The galaxy that is home to our solar system, the Milky Way, was once thought to be the entire universe. Today, we know our galaxy is just one of billions. As the universe continues to expand ever outward, the mysteries to be explored and solved by scientists, astronomers, and students is equally vast. The Smithsonian Institution's Bezos Learning Center provides a profound opportunity to reimagine STEAM learning in the service of these planetary puzzles. Students and teachers from inside the Beltway and across the country will immerse themselves in a creative learning environment where discovery awaits. The inspiration for the Bezos Learning Center is a spiral galaxy, whose form reflects two-thirds of the known galaxies, including our own Milky Way. The building's architecture metaphorically places the individual student, educator, and visitor at the core of the galaxy, surrounded by educational experiences and paths of discovery that lead to infinite possibilities for their future in science, innovation, and leadership.
Extend NASM to form a mass for the Bezos Learning Center and hold the street edges.

Carve the mass with the Spiral Galaxy to form a courtyard facing the Mall.

Raise the mass above the Dining program to house the Bezos Learning Center.

Cut the massing to visually connect the Astronomy Park and open views to the Sky, Capitol, Monument, and Mall.

Twist the mass with the gravitational pull of the Spiral Galaxy and project toward the Mall.

Frame the courtyard with a curving, glazed volume which connects to the NASM spine.