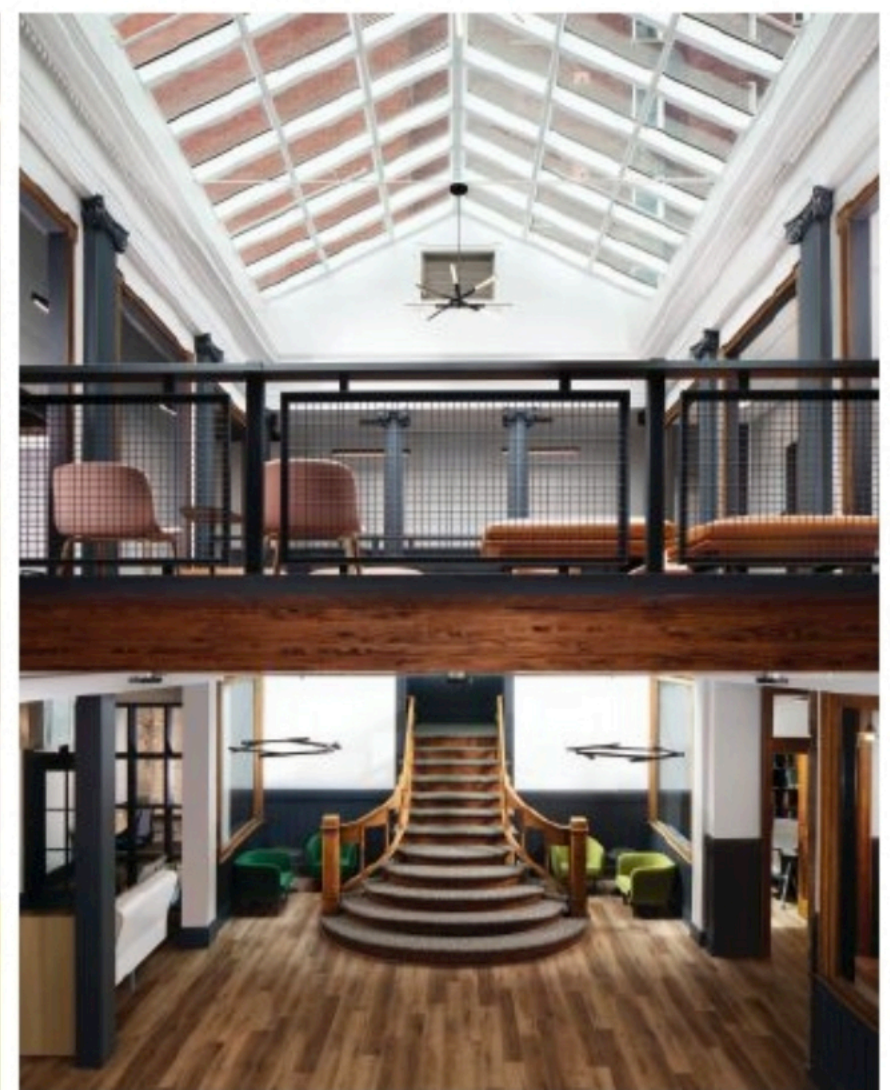
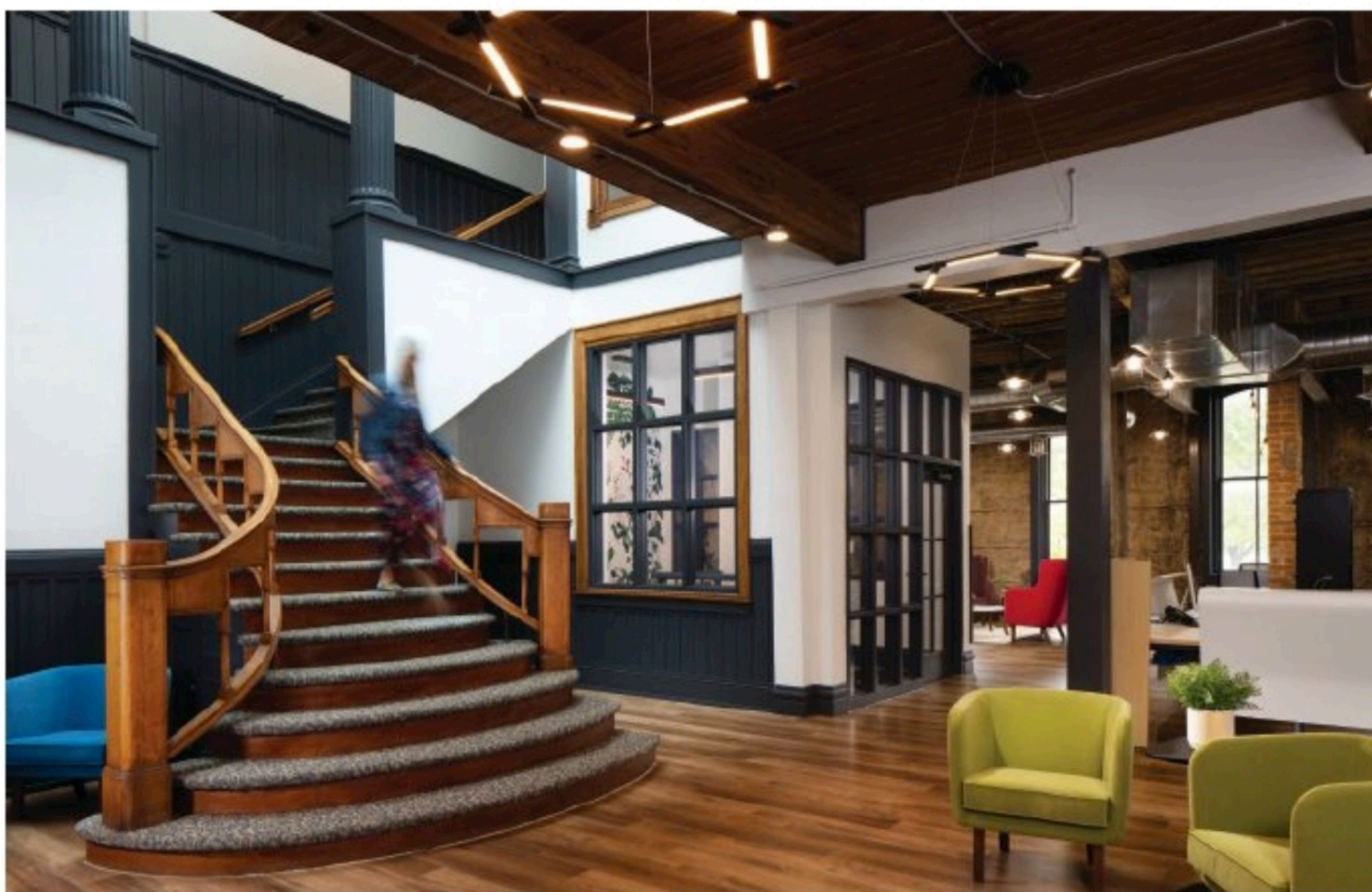




ELLSWORTH BLOCK

BEST NEW DEVELOPMENT OR RENOVATION—MIXED USE



PROJECT CREDITS

- LOCATION:**
23 N. Pinckney St., Madison, WI 53703
- OWNER/DEVELOPER:** Osario Investments
- CONSTRUCTION FIRM:** Friede & Associates
- ARCHITECT:** GMK Architecture Inc.
- INTERIOR DESIGN:** InteriorLOGIC Inc.
- ENGINEER:** Pierce Engineers Inc.
- PHOTOGRAPHY:**
Tricia Shay, Shay Photography
- COMPLETION DATE:** March 1, 2020

Yet another renovation of a historic building, the Ellsworth Block Building on Madison’s Capitol Square has restored the structure to its former glory with a few modern touches.

The structure, which was built in 1871 and required a complete renovation, is home to the Wisconsin English as a Second Language School and serves business executives and students from all over the world who want to improve their language skills for academic, personal, or professional reasons. The project not only created an open, updated space for the school, it resulted in a stunning look for the Ellsworth Building that is now available for business events such as small conferences and private gatherings such as weddings. In normal

times, the school serves about 400 students each year and an estimated 2,400 people will visit the space on an annual basis.

Named for the Ellsworth Brothers, who built the structure and operated a grocery store there, it’s a Madison showcase of sorts. Its existing central stairs are its most attractive feature, but thanks to this renovation, that’s not the only one. The new skydeck lounge connects the sides of the atrium under the original rooftop skylight and serves as a metaphor for the traditional and contemporary partnership that brought this project together. “The central skylight floods the space with daylight, while the new openings invite interest and movement, all creating a warm and inviting center for net-

working and events,” says one CDA judge.

By keeping the ideas of the past at the forefront of the design, another judge says the renovation succeeds in creatively repurposing the building. Existing decorative trim and columns were salvaged during the demolition and reused. To the extent possible, oak wainscoting was left in place and new matching oak wainscoting was used as needed, but all of the 1880s-era doors were repainted, newly exposed brick was cleaned, and existing limestone walls were left exposed.

Another judge was struck by what he called “the very artful blend of old and new. It can be difficult to blend these together well, and this project does it very successfully.”