

Insite Magazine

2009



Tolles Career and Technical Center Separating the Old and the New, the Past and the Present

Career centers aren't what they used to be. Today's career and technical centers offer expanded curriculums, more sophisticated technology and more opportunity compared to career centers of the past.

As both an education center and career-oriented school, Tolles Career and Technical Center needed to update its building to respond to changing curriculum needs and assist in attracting new students. Tolles went through a quality-based selection process to determine the architectural firm that could deliver high-quality design, could complete the project in a rapid time frame and within tight budget constraints.

Tolles selected SHP Leading Design (SHP) to create a new entry to the school, update the buildings to respond to the changing curriculum needs and construct an addition expanding the facility to increase program offerings. As a school of choice, the look and feel of the build-

ing plays a major role in attracting new students, making the design of the building an essential element of the project. Additionally, it was vital that the overall design of the building accurately reflect the image of the school, while also creating visual continuity between the existing building and the new building. SHP's challenge in all of these designs was to create a professional atmosphere and eliminate the institutional feel of the school.

Though the pace of the project was extremely aggressive, SHP worked collaboratively with Tolles, presenting several renderings showing different options, and discussing curriculum goals and how to achieve these goals through the design of the building. To create visual continuity between the existing building and the new addition, SHP borrowed elements from the existing building, adapting them to a more modern aesthetic look for the new addition.

"The Tolles Career and Technical Center wanted the front of the building to make a statement—that this isn't an ordinary career center," says Andrew Maletz, vice president and general manager of SHP Columbus. "We designed the façade of the building to incorporate steel, glass and elements that are found more in a professional office space than a school."





The new entry provides better security for students and visitors and also accommodates updated reception area and administration offices. To create a cohesive feel, the same green metal roof on the existing building was used on the new addition, but SHP gave it a more modern form.

SHP renovated the cosmetology, early childhood and culinary labs to reflect the current curriculum and accommodate increasing enrollment. Today's career and technical centers emphasize technology more than their predecessors. To meet the growing technical need, SHP also expanded and renovated science rooms to address the more comprehensive science instruction that continues to be a growing part of career and technical education. To respond to the changing curriculum desires, the new addition focused heavily on medical-related programs including LPN, biotechnology, sports medicine, pre-veterinary and dentistry.

"This was a challenging project because we were combining old and new architecture while creating consistency both internally and externally," explains Maletz. "It was also a very rewarding project due to the sincere collaboration that occurred between SHP and Tolles. We greatly

appreciated the opportunity to better understand the changing face of workforce development and express these changes through design."

Ultimately, the objectives set by Tolles were met. The school buildings now reflect Tolles' mission of "offering many roads to learning and ultimately a successful career." Design and construction were completed in approximately 15 months, with the school remaining in operation, and the project was completed on budget.



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