

**REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTIONS REVIEW – 2007  
EASTERN SEABOARD EDITION**

**PETER AND ELIZABETH HOROWITZ VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS  
CENTER AT HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Columbia, Maryland

Before the Peter and Elizabeth Horowitz Visual and Performing Arts Center, Howard Community College (HCC) did not have one facility designed and built solely for the instruction of the arts.

“We had a lot of adapted space, said Valerie Lash, chairperson of the arts and humanities division at HCC. “For instance, a former cafeteria is now a studio theater. A former kitchen is now a band studio.”

Suresh A. Kodolikor, AIA, associate principal with Design Collective, Inc., the project’s architect, said the school’s curriculum overmatched the facilities available. “They have an ambitious arts and humanities course,” he said. “Their space was so inadequate that it had to be supplemented by these temporary structures.”

The new center features a black box theater, which can seat up to 200 people; a smaller recital room, which can seat 120; and two dance studios. The facility also contains a technical support area with dressing rooms, costume rooms, and a green room.

The instructional aspect of the center is not neglected. The building boasts several art studios, which include light monitors to bring in natural light, along with lecture spaces for both visual and performing arts. Large and medium ensemble rooms were also designed for the performing arts.

A practice room in the new center contains one of the most innovative features. “We actually have a Wenger ‘V-Room’ sound system so that a person who is practicing in it can hear themselves as if they were practicing in a much larger space,” Lash said. “The rest of the practice rooms are ready to install that technology so that when we can afford the technology, we can add it. So the students who have recitals have an opportunity to work in this room according to the acoustics that they’ll be in.”

Selection for the center’s site was easy. “We chose the property immediately adjacent to the [school’s] current Smith Theater. The new building butts right up against it,” Lash said. “We wanted all of it to feel as though it were one building.

The project offered a significant financial challenge. Ordinarily, such a project would cost \$25 million, according to Kodolikor. Instead, the team had a budget of approximately \$20 million.



“We had value-engineering sessions right from the design stage,” Kodolikor said. “We had a construction manager on the job, and they have been pretty good about getting this project in the budget. The owner identified items of priority, and we were able to work with the construction manager to put the highest priority items in the building so the spirit of the program wasn’t affected.”

Overall, the center has provided a great experience for all involved.

Doud and the rest of Planit are very happy with the space and the design. Doud says bringing prospective clients to the office is a conscious part of the pitch, citing the space as a “true reflection of what it’s like to work with us.”

#### FACTS & FIGURES

**Owner:** Howard Community College, Columbia, MD

**Type of Project:** A visual and performing arts center

**Architect:** Design Collective, Inc., Baltimore, MD

**Construction Manager:** Riparius Construction, Inc., Timonium, MD

**Size:** 77,000 square feet

**Cost:** Approximately \$20 million

**Construction Time:** September 2004 - July 2006

**The Need:** A cutting-edge arts and humanities facility

**The Challenge:** To build a facility that would ordinarily cost \$25 million on a budget of \$19 million