client is AnMed Health in Anderson, SC. Significant local projects include CU ICAR - Collaboration 3 – Timken Building, the Children's Museum of the Upstate and the Upcountry History Museum.

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