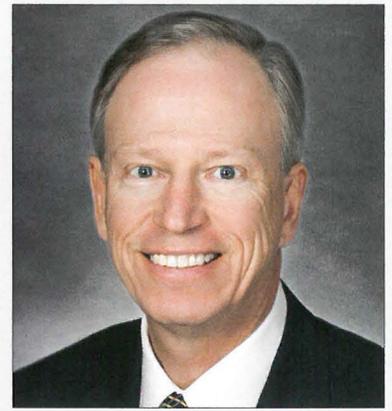


Renovation and Reconstruction – Turning a Vision into a Reality

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With the assistance of a highly-experienced design/build team, owner, Instituto del Progreso Latino, was able to realize the potential of transforming a functionally obsolete neighborhood building into the Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy (IHSCA), a charter high school focused on providing a science-rich education, job placement support, and community outreach.

Following an extensive site and existing building evaluation, a 100,890-sq.-ft. former industrial facility at 2520 S. Western Avenue in Chicago was selected for the new high school. McShane Construction Co., Ghafari Associates, and JGMA Architecture were selected as the design/builder team working with The Resurrection Project, who served as owner's representative, to transform this 1920s-era building into a contemporary educational institution within a seven-month timeframe to welcome students to the new school year.

With an accelerated timeline and challenging conditions within the existing structure, McShane worked effectively to combine comprehensive design, pre-construction, and construction expertise to reconfigure the deteriorating building from its intricate building systems to the exterior aesthetic of the building envelope. As with any renovation, the possibilities of unforeseen challenges were abundant.

The assignment included the complete demolition of a free-standing structure to the north of the property and the interior demolition of 77,280 sq. ft. within the existing building. The project team immediately began reinforcing the wood superstructure and the phased reconstruction of the existing space together with the new construction of a 23,610-sq.-ft. addition. To handle the uneven floors that varied from 2" to 8" across each floor of the building, we utilized an innovative high-density insulation board product rather than concrete

to provide the even floor surfaces without adding weight to the overall structure.

The exterior of the four-story, heavy timber and brick building was enhanced both aesthetically and technologically utilizing a high performance 'skin' with a rain screen and spray insulation, improving the thermal performance of the building. The new exterior not only increases sustainability, but its new green and copper color-morphing façade serves as a symbol of transformation and progress in this urban community.

The efforts resulted in a successful and rewarding outcome. The fast-track construction schedule was met allowing IHSCA to open its doors for the new school year within seven months from the start of construction. With heightened safety risks of renovating an older structure there were no lost work days, thanks to our safety program that implemented a well-run and safe working environment.

The vision of Instituto del Progreso Latino was realized through the expertise of the team allowing nearly 750 high school students from Chicago communities to experience a unique and fulfilling educational experience today and in the future. The project has earned numerous awards, including its recent recognition as the Rehab Construction Project of the Year by the Chicago Building Congress, acknowledging its achievement in the transformation of an aging non-performing structure into a vibrant and fundamental asset to the students and community of the Pilsen neighborhood.



Photos: Before: After an extensive site selection, a 100,890-sq.-ft. abandoned manufacturing/warehouse building at 2520 South Western Avenue was selected as the site of the new charter high school. The first of its kind in the State of Illinois, the school provides targeted education to support careers within the health sciences fields.

After: The exterior of the original 1920s-era heavy timber and brick building was modernized utilizing a new high-performance 'skin' with a rain screen and spray insulation providing the technological means to improve the sustainability of the structure.

Classroom: The four levels of the Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy were designed and constructed to serve specific purposes and are brightly colored for designation as Community, College, Hospital, and Biotech floors.