

# Emergency Family Assistance Association

## EFAA—Offices and Transitional Housing Mixed-Use Building

by George Watt



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**W**e began the design process for the new Heyman Family Client Services Center for Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA) with a question – how can this new building best serve EFAA's mission? With over 90 years in Boulder County at the center of a helping network for families, EFAA is truly part of the fabric of this community, and as such, it was a great opportunity and responsibility to create this new home for EFAA for the next 90 years.

Through design workshops with EFAA's staff and dedicated building committee, charrettes among the design team of George Watt Architecture, Outside LA, JVA Engineering, and Clanton and Associates, we identified our major design goals. The site was selected so that the new building could be integrated into a walkable mixed-use neighborhood, on the local bus line for the convenience of staff and clients, and close to services for the staff who would work there. The design team understood from the outset that EFAA is a great steward of the support it receives, stretching their dollars. All of the design elements of the building must contribute to the economy of operating the building, resource conservation during the construction process, and energy efficiency for the long term. Since EFAA's service focuses on meeting the basic needs of food and shelter while promoting self-sufficiency for clients, focusing all of EFAA's functions in one building was an overarching design goal.

Thoughtful urban design and careful space-planning brought the office needs and food pantry together with seven transitional apartments for families in need, all under one roof. And that roof is, naturally, covered with solar panels. A 19.8 kW PV array, in addition to a 320 sq. ft. solar hot water system connected to radiant floors in lightweight concrete, provide 65% of the residential electrical needs and 83% of the hot water needs, respectively. A highly insulated envelope, high-performance windows and doors, a 94% high-efficiency boiler, and CFL throughout are just some of the active systems and materials utilized to reduce the building's energy bills (and carbon footprint!), saving much-needed funds for those who come to EFAA for help. Passive systems include daylighting strategies throughout, passive solar on the office floor, and natural ventilation. Finishes specified to achieve a high level of indoor air quality also add to a pleasing, efficient environment for EFAA staff and their clients, while boosting operational savings in the long run.

In-kind donations, grant awards, funding through the EOC, CRC, Namaste, and Climate Smart, along with great efforts and financial contributions from many in our community, have brought into being a well-integrated, efficient new home for EFAA, their clients, and Boulder County, one that will serve them well for years to come.

**Year Built:** 2008

**Size:** 15,000 sq. ft. (residential space: 9,900 sq. ft., office space: 5,100 sq. ft.)

### Contractors:

- Clean Slate Energy (Solar Thermal)
- George Watt Architecture (Architect)
- Namaste Solar Electric (PV System) (see ad on page 5)
- Outside LA (Landscape Design)
- Porchfront Homes (Builder)

### Energy Features

- Energy audit
- Passive solar design
- Grid-tied 15kW PV system
- Solar thermal collector
- Radiant floor heat
- 94% high-efficiency boiler
- 13 SEER air conditioning
- Whole-house fans
- CFLs
- High-performance windows
- Icynene foam insulation
- Programmable thermostat

### Green Features

- Advanced framing techniques
- Used engineered lumber, composite lumber, and recycled lumber
- Fiber-cement exterior siding
- Recycled carpet
- Low-maintenance manufactured flooring
- Locally-quarried stone veneer, stucco, and recycled content siding
- Natural ventilation
- Low-VOC paints and water-based finishes

### Water Features

- Xeriscape and low-water lawn
- Drip irrigation
- Smart irrigation controller
- Soil amendments
- Hydro-zoning
- Low-flow plumbing fixtures

### Re-Use/Salvage Features

- 80% of construction waste recycled