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When the owners of Westminster Christian Academy began the process of renovating their outdated school building, they found Mitchell & Hugeback Architects to be the perfect partner for the project. Nick Walker, one of the Mitchell & Hugeback architects assigned to the project, was also a Westminster alumnus.

The WCA building, which at one time had housed a public school, was now the home of a private college preparatory school. The administration's vision called for creating a new entry that would symbolize the school's accomplishments and growth in sophistication to the surrounding community.

Because of the sprawling size of the one story building, overall refacing was not an option. Instead, project designers chose to recreate the entry facade with a masonry colonnade. The colonnade utilized the vocabulary of the existing building, but created a new scale for the single story structure.

[continued]

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY St. Louis, MO



OWNER: Westminster Christian Academy

ARCHITECT: Mitchell & Hugeback Architects
Nick Walker, AIA from St. Louis

GENERAL CONTRACTOR:
L.A. Schaffer

MASONRY CONTRACTOR:
John J. Smith Masonry Co.

LOCAL UNION:
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied
Craftworkers Local # 1, MO

AREA: Total 55,000 sq.ft. addition/renovation with
5,465 sq.ft. breezeway and 3,038 sq.ft.
colonnade

CONSTRUCTION TIME: 18 months

PROJECT COST: \$10 million

PROJECT SUMMARY: A "new look" for a dated building - blending masonry and split face block with existing brick veneer.

Masonry was the material of choice, blending perfectly with the building's existing brick veneer and blue stone accents. Split face block was used to create a commanding structural base. Cut stone crosses, symbolic of the school, were placed between each of the columns.

The colonnade was separated from the main school building by a breezeway and a peaceful, landscaped courtyard. This design helped to further symbolize the school as a place for quiet contemplation and learning.



IMI PROFILE: FORMER MASONRY CAMPER

WHO: Nicholas Walker
AIA St. Louis, MO



HISTORY: Nick began his architectural career at Mitchell & Hugeback Architects, where he had the opportunity to use masonry in his designs for several prominent schools and institutions. He describes the Westminster Christian Academy project as a "wonderful and unique opportunity to collaborate with the teachers and administrators of my alma mater."

CURRENTLY: Nick currently works as a construction manager for *Assisted Living Construction Co.*, an elderly care facilities developer. His current projects include building a 64,000 sq.ft. addition onto an existing facility and designing an all new 16 acre elderly care campus.

MASONRY CAMP EXPERIENCE: During his last year of school, Nick was invited to be an architectural representative to IMI's summer Masonry Camp. He describes what he learned at camp as invaluable, especially with his work on the Westminster project. "Because of my experience at Masonry Camp, I know how to properly detail the use of masonry, and how to use it in collaboration with brick, block and cut stone for a calculated presentation of architecture."

In addition to the new entry, renovations included redesign of the student commons, administrative offices, gymnasium and fitness center.

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