



Project Summary

The new 90,000-square-foot academic building for West Chester University's College of Business and Public Management opened to students and faculty in January 2017. The building accommodates the departments of accounting, criminal justice, economics and finance, geography and planning, management, marketing, and public policy and administration, and houses the Cottrell Entrepreneurial Leadership Center, Center for GIS and Spatial Analysis, and Center for Social and Economic Policy Research. Two floors of faculty offices cap three floors of classrooms and meeting rooms.

Voith & Mactavish Architects, LLP, designed the facility to reflect the traditional Collegiate Gothic architecture of campus and the present and future of academic teaching and learning. The streamlined traditional exterior combines with a contemporary interior to support collaboration, incorporate advanced technology, and establish hierarchy.

Construction Management Summary

The project entailed demolition of an existing dormitory and construction of the new five-story building with its first floor located partially below grade. Initially, the Pennsylvania Department of General Services (PADGS) intended to self-manage construction. Acknowledging the complexity and schedule, PADGS engaged GREYHAWK in August 2014 to provide project and construction management services. The industry standard agreement for the \$24 million project included construction phase observation, monitoring, and daily reporting on construction progress in accordance with contract documents; and post-construction phase services to assist with development of punch lists, obtaining certificates of occupancy, and compiling close-out documentation.

GREYHAWK immediately stepped into a leadership role, examined the baseline schedule – prepared by the general contractor, accepted by the other contractors, and provided to PADGS – and quickly identified significant issues. The general contractor had missed contractual milestone dates for abatement, demolition, and site clearing. GREYHAWK put the prime contractors on notice, requested a revised schedule, and immediately provided a value-add to the owner. Over the next six months, the general contractor's performance continued to worsen, putting the project's anticipated May 2016 completion in jeopardy.

In November 2015, PADGS realized the general contractor's surety needed to be involved. A seven (7) day letter to cure was issued but not acknowledged by the contractor. Given this lack of response, on 02 December 2015, PADGS terminated the general contractor and The Hartford Surety and Fidelity Insurance Company was responsible for completing the work. As such, GREYHAWK's construction management role expanded to include claims consulting and coordination among the surety and its consultants and on-site personnel, PADGS legal counsel, and claims consultants representing the other prime contractors.

GREYHAWK's full-service program management and tireless commitment to project success ensured completion only one semester behind the original schedule, opening to students and faculty for the spring 2017 semester. The rigorous attention to detail in project execution also ensured the building earned its targeted LEED Gold certification.

Quality Management

GREYHAWK coordinated all construction management activities between PADGS, the surety and its takeover personnel, four other prime contractors, and over 50 subcontractors. GREYHAWK also coordinated all work inspections by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. In a project that faced initial schedule concerns and experienced the removal of the general contractor and replacement with its surety, GREYHAWK's consistent presence, construction management skills, and claims management expertise ensured a high level of quality and enabled the project to be completed successfully, even achieving LEED Gold.

From the moment a project is awarded, GREYHAWK implements a methodology of communication, coordination, monitoring, documentation, and follow-up. The design intent of the architect and engineers is balanced with the owner's primary objectives. During construction GREYHAWK examines work in progress on a daily basis, and notifies contractors and the design team before small problems become large. Extensive photo documentation, daily reporting of issues and resolutions, daily communication with field superintendents and subcontractors ensures issues are discussed and solutions vetted. GREYHAWK takes a proactive lead, managing and maintaining a work-to-complete list with diligent follow-up to



ensure end results with minimal defects and the owner's vision fully realized. By putting this quality management methodology into action on the West Chester University College of Business and Public Management, PADGS gained a completed project of which they and the university can be proud.

Cost Management

GREYHAWK reviewed all payment applications to ensure the contractors were billing fairly for the work performed. GREYHAWK worked closely with the architect and PADGS to analyze all change order requests and confirm the owner was receiving good value for the changes. GREYHAWK's rigorous documentation and due diligence also allowed PADGS to assess \$764,750.00 of liquidated damages to the surety, as protection for extended services from the design team and potential claims by other prime contractors.

Schedule Management

As a full-service firm, GREYHAWK has personnel and technology to review and inform owners on monthly schedule updates. In this project, the general contractor was required to hire a consultant project scheduler, who was responsible for developing the initial project construction schedule and providing monthly updates. GREYHAWK schedule reviews first identified that the general contractor was not adhering to the schedule and attempting to mask poor achievement by using negative lags between activities. GREYHAWK's detailed schedule analysis provided PADGS the basis to make thoroughly vetted decisions on the disposition of the general contractor.

Safety Management

During the two-year construction project duration, there were zero (0) incidents. At peak progress, and with multiple prime contractors, there were 100 tradespeople on site. GREYHAWK contributed to this phenomenal safety record by making construction safety awareness a priority and constant theme throughout the project. Contractors were required to prepare safety plans and enforce the plans among workers, subcontractors, and suppliers. Any deficiencies or concerns required immediate resolution.

Innovation and Creativity

GREYHAWK anticipated the other prime contractors would seek damages against the general contractor's surety and PADGS. Using its schedule analysis and claim skills, GREYHAWK

was able to defend the owner. GREYHAWK approached each item in the claim with the same analysis criteria of discussion, liability, causation, damages, and recommendations. Using this methodology and comprehensive documentation, GREYHAWK analyzed \$1,258,852.48 of potential claims and recommended a value of \$92,463.38 to PADGS.

Customer Service

From hitting the ground running to providing rigorous documentation of inaction and defaults of the original general contractor to serving as the single point of contact between the prime contractors, the surety, and the myriad consultants and subcontractors, GREYHAWK prioritized and effected exemplary customer service for PADGS. Consistent and continual updates provided by GREYHAWK to PADGS kept the owner apprised. GREYHAWK's tireless commitment ensured the project was completed successfully.

Green Building

The new building makes use of sustainable features, including West Chester University's ground-source heating and cooling, efficient HVAC, and stormwater management. Indoor air and environmental quality were prioritized during construction and before occupancy. GREYHAWK played an integral role ensuring the prime contractors were adhering to requirements to achieve LEED certification, specifically regarding air pollution mitigation during construction and positive material identification of products being installed to ensure they were LEED-approved. GREYHAWK also served as liaison between PADGS and a specialty cleaning contractor, which performed a final cleaning of the building before occupancy. The combined efforts during design and construction earned the building LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

This article originally appeared as a submission for the CMAA Mid-Atlantic Project Achievement Awards for which it won the 2017 Award for Best Public Building Project Over \$20 Million.

About the Author

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