

MassMutual Commonwealth Office Upfit

Virginia Beach, VA

SIZE

21,572 SF

COMPLETION

2018

PHOTOGRAPHY

Keith Isaacs Photography

DESIGNERS

Arjun Kainth, Allied ASID – Clark Nexsen
Susan Drew, CID, LEED AP BD+C – Clark Nexsen

AWARDS

Hampton Roads Association for Commercial Real Estate (HRACRE) Award of Merit – Best Interior, 2018

For financial services firms like MassMutual, appealing to younger generations of workers requires striking a balance between honoring the firm’s long history and offering a vibrant, modern, tech-savvy work environment. The [MassMutual Commonwealth](#) office upfit was driven by the need to transform their space from “stuffy” and “stodgy” to sleek and contemporary, supporting efforts to recruit the best and brightest financial graduates.

Clark Nexsen’s [Workplace Interiors](#) practice partnered with MassMutual to reimagine their office and achieve goals to break down silos, promote collaboration, and enhance employees’ sense of pride with an inspiring workplace. Today, their 11th floor, 22,000 square foot space features open office environments, collaboration nooks, “phone booths” for private calls, a variety of quiet spaces and flex offices, and a large training room and kitchen that are central to socialization in the office.

Described by Clark Nexsen’s interiors director [Susan Drew](#) as “fun and contemporary,” the office has a decidedly playful side more reminiscent of Google than your traditional financial services firm. The inclusion of spaces for games including foosball or cornhole offer employees an opportunity for a break and a chance to build relationships with each other. The materials and finishes selected throughout the office further promote this sense of fun. A palette of orange, green, and blue is a lively accent, while corrugated metal and vinyl flooring that mimics the look of concrete add an industrial feel.

In the design process, attention was paid to not only creating an environment that appeals to younger workers, but also satisfying the working preferences of multiple generations. A balance of open, private, and quiet office spaces give employees choice in how they work. The use of interior glazing on perimeter offices allows daylight to filter through to the open office areas, which are structured by team and function. To reinforce the office’s sense of place, each area is named for a Virginia Beach neighborhood. For example, the “Town Center” lobby welcomes clients with a clean, warm design. A reclaimed wood wall backs the reception desk, and glass-front conference rooms border the lobby, each showcasing cutting-edge technology.

Arjun Kainth, Allied ASID – Clark Nexsen

Bio:

As a designer, I've always based my design ideas on prioritizing the individual needs of people in an interior environment - psychologically, emotionally, and physically speaking. The built environment, from the selection of materials to the harmony of shapes and colors, can play a critical role in sense of comfort and security felt by occupants.

I've worked in the industry for 5+ years, getting my first start in residential design and eventually moving to commercial projects 2+ years ago. From office upfits to large government facilities, I feel that every design is a new puzzle that requires a new solution. Design presents a career path that gives you a new challenge everyday and allows you to directly improve the quality of life for people around you.