

# BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

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## HEROES AND MAVERICKS

TOM DIXON  
DESIGN RESEARCH STUDIO





3 The Gettys Group juxtaposed reclaimed wood and hot-rolled steel elements to infuse a rustic elegance into the Renaissance West Chester in White Plains, N.Y.

## OUTREACH ADVOCATE ROGER HILL

**A NATIVE OF RACINE, Wis.,** Roger Hill admits to being a huge fan of the Green Bay Packers football team. That boyhood allegiance notwithstanding, Hill's adopted hometown of Chicago—where he co-founded The Gettys Group hospitality design consultancy 25 years ago and now serves as its chairman and ceo—is the focus of much of his passion and commitment.

Hill's community outreach efforts include serving as a board member of the Lincoln Park Zoo, and as both a past president and past trustee of the auxiliary board at the Art Institute of Chicago. Why those two organizations?

"The Lincoln Park Zoo is one of the largest free zoos in the country, and it requires a lot of community support to maintain. I love the fact that anyone can enjoy this zoo—it doesn't matter where you are from or what your background is. It's been an honor to help to make it a better place," he explains. "My involvement in The Art Institute has been a natural fit, because of my personal and professional passions. It's an incredible organization at the forefront of design and technology. I'd have to say that my favorite project there was 'Art on the Move' which helped bring art back into classrooms."

Beyond those personal endeavors, the firm Hill runs has started a companywide "Gettys Gives Back" philanthropy program in conjunction with the Ronald McDonald House organization. Hill says that

program can trace its genesis to 2012, when representatives of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana asked his firm to provide interior design and procurement services for the 100,000-sq.-ft. house being built near the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. (Such residences provide housing for families with children being treated at nearby hospitals.)

"Our team handled the design for all public communal spaces, including the entry lobby and reception, all kitchens, dining rooms, living rooms and reading areas, children's areas, and all 86 guest rooms," says Hill. "And through our company's procurement connections, we were able to obtain donations for many of the products, furniture and custom, locally sourced artwork in the house, which is the largest Ronald McDonald House in the world."

Based on that experience, The Gettys Group decided to create an ongoing philanthropic program with Ronald McDonald House. "Each year, our offices around the world [Chicago, Miami, Hong Kong, Jeddah and Manila] partner with their local chapters for charity work, such as taking off days of work to pack lunches for families and visit with children staying at the houses," says Hill. "Our team finds this effort to be both rewarding and invigorating."

In addition to its charitable efforts, Hill's firm continues to be an impact player in Chicago's hospitality market, thanks to its designs of such

high-profile hotel projects as The Kinzie, The Godfrey and The Felix. Reinforcing The Gettys Group's commitment to its hometown is the recent move of its headquarters to bigger offices, on West Wacker Drive.

Hill says the company's new space, designed by an in-house team, is "a lab or think-tank environment that allows us to test out a wide variety of ideas and designs. We encourage our clients to do big things, and this new environment helps us showcase a lot of our big ideas."



COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE WESTCHESTER (3); COURTESY OF THE GETTYS GROUP (HILL)