



*Independence Lodge* seeks to be the welcoming home of Therapeutic Adventures, embracing the spirit of its adaptive participants, families and program staff while embodying the nature and objectives of TA programs with its built form. Situated slope-side at Massanutten Resort, the lodge attempts to coexist with the surrounding landscape. By way of a series of curved wall fragments, *Independence Lodge* finds itself within its own “Circle of Courage.” The walls loosely define the immediate precinct and provide a sense of security. The breaks in the wall allow for exploration and challenge, beyond the local precinct, that adaptive programs, and the mountain, offer.

The building is an interpretation of the adaptive program participants, both physically and spiritually. Unfortunately, even today, persons with disabilities are still frequently looked at as different and unapproachable. However, taking the opportunity to interact with those who live with physical, developmental or intellectual disabilities, mental health disorders, and other complex medical needs reveals a dynamism, and passion for life, that the able-bodied should aspire to. It is my hope that the *Independence Lodge* will be an environment that fosters such interaction.

Design decisions throughout stem from proven environmental design strategies. The building is sited with respect to the cardinal directions and the sun’s natural path. Exterior elements like the roof overhang work to tune the building to the sun’s movement and orientation (throughout the day and the year). The amount of glass was carefully considered in terms of heat gain and heat loss, as well as affording significant views. Material selection took into consideration environmental effects as well. Sustainable, or environmentally friendly, products have been specified wherever possible.