

FEATURES

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Dynamic colors, random patterns and great detailing show smooth metal panels at their best

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By **Administrator**
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The growing campus of Chandler-Gilbert Community College in Chandler, Ariz., already had a number of dynamic buildings that had established it as an architecturally distinctive environment. The latest addition-Ironwood Hall-matched that legacy and served as a portal to the central campus at the northern entry.

The colors on the existing buildings were quite bright, and Architekton, a Tempe, Ariz.-based architecture firm, was charged with matching that aesthetic. It chose to use smooth metal panels in bold colors and random, almost idiosyncratic patterns. The judges enjoyed the liveliness of the colors and the patterns, selecting this project as our winner in the Smooth Metal Panel category.



Judge Andrew Cottrell says, "The building pattern with the use of such bold colors with the long horizon strips is a very exciting use of smooth face metal panels." Mark Dewalt agrees, adding, "The metal panel skin is perfectly executed with glass elements and strong colors."

For Architekton, there were other considerations in its selection of these panels. John Kane, FAIA, is the design principal and he explains: "The existing buildings for the most part have a stucco or synthetic coating that have been a maintenance issue. So one of our charges was to come up with another material that could try to work with the existing palette ... One of things that was important was that they don't want the colors to fade over time."

Another issue was the ability to control costs. In the panel specifying, Architekton identified off-the-shelf panels in standard colors from Rollfab Metal Building Products, Phoenix. The three shades of green and autumn harvest color were randomly applied and accented with blue glazing to work with the rest of the campus colors.



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Kane says the panel installer, Total Metals LLC of Chandler, "really took a lot of pride and care in the detailing and craftsmanship of installation." One success is the issue surrounding the places where the panels passed in front of windows, revealing the back of the panel to the building occupants. Panels typically have a wash coat on the back that have stamped numbers that needed to be removed.

Aluminum composite panels were used on the east and west elevations along the central core of the building. Citadel Architectural Products Inc., Indianapolis, provided 1,085 square feet of the paneling,



which on the shaded east end of the courtyard provides a clean backdrop to the green space in and around the building.

The building's central core is defined by a canopy that runs its length with purlins crossing in a random pattern. The 9,650 feet of purlins were supplied by MBCI, Houston. To shade the end of the courtyard from the harsh western sun, project designer Catherine Britt, AIA, specified metal B-Deck that drops over the edge of the canopy and forms a façade.

Britt describes the process of designing the canopy: "We looked at so many different options and came full circle to something really simple used in a kind of a neat and creative way."

Chandler-Gilbert Community College Ironwood Hall, Chandler, Ariz.

Completed: November 2009

Total square feet: 58,459 square feet

Building owner: Maricopa Community College District

Architect: ARCHITEKTON, Tempe, Ariz., www.architekton.com

General contractor: Caliente Construction, Mesa, Ariz.

Steel erector: WBE Steel Services Inc., Mesa

Installer: Total Metals LLC, Chandler

Metal canopy purlins: MBCI, Houston, www.mbc.com

Smooth metal wall panels: Rollfab Metal Building Products, Phoenix, www.rollfabmetal.com; and Citadel Architectural Products Inc., Indianapolis, www.citadelap.com

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