Category: 4 – Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor (Under $2M)

Specialty Contractor: Heartland Acoustics & Interiors, Inc.

Project Name: Colorado State University Stadium

On August 5th, 21,447 fans flocked to 751 West Pitkin Street for the unveiling of Colorado State University's brand new stadium. The energy was high as athletic director Joe Parker cut the green ribbon, the gates opened, and a project two years in the making was finally opened to the public. Three weeks later, the CSU Rams hosted their first on-campus football game since 1967. In a thrilling, opening-day display, they defeated the Oregon State Beavers 58-27 in front of a sellout crowd.

The Colorado State University Stadium is a state-of-the-art, on-campus facility that rivals any other university sports facility in the country. The $220M project was financed solely by donors and investors and did not rely on any funding from tuition or the state. The stadium is not only home to the Sonny Lubick Field, but also holds the new Alumni Center, the Center for Advising and Student Achievement, athletic staff offices, training facilities for all sports, classroom facilities, and laboratories. Overall, this project has been described as not just a football stadium, but a catalyst for growth and development for the university.

Solutions of Special and Innovative Projects

The new Alumni Center provides a pristine sideline view of the Sonny Lubick Field. A focal point of the Alumni Center is the USG Pixels ceiling that showcases the Rams logo and is backlit with custom lighting elements. This custom image, metal pan ceiling required enormous amounts of coordination up front. The ceiling consisted of 174 panels totaling 2,088 square feet. Each of these custom panels had to be carefully planned and perfectly manufactured in order to fit into their proper places. During installation, substantial coordination with the electrical tradesmen was necessary because the ceiling had to be completed in phases. Heartland Acoustics & Interiors, as the ceiling contractor, worked closely with the electrician to complete small areas at a time. This ensured there would be no backtracking and kept damage to the fragile panels to a

minimum. Because of Heartland's careful planning and coordination with the other trades, this ceiling became a key feature of the stadium.

Excellence in Project Execution

Another very unique design element in this facility was the use of a custom image, acoustic stretch wall system in the football team meeting room. The use of this system provided an aesthetically pleasing space while also providing high acoustic value in a room that will see up to one hundred football players and coaches in any given meeting. Selecting the images, finding fabric suitable for the application and overall workability of the scope were the biggest challenges with this area. With nearly 70 feet of fabric, this large format application required special thought and attention. Working around the seating to install the stretch wall system also proved to be difficult. However, with thorough guidance and excellent teamwork, the wall application was successfully installed and is an eye catching, yet functional, element of the room.

Other acoustical elements of this project required strong efforts of teamwork and management as well. Approximately 150,000 square feet of USG grid and tile were installed throughout the project. Heartland Acoustics & Interiors also installed 1,000 square feet of Rulon linear Endure ceiling, which was custom-colored to match the CSU green.

"Excellent management produces great quality. To finish this application according to our professional standards, my team and I worked closely to brainstorm solutions in anticipation of possible issues that might arise during this part of the project. My goal was to effectively guide my team so we could find the best methods to achieve a superior result. In the end we put together a great project." – Dave Ronzio, Project Superintendent

Contribution to the Community

Heartland Acoustics & Interiors takes great pride in our contribution to such a large-scale project, knowing that our unique ceiling applications provide stand out focal points throughout the stadium.

Perhaps no one will be more impacted by this project than the Colorado State University community and the city of Fort Collins. For the CSU community, the football game day experience is now truly one with the university. Outside the north gates of the stadium, one will notice “RAMS” spelled out using bricks, but what may not have been noticed is that each individual brick is dedicated to the thousands of people who offered donations. These bricks are filled with the names of those who helped make this project a reality.

This facility will provide a needed boost to recruiting out-of-state students, as well as building a winning football team. The stadium will also be bringing in nearly 40,000 alumni, fans and their families right to campus multiple times per year. The facility also serves to host soccer and lacrosse games, community events, student events and concerts.

Safety

Completing the project safely was the number one priority of the general contractor, Mortenson Construction. This project had an extremely aggressive schedule of twenty months from start to finish. Along with the safety plan put in place by Mortenson, each subcontractor was required to submit specific safety plans for their scopes of work. Each day, a representative of every trade on the job was required to attend a “POD” meeting. This Plan-of-the-Day meeting was to guarantee each trade on site was familiar with what all other trades were doing. Each representative would present their plan for that day, emphasizing all required safety elements associated with that plan. Some of these different safety elements included working off scaffolds, working on man lifts, and working around hundreds of other tradesmen and their equipment. In addition to the “POD” meetings, there was a weekly Subcontractor Safety meeting that also occurred on site. Attendance to these meetings was mandatory and tracked, a nod to just how important safety was to everyone on site. Upwards of 650 people were working on this job at one time, making safety a major factor in the completion of this project.