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NCAR Celebrates 25th Anniversary at Its I.M. Pei-Designed Headquarters

Boulder, Colorado-- Twenty-five years ago this year, the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), a nonprofit research organization sponsored by the National Science Foundation, was created by the 13 original member universities of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR).

In 1967, NCAR established its permanent home, nestled beneath the craggy base of the Rocky Mountains at the southwestern edge of Boulder, Colorado. The headquarters building, known as the Mesa Laboratory, is a major piece of American architecture designed by the internationally recognized architect, I.M. Pei.

Since the building's completion, Pei has become one of the world's foremost architects. The NCAR headquarters not only remains one of his favorite creations, it marks a turning point in his career.

The building has been compared to many things--a medieval fortress, a walled town, a modern-day Stonehenge. Yet despite these historical echoes, it is most likely to strike viewers as futuristic. Its pink turrets were created to be a world of their own, a sophisticated scientific enclave set in contemplative surroundings.

On September 14, the public and press are invited to an all-day Open House at the Mesa Laboratory that will feature special scientific exhibits. NCAR offers guided tours, by reservation only, at 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. weekdays by calling the NCAR receptionist at (303)497-1140. The building is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. weekends.

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