

**Category: 5 - Best Building Project – Specialty Contractor (\$2 - \$6 Million)**

**Contractor: Encore Electric**

**Project: US Olympic and Paralympic Museum**

With Pikes Peak -- one of Colorado's most iconic mountain peaks -- as a backdrop, the world's newest and soon to be most iconic museums, the US Olympic and Paralympic Museum is truly a sight to behold. The museum, standing tall in the middle of downtown Colorado Springs, Colorado, is the culmination of five years of planning, fundraising and design. At 60,000 square feet, it is the only comprehensive Olympic and Paralympic museum in the United States.

Not only will the museum highlight the stories and triumphs of these amazing athletes, it began a major transformation of the downtown Colorado Springs area. Standing in a place where others used to avoid, it invites everyone inside for inspiration.

The US Olympic and Paralympic Museum opened to the public in July 2020 and is expected to host more than 350,000 visitors annually while creating up to 60 new, permanent jobs in the Colorado Springs area.

Encore Electric has been working on this project for more than five years and is grateful to be a part of the GE Johnson construction team. It was a complicated and extremely detailed build, with a planned user experience like no other and features the latest in technology and comforts, all with power and electricity provided by the Encore Electric team. Encore Electric had a constant presence on the site for more than 800 working days!

Encore Electric was tasked with doing the electrical install and fire alarm on the project. This included providing power throughout the facility and conduit rough in for most of the exhibits in the museum. This provided a big challenge for the Encore Electric team, starting with the design work in preconstruction. Those teams had to take the owner's and general contractor's vision for the project and design these systems sight unseen.

There were multiple challenges throughout the construction process. Following the groundbreaking in 2017, momentum was strong with former athletes, members of the US Olympic Committee and elected officials behind it. Unforeseen circumstances delayed and pushed the project's completion until 2020. There were multiple changes that had to be implemented to meet the owner's design specifications – including 132 Architect's Supplemental Instructions for construction crews to address. Just like a coach to a team, general contractor partner GE Johnson brought the specialty contractors together to work together, be flexible, plan

ahead and adapt to the changes as they were issued. And, although, ultimately the big opening on the night of the 2020 Summer Games was pushed to 2021, the team delivered the finished museum. By building relationships, the Encore Electric team was able to plan ahead on future changes instead of merely reacting to them.

Change is challenging, and Encore Electric project managers and superintendents knew that keeping morale high and distractions low would allow for better performance on the project. Safety and productivity were key, and fortunately these are areas where our electricians shine every day on every job site.

One extremely interesting aspect of the build is that there is more than 2,800 feet of track lighting installed inside of the facility. That's a half a mile of track lighting -- a massive amount that will help to highlight each aspect of the exhibits, so no detail is lost.

Speaking of size, visitors are greeted by a digital screen that is 2 ½ stories tall! Encore Electric installed and provided power to the more than 100 power receptacles hidden behind the screen. This was a major undertaking to ensure that such a large amount of power could be delivered to one area safely and without interfering with the other electrical systems inside of the facility.

One more daunting challenge in the design of this facility was wall design. Not one wall in the facility is a perfect and straight 90 degree angle – all of them are slanted to one degree or another – that was the architect's vision for the facility and another reason why it stands out as one of the most anticipated building openings in the entire world in 2020, according to Architectural Digest Magazine. However, that meant that the electrical install in these walls could not be standardized and had to be customized for every single surface in the building. The Encore Electric team ensured precision by using total station and shooting thousands of points for the electrical team and the teams working around them.

“Varying elevations and no common walls between levels made planning one-line, branch circuit and systems conduit routing a challenge,” said Steve Young, superintendent for Encore Electric on the project.

The most important aspect of an electrical install can sometimes be your ability to hide the electrical work from view, so as to not interrupt the user experience. Encore Electric paid special care to making invisible the electrical and lighting work in the facility so the entire facility could

be seamless, never drawing an eye to any specific detail of the electrical installation, while allow guests to enjoy the experience more because of the power and light

Part of the “City For Champions” vision that is currently being implemented in Colorado Springs, the Museum is the first facility to open in what is hoped will bring a revitalization of this downtown area. It is a part that has struggled since the 2008 recession but is seeing renewed investment as the community continues to enjoy record growth and prosperity.

Tim Redfern, the one-time senior superintendent for GE Johnson Construction and current Construction Manager, has lived in Colorado Springs his entire life. He worked on the building of the Olympic Training Center in the 1990s, and believes this project is a part of his personal and family history. “This project is everything. It will be a legacy that lasts a long time,” he said. Encore Electric Preconstruction Manager Colby Foos, also a Colorado Springs Native, expressed both a personal and professional interest in the project. “It’s a huge project for Colorado Springs,” said Foos. “With complex and technologically advanced requirements, it fits right into the Encore specialty. For me, being born and raised here, it means so much to be building part of Colorado Springs history.”