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## 2011 Metal Architecture Design Award

### *Category – Ribbed Metal Wall Panels*

### Renovation and new construction merge for new campus building

Marcy Marro, Managing Editor, Posted 07/06/2011

The exercise science and nursing departments at Mesa Community College in Mesa, Ariz., are studying in the newly renovated Health/Wellness Building that opened in July 2010. Expected to receive LEED Silver certification, the 38,000-square-foot building is a combination of renovation and new construction.



Originally conceived as a 'tenant fit-out' and interior renovation of two vacated buildings, the design team at Phoenix-based SmithGroup was charged with maximizing the campus' investment of \$5.2 million and getting two programs into updated facilities.

By maximizing the impact of construction dollars from a square footage and qualitative student environment standpoint, the project weaves together the campus' historic language with the newer construction on campus in terms of material and scale. "The campus has two types of buildings, all the original 1960's vintage one-story arcade buildings, and a handful of contemporary buildings constructed in the last 10 years," says Mark Kranz, AIA, LEED AP, design principal at SmithGroup. "This project, having both the old and new, is a beautiful expression of how to re-purpose and re-imagine an aging campus structure in a very economical way. Both the material palette and scale of this project strike a great balance between making a new and contemporary expression and respecting the bones and character of the old."

A small budget required the design team to consider low-cost envelope concepts. "The team's mantra became centered on doing something elegant and poetic with an inexpensive every day material," explains Kranz.

To complement the campus brand, the project utilizes simple Bare Galvalume metal panels and 4-inch masonry units. Phoenix-based Rollfab Metal Building Products supplied 22-gauge Acrylic-coated Galvalume Plus in the form of 6,287 square feet of wall panels and 2,981 square feet of soffit panels.

The building design features a playful expression of economical galvanized panels that give both new life and presence to the project while integrating it into an identifiable campus architectural language. "The playful rhythm of varying metal panel profiles yielded a subtle but provocative architectural impact," Kranz says.

To create a rich and textural play of movement on the exterior façade, five standard panels were composed. "We wanted to see if we could literally make the metal façade 'dance' from one end to the other and we found that, in modeling concepts three-dimensionally, it took five different panels to get the give of 'visual kinetic movement' we were looking for," Kranz explains.

"The use of the ribbed panel designs in different combinations along the façade creates a unique rhythm of light and shadow that is juxtaposed against the long brick lines below," says award judge Andrew Cottrell. "It really pushes the thought of what a ribbed panel can be beyond off the shelf, but within feasibility."

"Old and new were 'fused' together with a simple reinvention of the campus' ubiquitous shaded arcades that wrap nearly every building on campus," Kranz says. "We created a new interior mall concept that brought daylight into both buildings and honored the historic circulation patterns that have existed on campus for 50 years."

## Mesa Community College Health/Wellness Building, Mesa, Ariz.

Completed: July 2010

Total square feet: 38,000 square feet

Building owner: Maricopa Community College District

Architect: SmithGroup, Phoenix, [www.smithgroup.com](http://www.smithgroup.com)

General contractor: McGough Construction, Phoenix

**Ribbed metal wall panels: *Rollfab* Metal Products,**  
Phoenix, [www.rollfabmetal.com](http://www.rollfabmetal.com)