

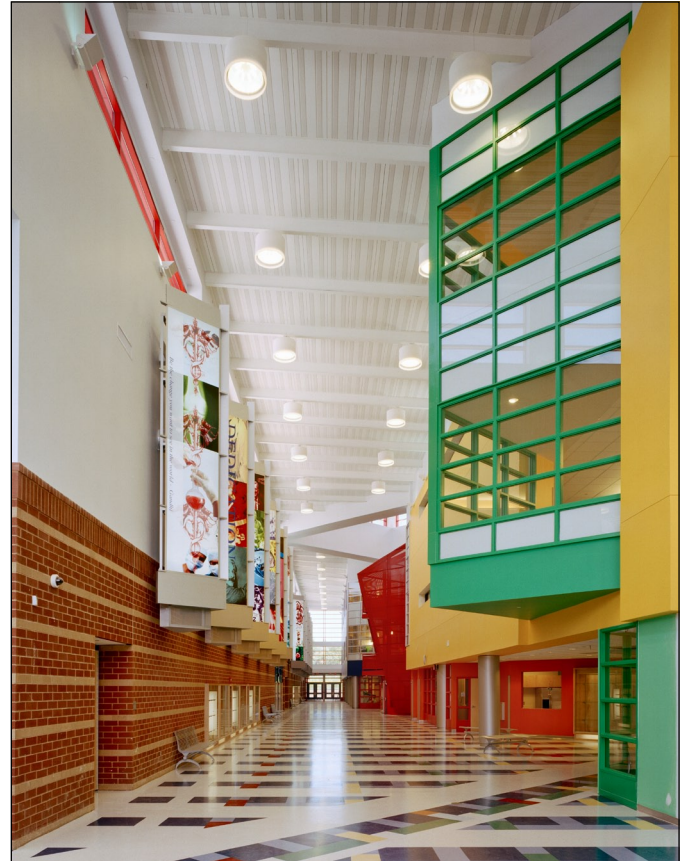
## PEARLESCENCE HELPS CREATE A CHAMP OF A MAGNET SCHOOL

Project:	The Sport and Medical Sciences Academy
Description:	A college preparatory middle and high school that focuses on medical and sport sciences.
Recognition:	Design Excellence, School Planning Management Magazine
Location:	Hartford, CT
Phone:	860.695.6900
Website:	<a href="http://www.sportandmedicalsciences.org">www.sportandmedicalsciences.org</a>

The Sport and Medical Sciences Academy was founded by a high school teacher in Hartford, Connecticut who had a unique vision: To take kids who were interested in athletics and use that interest to get them to focus on their overall education. When it received funding to become an official magnet middle school and high school, it needed a building just as unique as its mission. "It needed an 'active' environment," says Sherry-Ann Oxley-Williams, Interior Designer of DuBose Associates, an architectural firm with a long history of creating buildings for educational use.

But the building also needed to support the school's rigorous curriculum in language arts, mathematics, and science. "Not everyone can be a superstar basketball player. But there are lots of athletic careers that kids can go into, including medicine, communications, and administration," adds Craig Saunders, one of the partners at DuBose. "Almost everyone who attends this school goes on to post-secondary education."

Oxley-Williams explains that combining the action of sports with the rigors of classroom education wasn't a challenge, but rather, was the inspiration for the design.



*"The building is very concept-driven, classrooms, where everything is supposed to be orderly, are neutral. But outside of the classrooms, everything is bright."*

### UNIQUE CHALLENGES

The design firm did encounter challenges. For instance, there were only a few sites able to accommodate such a large project, and they had to settle for a triangular-shaped, brownfield site next to an interstate. "The building program was almost twice the square footage of the site, so we had to close the roads around it," says Saunders.

A second challenge was to design two schools in one building to accommodate the nearly 500 high school students and 250 middle school students. "Aside from spaces the kids could take turns using, such as the library and lunchroom, the middle and high schools had to be separate from each other," says Saunders. "It's tricky to design a building that creates a physical separation but doesn't seem separate."





Lamin-Art's Pearlescence 2409 Brilliant Gold



Lamin-Art's Pearlescence 2414 Corundum Blue



## DESIGN CONSISTENCY

To set the tone, assimilate the children into both a sports and academic environment, and bring their concept to life, Saunders, Oxley-Williams, and the rest of the team at DuBose Associates used color. "Bright colors were for the sports related environments and neutral colors were for the classrooms," says Oxley-Williams. Saunders recalls that, in order to establish the color palette, the team turned to the Pearlescence collection of high-pressure laminates.

*"We wanted to choose colors that were bright and strong for the entire school. Pearlescence provided a variety of colors that we were able to match up with the paints. It just worked perfectly."*

These colors included #2414 Corundum Blue and #2409 Brilliant Gold, which can be found in the classrooms, main offices, the Media Center, and the school store. They even used it on the reception desk.

The use of color also extended to the building's exterior. "We wanted it to be just as colorful as the inside," says Saunders. "Outside, there are metal panels and painted trim on the windows and doors. We used silver and bright blue on the windows. Everyone really liked it. They (the kids) were running around with their cell phones photographing everything."

Photography ©2008 Woodruff Brown

## DUBOSE ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS OVERVIEW

Description: Architectural planning and related services  
 Details: Founded in 1958, the firm boasts 20 employees  
 Specialty: Education (universities and schools) and Government (administrative and community centers)  
 Contact: Craig C. Saunders, Principal/Partner, AIA  
 Sherry-Ann Oxley-Williams, Interior Design, IIDA  
 Location: Hartford, CT  
 Phone: 860.249.9387  
 Website: www.dbarch.com

