



**TAO + LEE**  
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**TAO + LEE**  
**ASSOCIATES INC.**  
**(MBE/WBE)**

## **The St. Louis Couple Known Internationally for Architectural & Interior Design**

When Peter Tao and his wife Helen Lee decided to start their own design and architectural firm, they chose to start it in St. Louis. Tao, a St. Louis native and Washington University graduate, had been living and working in New York City, London and other parts of Europe and Asia before returning to start Tao + Lee Associates, Inc. in 1995. Tao + Lee has spent the past 13 years working all around the area on a diverse range of projects including commercial, restaurant, retail, educational and recreational.

“We have found St. Louis to be very accessible to us. It’s a welcoming enough place in terms of a business environment to allow us to find our way, find our area of interest, rather than in a big metropolis where you may get so overwhelmed and intimidated that you almost don’t pursue certain things,” Tao said.

The firm holds both Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women Business Enterprise (WBE) certifications, both obtained in 1997. They are hoping the certifications

will transform into design and architectural contract opportunities at St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL). “The Airport is very specific from a design point of view. Most opportunities for work there are from food vendors, who are chains with already established looks for their spaces. If we were to do something there we would want a project where we work with design from start to finish,” Tao said.

Tao said the success of the firm is based on building a positive reputation through professional and civic engagement in the community. The husband and wife team have served on over 30 boards and committees and were included in the 2015 publication Who’s Who Diversity in Color. Tao said St. Louis offers a good balance of personal and professional opportunities. “St. Louis is a great place to have your business because you can shape it. We really feel like we’ve found our niche and we’re not trying to be the biggest firm in the country, we just want to do good design and service our clientele well.”

For more information about Tao + Lee, visit [www.taolee.com](http://www.taolee.com).