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Efficiency Through Integration

University Hospitals consolidates customer
service operations in Highland Hills

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phone: 216.251.0035
 toll free: 888.641.4241
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CLEVELAND

3826 W. 158th St.
 Cleveland, Ohio 44111

AKRON

P.O. Box 9
 Munroe Falls, Ohio 44262

OWNER/PUBLISHER

Kenneth C. Krych
 kkrych@propertiesmag.com

MANAGING EDITOR/ART DIRECTOR

Mark Watt
 mwatt@propertiesmag.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Doug Bardwell, Jeanne Bluffstone, Karen Cahill, Dennis Castiglione, John Elliott, Lou Kren, Matt Lehnert, Alec Pacella, John Slagter, David Woodburn

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Laura Chernauskas
 lchernauskas@propertiesmag.com
 216.251.2520

Matt Lehnert
 mlehnert@propertiesmag.com
 216.251.6753

Larry Overbey
 loverbey@propertiesmag.com
 216.251.6649

OFFICE MANAGER

Lisa Larissey
 216.251.8506

REPRINTS

Andrea Keener
 akeener@propertiesmag.com
 216.849.4350

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KEN KRYCH

From The Inside Out

Ah, it is May at last. Looking around Northeast Ohio this month, it's clear that spring has sprung. In fact, summer is just around the corner and, soon enough, air conditioners will be kicking on in facilities around Northeast Ohio.

Fitting then that this month features our annual HVAC & Plumbing Systems special section, with an examination of the products and services that keep buildings comfortable. We thank Space Comfort Co., Brennan Heating & Cooling, Inc., Mechanical and Plumbing Industry Council (MAPIC), Gardiner and Neptune Plumbing & Heating Co., for their contributions.

Also this month, we offer our annual Inside Design special section, highlighting interior environments. We visit BOMBA Tacos & Rum in Rocky River, AIA Cleveland's Center for Architecture and Design, and the STERIS showroom at the Global Center for Health Innovation. We also welcome insights and expert advice from Icon Interiors, Mont Granite and ProSoCoustic on a variety of topics. Lastly, we thank Levelheads, Inc. for detailing their efforts to remodel a Highland Hills facility building as University Hospitals' new Customer Services Center.

Profiled projects

Our cover feature this month is Mariner's Watch, the newly opened apartments designed by Dimit Architects, LLC. We also tour the new Center for Dialysis Care at Eliza Bryant Village and the Bob Gillingham Ford dealership in Parma, which has been updated with interior and exterior improvements, as well as a service center addition.

Coming next month!

As of this writing, we are looking at an interesting mix of projects to be highlighted in our June 2015 issue, including the new Kay Jewelers Pavilion at Akron Children's Hospital, Cleveland Clinic's Lutheran Hospital expansion in Ohio City, and the new Near West Theatre

in the Gordon Square Arts District of Cleveland. The June issue will also include our annual Environmental Solutions special section with a host of articles on environmental challenges faced in the region

Until then, enjoy the ever-improving springtime weather!

Positively,



Kenneth C. Krych
Owner/Publisher

Letters

We were very pleased with our 100th anniversary feature in *Properties* (February 2015). We've received many compliments, both internally and externally, and all have mentioned how the feature did a great job telling our story. We plan to use this to continue raising awareness of Ruhlin in the marketplace and *Properties* is a great platform for that goal."

Jim Ruhlin
The Ruhlin Company

On behalf of the Cleveland Engineering Society Board of Directors, staff and the 63rd Annual Design & Construction Conference Planning Committee, thank you for your in-kind support as our Media Sponsor. This year's conference would not have been a success without you.

**Susan Davis, Tuwhanna Lewis &
Rebecca Peterson**
Cleveland Engineering Society



Efficiency Through Integration

UH consolidates customer service operations in Highland Hills

By Christopher P. Trotta, AIA
levelHEADS, Inc.

The Northeast Ohio healthcare market is quite remarkable considering the quality of care provided by our regional, world-class healthcare providers and the advanced facilities utilized to provide patient care services at a premier level. Healthcare systems, community hospitals and private practices are in constant evolution through acquisitions, physician alignment and outpatient strategies reacting to healthcare reform and evolving demographics and reimbursement.

University Hospitals (UH) is no exception to this paradigm, and is a regional forerunner through its strategic approach to these changing times and providing the communities of Cleveland/Akron with the highest level of patient care and patient outcomes. Most recently, UH executed the integration of Elyria, Parma and Robinson Healthcare Systems into the health system to strengthen its regional footprint and community outreach.

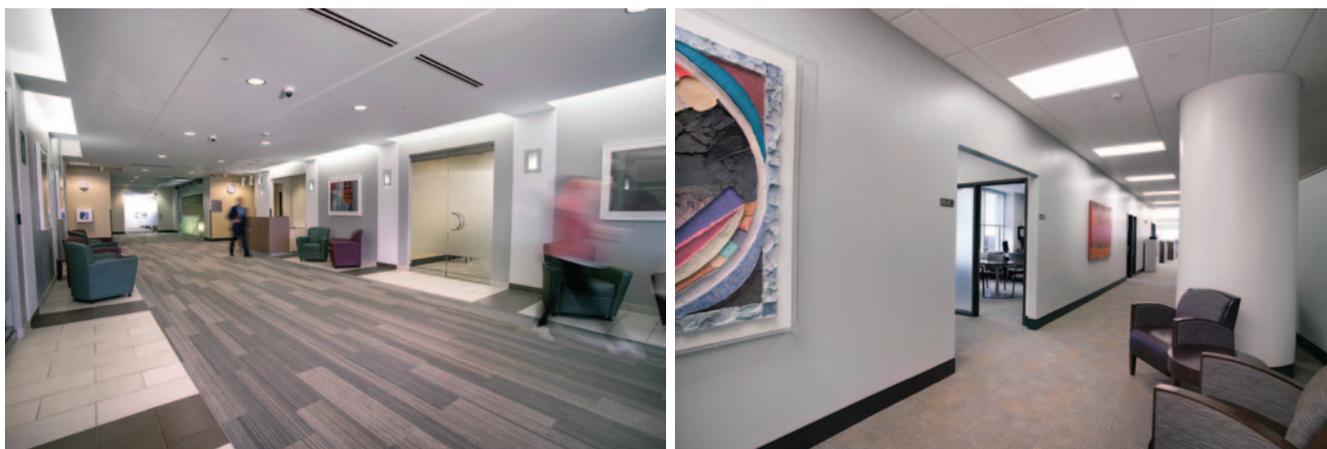
“With these new facilities online it was even more important for UH to

ensure that customer service did not get diluted and continued to be a priority within the delivery of care model through the multiple touch points with patients and their overall care experience,” says UH Vice President, System Resource Management Mary Beth Levine.

Similar to how UH consolidated administrative and support services at the Management Services Center (MSC) in Shaker Heights several years ago, the hospital system wanted to bring together customer services for the enter-

prise into a single building. This strategy would also free up space in the MSC for additional alignments and overall reduction of system leases and continued operational improvement efficiencies.

The 130,000-square-foot, four-story Harvard Crossing building was selected for this transformation – very similar to the MSC in the sense that it was a former OfficeMax corporate facility. The building was almost fully furnished with workstations, casework and case goods, however was not organizationally structured to meet UH’s programmatic needs.



SIMPLE SERENITY Color palettes for the facility were selected to create a “warm but calming space for staff and employees to work in,” says Debra DeCapite, of University Hospitals.

Revenue Cycle, Customer Service and Patient Access (Call Center) were the three main programs consolidating to this Northfield Road/Harvard Road facility. Patient Access Services pulled four functional areas together including physician scheduling, radiology scheduling, insurance verification/precert and concierge services. In all, the project brought together 900 employees to improve operations.

“This consolidation has increased productivity and cross-functional synergies between these groups,” says Maria Kamenos, vice president of Patient Access Services. “Due to the open layout of the space, it has led to easy collaboration amongst the teams, and the space offers some beautiful amenities that the staff really love. In addition, keeping the walls low around the perimeter of the space allows a great deal of natural light to permeate the space, while our sound masking system manages noise levels and creates a serene and professional environment.

“To execute the project in a fast 150-day timeframe after closing on the property back in fall 2014, UH put together a comprehensive and diverse team to execute the selective renovation of every floor and modernize the building’s interior and infrastructure. A “fast-track” approach was implemented to keep design just a few steps ahead of construction.

“The UH Customer Services Center was a large renovation project which included numerous contractors and vendors and a great collaborative effort to complete,” says UH Senior Project Coordinator Debra DeCapite. “We had weekly construction meetings to discuss any issues which kept the project on track and on schedule. The ability for all of the designers, contractors and vendors to meet and interact with each other facilitated the communication process, which made the project run very smoothly.”

The architect-of-record, levelHEADS, and construction manager, R.L. Hill

“Due to the open layout of the space, it has led to easy collaboration amongst the teams, and the space offers some beautiful amenities that the staff really love.”

Maria Kamenos

University Hospitals Patient Access Services

Management, worked within a design/build mindset, efficiently addressing the multiple bid packages, tight time frame, field discrepancies, code and life safety issues, and interactions with the Village of Highland Hills Building Department. DeCapite was instrumental with managing the Village and its critical and thorough directives. Square One Architects was brought on board to support levelHEADS

and provide life-safety management and third-party “special inspections” required by the Village of Highland Hills and the plans examiner.

R.L. Hill Management was able to complete this project in cooperation with levelHEADS and Karpinski Engineers, from pre-construction through occupancy, notes R.L. Hill Management Director of Construction Philip S. Ozan.

“There was also great cooperation from all of the subcontractors who we hand-selected for their skill and manpower to meet the schedule,” Ozan says.

Together, R.L. Hill Management and levelHEADS employed a hands-on approach to demolition. They walked the facility together with demolition documents in hand and marked directly on interiors walls, and other site features, items to be saved or demolished, extent of the demolition and other important field directions. The result was limited rework from the fast-track demolition advancing just ahead of permits for new construction.

“Work included surgical demolition of certain walls and ceilings, as well as installation of all new flooring, painting, selective drywall, millwork, countertops and lighting,” Ozan says.

Other successful measures that helped keep the project on pace and on budget included detailed user group attention and interface, creative design philosophy execution, FF&E resource management and implementation, and utilization of UH



IMPROVING MOVES Work within the former OfficeMax corporate facility included “surgical demolition of certain walls and ceilings, as well as installation of all new flooring, painting, selective drywall, millwork, countertops and lighting,” says Philip S. Ozan, of R.L. Hill Management.

staff to support the team with design and client management. From the beginning, levelHEADS Inc. was contracted to help manage the three building constituents and figure out the adjacencies based on optimum space utilization, office size standardization, work group organization and how to maximize existing room layouts to minimize demolition and construction.

“Over 200 linear feet of millwork was repurposed to different locations, and approximately 100 doors, side-lights and door frames were saved and reused to fit new configurations of rooms and office entrances,” says Marissa Petrovic, project manager for levelHEADS accounts.

Strategic use of bulkheads cut costs of new ceiling products due to terminating ceilings of varying heights to accept new open office planning. Linear direct and indirect lighting was reorganized so very limited supplemental lighting was required.

“To meet the challenge of tight budget, much of the existing MEP systems were re-worked in lieu of wholesale replacement,” says Andrew Dzienny, PE and associate for electrical at Karpinski Engineering. “Care was taken during design phase to review record drawings and field verify the systems to be re-posed.”

Workstation management was a significant component to the on-time project delivery. Nine hundred and fifty Allsteel/HON Concensys 68-inch-high workstations existed within the building and had to be torn down, itemized, temporarily stored within on-site trailers, supplemented with new parts, refurbished and reinstalled in a phased manor to new configurations to serve UH’s program and work flow. Sales Representative



FRESHLY SERVED The remodeling project included renovation of the building's lunchroom and kitchen in the lower level.

Chris Rozzo was hands-on through the entire process and was instrumental in site management and working with UH to fulfill all workstation requirements. Mock-ups were utilized to provide the users with options of configurations. In addition to existing FF&E, 255 HON Initiate workstations were provided for the Patient Access space on the third floor.

UH Staff Architect James Miller was instrumental in working with the users to determine their workstation needs and coordinate with the architect on the execution of construction documentation and vendor deliverables. DeCapite supported levelHEADS from an interiors standpoint by providing finish selections and coordination with sub-contractors.

"Finish design consisted of six color palettes for each area: third floor, second floor, first floor, lower level, common areas and cafeteria," DeCapite says. "We initiated finish boards based on our University Hospitals finish standards to create a warm but calming space for staff and employees to work in."

Additional notable spaces within this project include a renovated building lunchroom and kitchen in the lower level, multiple conference and training spaces from 20 to 100 occupants, a private concierge department, and a totally

reorganized service dock for shipping/receiving and facility maintenance.

The project also included installation of a one-megawatt backup power system to support the entire facility indefinitely in the event of a power outage. "Hospitals are 24-hour facilities, and require 24-hour support," says Bob Ponstingle, vice president of DNS Technologies Inc., which designed and installed two backup generators onsite. "With this system in place, patients can expect the highest level of care that they have come to expect."

All in all, the beneficiary of the new Customer Services Center will be the patients and families of Northeast Ohio. By providing a conducive and positive work environment for employees to implement University Hospitals' mission and vision, the care experience will be elevated to the highest standard from external interface of the CSC through to the clinical environment and beyond. **P**

Christopher Trotta is president of levelHEADS, Inc. and served as lead designer and principal-in-charge for the UH CSC project. levelHEADS is a full-service consulting firm focusing on design, owner's representation, construction management, strategic planning and team integration. Trotta can be reached at chris@levelHEADS.us and 216.308.9178. Article reprinted with permission from Properties Magazine, May 2015.



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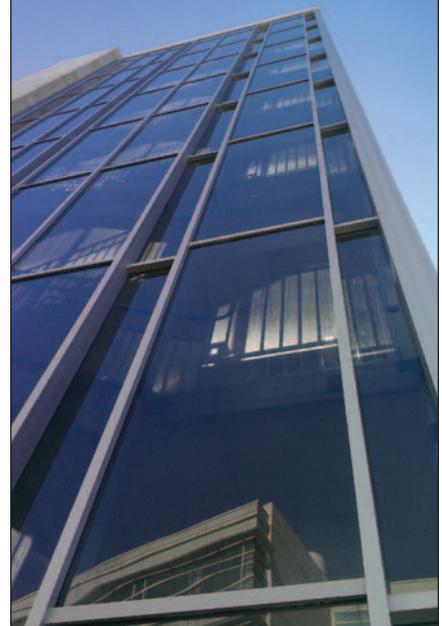
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