

MZA Architecture hires veteran Seattle designer Mia Marshall

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Even though they've worked in the Puget Sound region for two decades [Ming Zhang](#), president and CEO of MZA Architecture, and designer [Mia Marshall](#) hadn't met until recently.

Now she is on the leadership team of his firm, which is known for its international design flair.

"I'm their first interior designer, their first female leader. This is a big deal to Ming to build that diversity into the practice because that grounds you and helps you weather the storm," said Marshall, who was founding principal of Nelson Worldwide's Seattle office.

MZA was founded four years ago, when it was selected to design the four-skyscraper Elev8 proposal in its hometown of Bellevue. But the firm's roots stretch back to the early part of this century when members of the senior management team worked at MulvannyG2, which today [is the region's fifth-largest firm](#).

In addition to leading the interiors practice, Marshall is principal in charge of business development for the 30-person firm, which reported 22 percent annual growth since its founding.

"We are really to the point where we need to look at longer-term strategy. We want to emphasize our local presence. To a degree we're still quiet," Marshall said.

Thirty percent of MZA's work is in China, including a project with three skyscrapers that are about 300 feet taller than the 76-story Columbia Center. The rest of the firm's work is in the Seattle area.

"The experience of working in a different culture will always help the designer try to view how we can bring some of the unique things from the other culture to here," said Zhang, who has used his connections to China to bring capital stateside.

He helped facilitate [last year's \\$128 million deal](#) by [Stanford Hotels](#) of San Francisco to acquire a controlling interest in Elev8 from Plus Investment (USA).

Among MZA's current projects are [the Mira II condo tower](#) in Bellevue, [a luxury hotel in Seattle](#) next to the new Hyatt Regency and [the new Hotel Indigo in Everett](#).

MZA also is working on a 12-story office building at 601 Dexter Ave. N., and a 17-story residential tower for Plus Investment in Seattle at Seventh Avenue South and South Dearborn Street. In addition, the firm designed Shoresmith, a mid-rise condo project at 1170 Republican St., in South Lake Union; construction is scheduled to start next month, Zhang said.

MZA works on a projects large and small. "It doesn't have to be a high-rise, ground-up building," Marshall said. "Our goal is to work with a developer on any product type that they have."



MZA ARCHITECTURE

Mia Marshall has been named a new principal at MZA Architecture of Bellevue.

Marc Stiles
Staff Writer

Puget Sound Business Journal





The Elev8 project in downtown Bellevue was originally planned to have four approximately 400-foot-tall towers. Now project owner Stanford Hotels of San Francisco is having MZA Architecture redesign Elev8 to capitalize on new zoning that allows towers up to 600 feet tall.

MZA ARCHITECTS RENDERING



MZA Architecture is designing this 12-story Seattle office building for the owners of the site now occupied by the Copiers Northwest building at 601 Dexter Ave. N.

MZA ARCHITECTURE RENDERING