

## **Business News**

Jun 24

The Biber Partnership Completes the Rutgers Visitor Center By Betsy Kraat

PISCATAWAY--The award-winning New Jersey-based architectural firm, The Biber Partnership, completed the Rutgers University Visitor Center, the first design-build project for the University.

Located high atop Sutphen Road on the Busch Campus in Piscataway, the 12,512-sf facility serves as the starting point for tours of the New Brunswick Campus, houses interactive multi-media exhibits that illustrate the university's history as well as banquet and meeting spaces.

The Biber Partnership designed a custom perforated stainless steel screen as well as a striking red wall made from composite metal panels, perpendicular to the entrance and emblazoned with a 6-ft. high white "R" which serves as a beacon to visitors. A soaring 26-foot tall stonewall forms the backdrop for the building entry and continues through the interior of the space. The wall is made from calcium silicate panels, formed with a custom color reminiscent of the red shale that is ubiquitous in the area.

The lobby features two-story-high windows and the glow-in-the-night "scarlet wall" multimedia exhibit offering an interactive tour of the university's three main campuses. Meeting spaces on the first floor include a great room that can accommodate 380 for meetings or 250 for banquets. For increased flexibility, the space can be divided into separate rooms for smaller events. To reinforce the Rutgers brand, custom Rutgers University carpet was designed for the meeting spaces.

The Biber Partnership also incorporated several sustainable design features into the Visitor Center including the custom exterior stainless steel sunscreen, which also serves as an architectural element, low water use plumbing, low VOC materials, recycled-content products as well as increased energy efficiency. The building was designed to meet LEED silver standards.

As the first design-build project for Rutgers University, the team consisted of The Biber Partnership and Michael Riesz & Co. The team was chosen largely in part due to their forty-plus years of collaboration among team members along with a history of innovative design and fast-track delivery.

**Rutgers University**  
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