

## Inducted 2012

**Daniel Leonard Dworsky** (born October 4, 1927) has been a leading [Southern California architect](#) since the early 1950s. He is a longstanding member of the [American Institute of Architects College of Fellows](#). Among other works, Dworsky designed [Crisler Arena](#), the basketball arena at the [University of Michigan](#) named for Dworsky's former football coach, [Fritz Crisler](#). Other professional highlights include designing [Drake Stadium](#) at UCLA, the [Federal Reserve Bank](#) in Los Angeles, California and the [Block M](#) seating arrangement at [Michigan Stadium](#).



In 1949, Dworsky was the first round draft pick of the [Los Angeles Dons](#) of the [All-America Football Conference](#). The Dons were the first professional football team in Los Angeles. Dworsky played eleven games with the Dons in 1949, his only season in professional football. Dworsky turned down an offer from the [Pittsburgh Steelers](#) to return to the [University of Michigan](#) where he graduated in 1950 with a degree in architecture. Dworsky later noted: "It was a toss-up whether I would become a pro football player or an architect. Being a linebacker is good conditioning for a young designer. You learn to block the bull coming at you from all sides."

### Career as an architect

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In 1953, Dworsky began his own architecture firm in Los Angeles, known as Dworsky Associates. The firm grew into one of the most prominent architectural firms in California, creating major public buildings in California. Dworsky Associates won the 1984 Firm of the Year Award from the California Council of the [American Institute of Architects](#).

### Architectural style

Dworsky belongs to the generation of post-World War II modernists which took its cues from the 1920s German [Bauhaus](#) and the French-Swiss master [Le Corbusier](#). In 1988, Dworsky noted: "I am most intrigued by the essential mystery of architecture. For me, built space will always be a kind of theater, a stage on which life is played, and played out. That's why I keep on being an architect. Asked what inspires his architecture, Dworsky said he draws from the "solid, resolved concepts" of modern designers such as [Le Corbusier](#) and [Marcel Bruer](#), while being encouraged on occasion to experiment by such "new wave" designers as [Frank Gehry](#) and [Eric Owen Moss](#).

### Crisler Arena and the Block "M"



[Crisler Arena](#)



Dworsky's "Block M" at Michigan Stadium



The Tom Bradley Terminal at LAX



Federal Reserve Bank, Los Angeles



Drake Stadium at UCLA

Dworsky's first major commission was to design a basketball arena for his alma mater, the University of Michigan. The members of the 1947 Michigan Wolverines football team had reunions with Fritz Crisler every five years in Ann Arbor, and it was at one of those reunions that Crisler (by then the school's athletic director) gave Dworsky one of his big breaks, asking him to design the arena. Built in 1967, the arena was named Crisler Arena, as a tribute to the coach. Dworsky's design of the arena was well received and was said to demonstrate "his ability to combine majesty of scale with human accessibility. The roof of Crisler Arena is made of two plates, each weighing approximately 160 tons. The bridge-like construction allows them to expand or contract given the change of seasons or the weight of the snow. Crisler Arena remains the home of Michigan's basketball team and houses memorabilia and trophies from all Wolverine varsity athletic teams.

In 1965, the wooden benches at Michigan Stadium were replaced with blue fiberglass benches. Dworsky designed a yellow "Block M" for the stands on the eastern side of the stadium, just above the tunnel.

## **Drake Stadium at UCLA**

After his work on Crisler Arena, Dworsky was commissioned by UCLA to design a track and field stadium on the university's central campus. Dworsky designed the stadium, known as Drake Stadium. Since its inaugural meet on February 22, 1969, the stadium has been the site of numerous championship meets, including the National AAU track & field championships in 1976, 1977, and 1978. It is also used each year for special campus events, such as the annual UCLA Commencement Exercises in June.

## **Major works**

The major works credited to Dworsky and his firm include the following:

- The Jerry Lewis Neuromuscular Research Center at UCLA (1979).
- The Tom Bradley International Terminal at Los Angeles International Airport (1984).
- A 35 acres (0.055 sq mi; 0.142 km<sup>2</sup>) planned community complex for the California School for the Blind in Fremont, California.<sup>[1]</sup> The design won a merit award from the California AIA.
- The Theater Arts Building at California State University Dominguez Hills. Dworsky cited the theater as one of his favorite projects.<sup>[1]</sup> Photograph of Building
- The Angelus Plaza residential complex in the Bunker Hill area of downtown Los Angeles (1982) Photograph of Building
- The Ventura County Jail.

- The Los Angeles Branch of the [Federal Reserve Bank](#) located at [Grand Avenue](#) and [Olympic Boulevard](#) in downtown Los Angeles (1987).<sup>1</sup>Dworsky Associates won several awards for its design of the 304,000 square feet (28,200 m<sup>2</sup>), \$50 million building.[Photograph of Building](#)
- The Northrop Electronics Division Headquarters in [Hawthorne, California](#). Dworsky Associates received a Gold Nugget Grand Award for Best Commercial Office Building and top honors in the Crescent Architecture Awards competition for the design.
- The Kilroy Airport Center in [Long Beach, California](#), a complex of office buildings fronting [the 405 Freeway](#) with direct runway access to the [Long Beach Airport](#) for private aircraft (1987).[Photograph of Building](#)
- The Westwood Terrace building on [Sepulveda Boulevard](#) in [West Los Angeles, California](#) occupied by [New World Entertainment](#).<sup>26</sup>[Photograph of Building](#)
- The 20-story City Tower in [Orange, California](#) near the intersection of the [Garden Grove \(22\)](#) and Santa Ana freeways in Orange County.<sup>1</sup> [Photograph of Building](#)
- The Home Savings building on [Ventura Boulevard](#) in [Sherman Oaks, California](#).
- The Metropolitan, a 14-story upscale rental complex in downtown Los Angeles' [South Park](#) area.
- The Van Nuys Municipal Court building in [Van Nuys, California](#). Dworsky Associates received the Kaufman & Broad Award for Outstanding New Public or Civic Project for the design.
- The Federal Office Building in Long Beach, California. Dworsky Associates was awarded a 1992 Design Award from the [General Services Administration](#) for its design of the federal building.
- The renovation of the Carnation Building at 5055 [Wilshire Boulevard](#) in Hollywood. The renovated building was occupied by [The Hollywood Reporter](#), [Billboard](#), and other entertainment industry companies.
- The Beverly Hills Main Post Office in [Beverly Hills, California](#). Dworsky Associates received a Beautification Award from the Los Angeles Business Council for the design.
- The [San Joaquin County](#) Jail in [French Camp, California](#). Shortly after the prison opened, six prisoners escaped after cutting through a one-inch bar in the dayroom with a [hacksaw](#). The prison break led to finger-pointing among the construction firm, the architect, and the prison guards over who was responsible for the lapse in security.
- The [UC Riverside Alumni and Visitors Center](#) (1996). [Photographs](#)
- The [Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza](#), a project on which Dworsky Associates teamed with New Mexico architect [Antoine Predock](#). The New Mexico chapter of the [AIA](#) gave Predock and Dworsky Associates an award in 1996 for their work on the Civic Arts Plaza.
- The Calexico Port of Entry building in [Calexico, California](#). The innovative design won the highest award from the California AIA, and it won a Presidential Design Award from President [Bill Clinton](#).[Photos and Drawings of Award Winning Calexico Port of Entry](#)
- Beckman Hall at [Chapman University](#) in Orange, California (1999). [Photograph of Building](#)
- The Lloyd D. George Federal Courthouse in [Las Vegas, Nevada](#) (2000). [Photographs of Courthouse](#)
- The [Hollywood-Highland station](#) on the [Metro Red Line \(LACMTA\)](#) in the heart of Hollywood.[Photograph of Station](#)

## Awards and honors

Dworsky has received numerous national, regional and community awards for design excellence, including the following:

- Dworsky's numerous award-winning projects in his first 14 years of practice led to his election to the [American Institute of Architects College of Fellows](#) at the early age of 41.
- Gold Medal Award from the Los Angeles Chapter of the [American Institute of Architects](#)

- Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Service from the American Institute of Architects, California Council, awarded in 2004. In granting the award, the Council noted that Dworsky had "made a major, positive impact on California architecture" and his "strong, simple sculpted work has provided a compelling statement for California architecture the past half century.
- He was voted one of the twelve most distinguished architects in Los Angeles
- Dworsky Associates won the 1984 Firm of the Year Award from the American Institute of Architects, California Council, for "excellence in design of distinguished architecture and reaching for a livelier style beyond the boundaries of conventional modernism.
- He was honored by the Southern California Institute of Architecture in May 1986 for his professional accomplishments and his efforts on behalf of the school's scholarship program.
- Dworsky was awarded a \$3.5 million grant by the California Board of Corrections in 1982 to study the idea of the modular jail.
- Dworsky served on the Architectural Evaluation Board for the County of Los Angeles.
- Dworsky also served on the board of directors and the "directors circle" of the Southern California Institute of Architecture.