Rosemary McMonigal
McMonigal Architects, LLC

Rosemary McMonigal, AIA, CID, formed McMonigal Architects in 1984, based on the belief that architecture, interiors and landscape are interconnected disciplines—a philosophy that consistently results in beautiful and livable projects. Clients benefit from successful collaborations between these disciplines, and from Rosemary’s dual background as a registered architect and certified interior designer.

Inspired by clients, no two houses designed by McMonigal Architects are the same. Rosemary emphasizes that the houses she and her team design reflect their clients’, not an architect’s, portrait. The firm’s goal is to have clients walk into their house and say, “This is our home.”

Above: The design explores the question, “What is a modern Midwestern house?” The two-acre site contains mature oaks and lowland marsh preserve. The home's footprint is 1,000 square feet.
Photograph by Luxen McKeen Photography

Facing Page: The circular core of this prairie house has panoramic views of 22 acres, which feature a lake, a wooded ravine, and coniferous trees and an original farmstead preserved on site.
Photograph by James Erickson Photography
Rosemary takes her vocation to heart. Eschewing fashion trends and styles that change, she feels that the most exciting facet of her work is creating architecture that reflects the firm’s clients and endures. Knowing and ensuring that the homes she and her team design meet this excellence and are going to be used and enjoyed for years to come makes the process rewarding.

It is the “science” of the homes in which we live that fascinates Rosemary. She compares homes to “living laboratories for people.” Some of the systems the firm uses are unique: Homeowners experience and offer feedback about new products and technologies, each home is tested prior to completion and Rosemary and her team build on this knowledge. McMongial clients know that their input is vital in helping the firm learn what is working and what needs improvement—it is how good design systems evolve.

Once the clients have moved into their homes, they are certainly not forgotten. Rosemary follows up three months, six months and as many as five years later to make certain that all systems are in order and to discern whether anything needs to be modified to support the home’s current condition. More than a warranty, her continued support represents the professionalism that has come to define the firm.
McMonigal Architects offices in a charming, rehabilitated 1800s' Minneapolis building. Speaking to their dedication to detail and excellence, the firm received an American Institute of Architects small project award for the design of this space. The staff is committed to designing personal reflections of their clients while integrating the home to its site and respecting the budget. Rosemary believes architecture is influenced by the time, place and people who live there. Clients are often drawn to McMonigal Architects not only for its design work but also because they know the firm is devoted to healthy, energy-efficient and sustainable homes and has been a leader in Green design.

A Twin Cities-area native, Rosemary was educated at the University of Minnesota where she gained early exposure to the importance of the environment in relation to architecture, which continues to impact her projects today. Her firm’s work includes new construction, renovation and addition commissions.

Top Left: This farmhouse met goals of chemical sensitivity, accessibility/future adaptability, accommodating the clients’ 17-inch height difference and rooms with windows on multiple sides for daylight and ventilation. Photograph by Andrea Rugg Photographers.

Bottom Left: Perched high above a lake on natural forms of rugged hills and bluffs, rock outcroppings, white pines and birch trees, the house is a private retreat. Photograph by Karen Melvin Photography.

Facing Page Top & Bottom: The clients were ready to simplify their lives and trade their large house for a small cottage on the lake. The proximity to the lake was facilitated by preserving the footprint of the existing house. Photographs by Phillip Mueller Photography.