

Case Study

Wayne County Community College

The Wayne County Community College District clearly knows and serves its community well. The two-year educational institution focuses on preparing the people of the Detroit area for the technical and skilled jobs that are prevalent there. Because of the diversity of its service areas, WCCCD places a strong emphasis on occupational and career programs, as well as traditional college and university transfer programs.



Wayne County Community College

Location Five campuses in the industrial, rural and metropolitan areas of Wayne County, in Southeastern Michigan

Number of People Served Over 20,000 students are enrolled

Sales Representative Contact Information Jim Seibold of Seibold Baker Associates

Dealer Contact Information Steve Cojei, Principal at Interior Environments



The need

When it first “opened its doors” to students in 1969, Wayne County Community College actually had no buildings or facilities of its own—local school boards across the county made classrooms available in their schools.

Today, WCCC has five campuses in a variety of urban, rural and industrial settings across the Detroit area, comprised mostly of buildings the college has acquired and repurposed. But right in the midst of the aging buildings on the Northwest Campus stands an impressive monument to the future of learning at WCCC.



The new academic building, loaded with sustainable features and new technologies, was ready for classes to begin in January 2013. Made possible by a capital improvement program entitled Building For the Future, the new building allows that campus to serve an additional 9,000 students.

“The building was designed to be a flagship for the future—a vision of where the college is going, moving forward,” says Allison Roon, the izzy+ design expert on the project. “When you see the new building, this modernist cube in the midst of all these older brick buildings, you think ‘Wow—someone is investing in the future here.’”



Upon entering the building, that future-focused commitment is further solidified, following the vision WCCC administrators had for the look and function of the interior. Roon says the clients’ three primary goals were flexibility for the future, a beautiful, durable aesthetic that mimics the design of the building, and the ability to get product at a good price—fast. *Really* fast.

It was that last requirement that stands out in the mind of izzy+ dealer Steve Cojei, Principal at Interior Environments. Upon taking on the project, the team had three months to design, specify, and get furniture delivered and installed for about 90 percent of the 90,000 square foot building.



“The school was in a bind. They needed someone with expertise in higher education, who knew the market and could bring them a solution quickly,” says Cojei. “We were able to meet their timeline without compromising their needs and expectations for the furniture. We’ve used izzy+ product in other education facilities, so we knew the quality was there and that we’d have the behind-the-scenes support we needed to make it all happen.”



The izzy+ solution

It took a solid team to “make it all happen.” Cojei and his project designer, Andrea Lupi, joined forces with Roon and izzy+ rep Jim Seibold, relying along the way on other izzy+ support, like Kathy Gifford, providing project management from izzy+ manufacturing sites.

If the pace of the project was impressive, the results are even more so. A combination of classrooms, student lounges, in-between spaces and what Roon calls “showpiece spaces,” for entertaining donors and visitors, allowed a full range of izzy+ products to be used.

“On the first floor, the goals were mobility, flexibility, and technology,” says Cojei. “We used Dewey 6-top tables, standing-height tables, incorporated technology, and basically took that floor into the future.”



In addition to the Dewey 6-Top Tables in classrooms, many newer izzy+ pieces were incorporated in lounges and in-between spaces, including Nemo Bars, Dewey Connection Carts, and Truman lounge seating. The classrooms on the second floor are more traditional, Cojei says, while maintaining consistency, aesthetics and quality across both floors.

“izzy+ Flavors made it so easy to design and spec,” says Roon, who co-created the new colors and materials program with Kerry Rowe for NeoCon 2012. “I have every izzy+ brand represented, with color and finish consistency across the brands and the spaces. It was great to see Flavors at work, doing what we wanted it to do.”



Lupi, who partnered with Roon on the design, agrees. “We did a combination of colors—lots of classic blues and grays and bamboo, with pops of evolving colors on the first floor to give it a really fresh look.”

Jim Seibold says he couldn’t be happier with how everything turned out.

“It was a great project with great chemistry between all the people involved,” says Seibold. “In our early meetings [with the college] they used a lot of terms that are second nature to izzy+, around areas like collaboration, flexibility, and supporting technology. It’s just what we do—it’s how we think and design for learning environments, so we were ready to respond.”



“It’s an awesome install,” Seibold concludes. “We were able to do so much, even in the short timeframe—we didn’t have to scale back at all on that wow-factor they were looking for.”

