



For Immediate Release
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Camino Nuevo Charter Academy Celebrates Opening of The Jane B. Eisner School, within a Restored and Rehabilitated Los Angeles Cultural Monument in the Historic Byzantine-Latino Quarter

Frederick Fisher and Partners Led Adaptive Reuse Project

Los Angeles, CA -- Deeply rooted in the Byzantine-Latino Quarter community and neighborhood, the Jane B. Eisner School is a rehabilitation of a 1928, 20,760 square-foot building originally built as a telephone company truck maintenance facility. The building façade is a “light” interpretation of the Churrigueresque style that was derived from a Mexican Spanish-Colonial style, brought to the U.S. by Bertram Goodhue in 1915 for the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park, San Diego. That Exposition was the start of the Spanish Colonial revival style in California.

The building, referred to as The Pacific Bell Building, is a registered City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument, located within the Harvard Heights Historic Preservation Overlay Zone in historic West Adams. Designed by Los Angeles-based architects Frederick Fisher and Partners, this campus supports the mission of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) as a place-based, experiential learning environment. At capacity the campus will house 270 6th-8th graders who will matriculate from the nearby Jose A. Castellanos Elementary School, and 20 faculty and staff.

CNCA received the building as a gift from the Byzantine-Latino Quarter Foundation (BLQF) who purchased the building from the California Department of Parks and Recreation in 2004 with the intention of building a community center. In 2011 the Foundation began to reach out to the community in search of funding and partners to move the project forward. As such they found local community organizer Philip Lance of Pueblo Nuevo Development, who is a co-founder of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. Lance saw the building’s potential as a school that would fit well into the growing network of CNCA’s campuses sprinkled throughout the greater MacArthur Park area. So Lance offered to create a community center in the building that would be open in the evenings and on weekends, if the Foundation agreed to let him use it as a school during the week.

While Lance spent 2011 conducting feasibility studies, and working out fundraising, bank financing and construction budgets, the Foundation continued to hold the title to the property. In June of 2012, Pueblo Nuevo Development took over the title, entered into its own partnership with the state, and began construction the next day, with an anticipated open date in fall 2012.

Both the architect's design process and CNCA's core mission called for extensive outreach to the community. Architects Frederick Fisher and Partners, whose portfolio includes many historic structures that have been adapted for creative and institutional clients, developed a deep level of understanding and trust with both the community and CNCA. The neighborhood includes several landmark structures, and the socially cohesive community built a strong consensus around the project. The building had been empty since the 1980s; the community was eager to see it revived and used in a meaningful way.

"Camino Nuevo Charter Academy had a tremendous opportunity to transform a revered and distinctive historic structure into a campus that would meet both their needs, and those of the neighborhood," said Frederick Fisher, principal of Frederick Fisher and Partners. "The location was ideal. But there were several challenges. We needed to adapt the structure to its new purpose, without diminishing or damaging its historic features and quality. Camino Nuevo's partnership with the state mandated the creation of a shared community space within the project. The space was tight, and we had to manage this complex, adaptive restoration project - and its critical seismic upgrades - within budget and quick timeframe." The total project cost came in at \$7.1 million.

Due to the compressed timeline, the design and construction team had to be economical and fast. The design involved careful testing of the 80-year-old brick walls, research into the building's past performance in earthquakes, and close collaboration with the Los Angeles city engineer. Seismic engineering was an intense challenge, requiring the construction of an entirely new steel structure within the old brick building. The expanses of raw brick, the massive original wooden bow trusses supporting the roof, and the new seismic structural elements were left exposed within the high, vaulted spaces. The exterior of the landmark building was completely restored. The interior was subdivided into nine classrooms, a multipurpose space shared with the community, and administrative support areas. Circulation, the flow of occupants throughout the space, was designed around a broad "main street" corridor, while the interior walls were organized to make the best use of the daylight from numerous skylights.

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“The design concept was to reveal the historic character and atmosphere that existed,” adds Fisher. “The intent was to frame a context for the activity of learning, like creating a studio space for an artist, paring the materials down to a minimum. The idea of a collage inspired the interior aesthetic, in which we simply let the design elements collide. Wood, sheet rock, brick and steel - we saw no need to smooth their intersection. We also left the mechanical equipment exposed. All of this gives the school a lively, robust, loft-like character.”

The space is divided into simple, rectangular rooms that do not conflict with the building that already existed. The number of students in each grade and class determined the needs of the common spaces and classrooms. The building is designed with a generic flexibility in order to accommodate both current and future educational methods so that the space will not become obsolete.

The project is designed to LEED Silver equivalence. The reuse of an old building and the flexible, adaptable design of the new spaces are also sustainable features. The visible environment and its historic elements stimulate observation and instigate discussion. The students, faculty and staff, and the changing light of the day, animate the structure and breath life into the space. “As ‘creative educational space,’ the project encompasses and involves the history that took place there over the past century,” says Lance. “This is intended to be a new element in the layering of histories that make up this neighborhood, the region, and the community itself.”

About Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects – www.fisherpartners.net

Established in Los Angeles in 1980, Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects (FFP) is an award-winning firm recognized for the rigor, beauty, and authenticity of its work in a wide variety of building types, including museums and galleries, educational facilities, libraries, urban plans and parks, and community spaces. Local context and global sustainability set the framework for architecture, interior design, urban planning, and exhibition design for clients such as the Annenberg Foundation, Princeton University, Huntington Library, Broad Art Foundation, Caltech, and Houston’s Restaurants.

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Images of the new campus are available by contacting
Joanna Brody at (310) 582-0085, joanna@brody-pr.com.

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Fisher Rehabs Historic Building Into Camino Nuevo Campus, 4 – 4 – 4

Design/Construction Team

Architect: Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects; Frederick Fisher, FAAR, Principal; Joe Coriaty, AIA, Partner in Charge; Project Team: Chris Conolly and Hector Semidey and Takashige Ikawa.

Contractor: Steve Nakano, Del Amo Construction

Construction Manager: Tamara Mullison, M.A.T. Consulting Company

Consultants: Michael Woodward, Land Use Attorney.
Jerry P. Christoff and John Zeman, Veneklasen Associates – Acoustical Engineering.
Phil Penny, Independent Roofing Consultants – Waterproofing and Roofing.
Andrew Madrid, Madrid and Associates – Financing Construction Administrator.

Lighting Design: Mark Duff, Prudential Lighting.

Graphic Design: Mick Hodgson and Randy Walker, Ph.D

Historical Consultant: Robert Chattel and Katherine McGee, Chattel, Inc.

Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Engineering: Caecilia Gotama, Gotama Building Engineers, Inc.; Michael Cochran, Structural Engineer, Weidlinger Associates, Inc.

Civil Engineering: John Cruikshank, JMC²

Subcontractors:

- Universal Asphalt Co., Inc. – A/C Paving.
- Preferred Ceilings, Inc. – Acoustic Paneling.
- Orange Woodworks, Inc. – Cabinetry.
- Werner Tile Co., Inc. – Ceramic Tile.
- HBA Incorporated – Concrete.
- G.D. Heil Inc. – Demolition.
- Bo-D-Bro, Inc. – Doors, Frames, Hardware.
- R. Young Enterprises, Inc. – Drywall.
- Chris' Hauling – Earthwork and Grading.
- Browning Fire Protection, Inc. – Fire Sprinklers.
- Southland Flooring, Inc. – Flooring.
- EER, Inc. – Flooring.
- Hale Glass Inc. – Glass and Glazing.
- DJ Insulation Inc. – Insulation.
- Amp Electric Landscape & Const – Landscape.
- Pacific Exteriors Inc. – Lath and Plaster.
- Churchill's Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc. - HVAC
- Triple C Electric, Inc.- Electrical.
- Contract Sign Group – Signage.
- Advanced Network Systems – Low Voltage.
- Integrated Communications & Data – Low Voltage.
- Taylor Tennis Courts, Inc. – Playground Equipment.
- Time Warner Cable – Low Voltage.
- Harris and Ruth Painting Cont. – Painting.
- Skyline Roof Co., Inc. – Roofing.
- All Seasons Framing Group – Rough Carpentry.
- Broadway Industries Inc. – Skylights.
- Red's Iron Specialties Inc. – Structural Steel.
- Mark Beemish Waterproofing, Inc. – Waterproofing.