Panels with a Purpose

Perforated metal reduces heat gain, illuminates life in medical center

At the **University of South Florida's Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation (CAMLS) in Tampa, Fla.,** perforated metal was used by Tampa-based The Beck Group both to reduce solar heat gain and evoke images related to essence of human life and medical science.

As CAMLS' designer and builder at the $30 million, 100,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility, Beck carried out its concept using perforated aluminum panels from Tampa-based McNICHOLS Designer Metals collection. The material, says Joe Harrington, Beck project manager, has the artistic traits to convey the allusion of health science, and the qualities of light diffusion that reduce solar heat gain, especially on the building's western exposure.

"We imagined it as complementary to the DNA image, which we could apply in several ways throughout the building," Harrington says. "The idea was to tie in the medical theme in relationship to the human body."

With the help of Burlington, Mass.-based Philips Color Kinetics, LED lights were installed into 6-inch aluminum channels above and below the bend. The light, diffused through the perforations in the metal, allows the building to be illuminated efficiently with color.

Ironically, the 0.125-gauge McNICHOLS perforated metal, installed as patchwork of varying sizes of panels and three different hole patterns, conjures up images of pores in the skin. The panels are arranged in alternating sizes from 2 to 4 feet wide and 6 to 8 feet long featuring hole patterns that vary from 3/4-inch round on a one-inch staggered design to 3/16-inch round on 5/16-inch staggered design.

The perforated metal skin covers 4,300 square feet of CAMLS's exterior. While the panels wrap the south- and east-facing corner of the building, it is the west side, with its LED lighting and signature "bend," that grabs the eye. More importantly, the lighting feature solved a building permit requirement. Because the west façade overhangs Tampa's scenic downtown pedestrian walkway, the builder is required to incorporate an element of public art.

Like the Tampa Museum of Art a few blocks away, which is entirely wrapped in perforated metal McNICHOLS Designer Metals collection, the CAMLS metal skin feature is a virtual canvas for an illuminated art on which commissioned light artists can create their own graphic designs.

Minneapolis-based Harmon Glass Inc. built and installed a glass curtainwall and metal panel system, installing the frame and painting the panels with electro-static paint to match the frame. The metal panels sit about 10 feet above the ground and are mounted 12 inches from the glass curtainwall. MA

Harmon Glass Inc.,
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McNICHOLS,
www.mcnichols.com, Circle #46

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