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ILLUMINATING HUBBELL LIGHTING HEADQUARTERS

As an international design firm serving the television, architectural and entertainment markets, Visual Terrain, Inc., based in Van Nuys, CA, has undoubtedly touched your life at one time or another. Have you ever watched entertainment specials on NBC-TV, ABC-TV, CBS-TV or Fox Broadcasting? Or visited Disneyland? Or traveled through LAX, the Los Angeles airport? Or toured Universal Studios in California? Or tasted something from Hershey Foods? Then Visual Terrain lit the way for you.

Distinguished as the only lighting and production design firm engaged in the television, entertainment and architectural arenas--and known for its creative mastery, practical experience and advanced technological knowledge--Visual Terrain won the commission to create the lighting design plan for Hubbell Lighting's remarkable headquarters facility in Greenville, SC. The Visual Terrain team of Dawn Hollingsworth, a managing partner of the firm, and Eileen Thomas, a principal of the firm, focused on two main concepts and a primary objective.

Through the lighting design, the Hollingsworth/Thomas team wanted to make a statement that reinforced the fact for anyone seeing the building for the first time that it indeed houses a lighting company. Secondly, without going overboard, they wanted to transform the building into a giant lighting laboratory while making it inspiring and comfortable for those who would work there.

Stars are Born

Usually, when lighting a corporate facility, a lighting designer might specify a few types of fixtures, according to Hollingsworth. "In the case of Hubbell Lighting our daunting objective was to include fixtures from as many of the 16 brands as possible that make up the lighting division," she added.

With concepts and the primary objective clear and agreed upon, the Visual Terrain lighting design team met with each brand manager to immerse themselves in product knowledge and the depth of choices available.

The end result? A remarkably effective lighting design incorporating over 150 different types of lighting fixtures to illuminate every area of the interior and the exterior of the building.

In addition to choosing from the available product lines, some unique new fixtures were also created. One such example is the lighting at the top of a four-story rotunda, the building's main entrance for guests. When the building was in the planning stages, the code name for the project was "Starlight." The lighting designers, wanting to create a metaphor of the code name, uniquely illuminated the rotunda's custom-designed reflector system, which also served as the exposed ceiling of the four-story edifice. Working with Hubbell's KIM Lighting division, a new 1,000 watt metal halide spotlight was used to work in tandem with 250 watt floodlights using blue metal halide lamps. The new 1,000 watt fixture, in concert with a custom designed ceiling reflector system, created the starburst effect while the 250 watt floodlights created a blue wash.

Empowering a Talented Cast

On the exterior of the building, the lighting design team cleverly focused on architectural features to make bold lighting statements. Employing surface-mounted, upright/downlight LEDs, new from the Prescolite division, mounted to a specially design curved back plate and custom finished to match the columns, blue LEDs illuminate the top portion of the poles around a patio area, while white LEDs do the job on the bottom portion of the poles.

To illuminate a ground-to-rooftop precast concrete facade, the Visual Terrain team worked with the Sterner Lighting division to create a new fixture resembling an eyelid. Mounted near the top of the four-story facade, the fixtures, when seen in daylight, appear to be part of the wall as they fit flush to the surface. In the evening, a door (the eyelid) opens to create wall washes along the length of the structure. KIM floodlights illuminate a flagpole, bollards light area pathways and in-ground metal halide uplights illuminate area landscaping, monument signs, and fountain piers. Architectural Area Lighting fixtures illuminate area pathways and parking lots while Devine Lighting Par 30 metal halide cylinders mounted to custom designed back plates light the building's south side elevation.

A Certain Glow

Moving from the specification of outdoor lighting, the design team turned its attention to illuminating the interior of Hubbell Lighting's headquarters. Looking for additional ways to apply lighting artistically, the designers worked creatively to showcase the full breadth and depth of the company's extensive product lines in real situations. As a result, the interior of the new Hubbell Lighting features fixtures from Prescolite, Progress, Columbia, Alera, Dual-Lite, KIM and Hubbell Industrial Lighting.

In the multi-functional first floor dining area, the press of a switch can move walls that transform the space into additional training rooms. To provide the dual functions of the space, Hollingsworth and Thomas chose 2-ft and 4-ft, 2-lamp T5 fluorescent strips from Columbia Lighting to backlight the perforated floating ceiling.

Employing dimming ballasts and colored gel sleeves, the team created a glowing color-changing backlight for the ceiling. A soothing environment for diners, the colored ceiling, along with direct illumination from Prescolite track fixtures, is also used as an identifier for specific training.

Diverse Solutions, Abundant Applications

- A main stairwell in the building is located behind a 4-story glass wall that is visible from Interstate 85. Taking full advantage of this opportunity to “mark” the building, the team strategically installed on the underside of the stairway steps 4-foot one-lamp T5 fluorescent strip lights from Columbia Lighting. With 6500K lamps, the light is cool, emitting an almost blue hue. The result is a four-story glass wall facade that comes alive at night.
- Throughout the building, training rooms on the lobby level, VIP offices on the fourth floor, conference rooms, pre-function areas, the amphitheater, and corridor/circulation areas use a variety of Prescolite track and downlighting, including low voltage downlights with the division’s exclusive American Matte reflector cone, low voltage lensed wall washers, and low voltage super adjustable downlights all in Zet finish. Other Prescolite products included six-inch horizontal two-26W compact fluorescent downlights and monopoint mounted track fixtures with perforated shades. Lastly, each corridor/circulation area was configured with 32W horizontal compact fluorescent downlights with a six-inch Signos decorative trim. To distinguish building floors, the lighting design team, the interior designer and Group Vice President, Scott Muse, collaborated to select a different colored trim for each level.
- In the main lobby, Alera Lighting decorative compact fluorescent wall sconces with Opal acrylic shielding in a silver/gray housing finish are used. Also in the rotunda, a dropped ceiling is dramatically illuminated with cove lighting from Alera, creating striking light patterns.
- In open office areas on the north and south sides of the building, CurVista linear T5 fluorescent fixtures with a perforated baffle (70% uplight and 30% downlight) identify the north area on the second and third levels of the building. T8 linear Nevis Plus Liso fluorescent fixtures with a diamond studded perforated strip delineate the south open office areas. Adjacent to the window wall on the second and third levels, Alera Paleta fixtures give these areas a consistent look.
- Progress Lighting decorative pendants with etched glass cones and clear glass shades add ambience to employee lobby/break areas, and incandescent Tri-band decorative sconces adorn the walls of the first floor auditorium. From its Michael Graves collection, three-lamp decorative sconces with glass shades accent the rectangular mirrors in the restrooms.

Creativity in the Workspace

The next challenge? To address lighting needs in the private offices on each floor of the building and the 3,000 square foot lighting workshop within the Lighting Solutions Center. All “D” office space on levels two and three are similar using T8 Stratus recessed indirect fluorescent lighting fixtures from Columbia. “C” offices are lit with Alera eight-foot T5 linear fluorescent Plank fixtures, and lab offices are equipped with Columbia’s new energy-efficient ZPT luminaires. VIP offices on each level feature Prescolite low voltage lensed wall washers with American Matte reflectors and Zet finish. Prescolite low voltage mirror super adjustable downlights with Zet finish are installed in the executive office suite.

In all, more than 150 different types of Hubbell Lighting fixtures illuminate the indoor and outdoor areas of Hubbell Lighting’s new corporate facilities. Commenting on the scale of the job, Dawn Hollingsworth said, “Doing this job is not only a source of great pride, it’s the first time in my experience where there were no problems holding the spec.”