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Design, Operation & Maintenance of Healthcare Facilities



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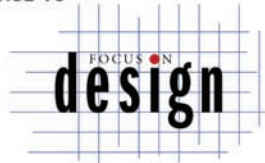
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FACILITY SOLUTIONS

Embracing a Spiritual Approach to Design

THE
SYMPOSIUM
DISTINCTION
AWARDS

2004 Symposium User-Centered Award

Each issue of FacilityCare highlights a design team winner of the 2004 Symposium Distinction Awards. The User-Centered Award recognizes a healthcare design project that best reflects and balances the requirements of patients, their family and practitioners. This month, HMC Architects in San Diego, Calif., is celebrated for exceeding the requirements of the Santa Ysabel Reservation community through innovation, creativity and teamwork.

Historically, Western medicine does not embrace a holistic or spiritual approach to the care and delivery of medicine. Nonetheless, it was of utmost importance to Indian Health Council Inc. (IHC) that their new community health clinic encourage, inspire and comfort local users seeking medical and dental services, many of whom might not ordinarily patronize the services of a Western medical healthcare facility. These Native American residents fully understand and embrace the holistic connection between the body's spiritual, physical and emotional wellbeing and the environment in which they live. From the outset, overall comfort, familiarity and accessibility to local residents was this client's top priority.

HMC Architects was called on by IHC to design a healthcare facility on land physically situated on the Santa Ysabel Reservation, located one hour northeast of San Diego. As advocates for health promotion, disease prevention and wellness among its constituents, it was critical to IHC that this rural, satellite medical and dental facility architecturally and spiritually address the cultural needs of the nine tribes that make up the local Native American community.



Design Team: HMC Architects, San Diego/Imperial Valley, Calif.
Project Name: Santa Ysabel Community Health Center
Type of Facility: Medical and Dental Healthcare Clinic
Size of Facility: 6,107 square feet
Number of Beds: 3 dental chairs; 3 exam rooms; 1 treatment room
Length of Project: 12 months
Total Development Cost: \$1,825,546
Date of Completion: October 2003

Design Team Members

Kenton Hems, RA, Project Manager/Designer;
Romelle Majel-McCauley, Client (Indian Health Clinic);
Linda Alexander, Mechanical Engineer (HVAC Engineering);
Rob Netzer, General Contractor (Roel Construction Company).

Notable Products and Services

ADA/Compliance Equipment: Plumbrex
Carpet: Lees Commercial Carpet
Ceilings: USG Interiors
Doors: Door Components Inc. (metal)
Draperies/Blinds: Graber
Flooring: Forbo (sheet vinyl); Specs Ceramics Inc. (slate)
Glass Block: Owens/Corning
Glass/Glazing: Arcadia, PPG Solarban 60
Fire/Life Safety Systems: TYCO (sprinklers); Kohler (back-up generator)
HVAC: Trane
Laminate: Nevamar; Pionite
Lighting: Lithonia, Wila, Gardco, Litecontrol; Lithonia (emergency)
Paint: ICI Delux
Roofing: Johns Manville
Security Alarms: Ademco
Signage: By Owner, Indian Health Council Inc.
Skylights: Solartube, Acralight
Toilets/Sinks: Kohler
Wallcovering: Symphony (vinyl)
Washroom Accessories: Bradley

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A metaphorical oak tree stands in the waiting area inviting patients to relax beneath its branches.

A User-Centered Approach

Santa Ysabel Community Health Center evolved from specific cultural concerns of local users and the need for human/healthcare services that were logistically feasible to the immediate community base. The surrounding grounds were spiritually important to the Native American community. As a result, the design solution for Santa Ysabel Community Health Center metaphorically grew from the land on which it sits. The facility was strategically positioned in response to the movement of the sun, capturing distant views of the valley and mountains beyond. The imagery of the vegetation and the natural rock outcroppings found in the Santa Ysabel Valley provided the inspiration, as well as a significant connection for the culturally historic relationship with the earth.



View from dental office.

The client wanted the old oak tree that stood in back of the facility to be symbolically represented in the lobby. To address this, the structural “canopy” of the entry/waiting room represents the oak tree, inviting visitors to the clinic to sit and relax beneath its “branches.” Wood, earth, rock and stone comprise the interior and exterior environment. The one-story healthcare clinic also features a stunning multipurpose room that offers an expansive mountain view through floor-to-ceiling windows. Serving as a space that now unifies the community, classes and meetings are regularly scheduled in the multipurpose room, as are group sessions that address social issues, such as domestic violence, anger management, parenting and substance abuse. At every step of the design process, it was clear that a strong connection to the environment had to be made both internally and exter-

nally and that particular needs had to be drawn upon architecturally in order to satisfy the cultural and spiritual concerns of the end users.

Tools of the Trade

IHC developed an early space program from which initial grant funding was obtained. This program, the “springboard” for all user-group meetings, was transformed into a floor plan that met the requirements gathered from initial meetings that were held with the various user groups and stakeholders — dental, medical, pharmacy, clerical and social services professionals. Open forums were held to discuss important elements to each user group and how best to incorporate those elements appropriately into the design. Weekly meetings were held at which IHC, stakeholders and designers were routinely present.

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Borrowing Inspiration

The strongest user requirement became the desire to have the design connect with the traditional elements of Native American culture while providing functionally efficient space for 21st Century healthcare providers. These definitive requirements blended design features, such as wood and stone, borrowing inspiration from numerous natural elements indigenous to the site and surrounding environment. The ancient oak tree became the inspiration for the entry and waiting area of the facility and fragmented natural rock formations sprouting from the valley floor became the inspiration for the building massing.

Meeting the Challenges

The challenges surrounding this fast-track project were two-fold: time and money. Grant funding for this project was contingent on rapid approval of signed construction documents. HMC developed designs in less than a month and obtained approvals for complete building plans in about 12 weeks. IHC was so pleased with the total design that they quickly sought additional, independent funding to fully complete the project. Although the facility could have been constructed on the reservation, the building was fully embraced by all nine local tribes as a result of the thoughtful design solution.

All of the team members agree that the true test of success for this design was determined by the joy expressed by those providing and receiving services.

Congratulations to the HMC Architects team for designing a health center that not only architecturally but spiritually addresses the cultural needs of the Native American community it serves!

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The multipurpose room offers an expansive mountain view.



The clinic features 10 distinct roof planes, each covering varied geometric forms.

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