

# Real Estate Journal

THE LARGEST WEEKLY COMMERCIAL/INVESTMENT NEWSPAPER IN THE WORLD

## New York Foundling completes \$32 million, LEED-certified Haven Academy; Environetics serves as architect and Signature as G.C.



Haven Academy Charter School, 170 Brown Place  
- Bronx, NY

Haven Academy Charter School, sponsored by The New York Foundling, opened the school year in a new complex - a 55,000 s/f, LEED-certified building that it shares with The Foundling's Bronx Community Services. Located at 170 Brown Place, Haven Academy is one of the first schools in the borough to be housed in a LEED-certified building.

The architect for the \$32 million project was Environetics Group Architects. The general contractor was Signature Construction Group, Inc. The project's innovative design is already receiving accolades: The complex received the 2010 AIA N.J. Design Award and the 2010 AIA Newark & Suburban Architects Design Award. Perkins & Will developed the original design concept for the project.

The Foundling and Haven Academy recognize the benefits of building a sustainable project that not only lessens the impact on the environment but also creates a healthy place in which their teachers and scholars can instruct and learn. They asked their design team to explore creative ways of achieving high LEED certification.

To this end:

- The existing building was kept intact and added to, in lieu of demolishing the structure.

- Many non-conventional engineering systems were incorporated to contribute to the building's overall energy efficiency. These features include occupancy sensors that turn off lights when room is not in use, a building-wide lighting control system, a system of zoned fan coil units served by a central chiller and cooling tower, and the use of light colored concrete pavers and roofing materials increase sunlight reflection and keep the building cooler.

- Interior space design and product specification meet LEED standards. Materials were chosen based on their proximity to the site and based on their pre- and post-consumer recycled content. Doors and millwork products were FSC Certified, coming only from mills that practice environmentally and socially responsible forest management. And all the products meet or exceed rigorous Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) criteria, which will

vastly improve the indoor air quality within the building, critical to this inner-city student population, which suffers from higher-than-average asthma rates.

- Interior environments were designed with large windows so occupants work and study with the benefit of natural light while also having a visual connection to the outside. Research has shown a dramatic correlation between daylit school environments and student performance.

All of these measures contribute to a facility that is tracking gold level certification under the LEED for Schools v. 2.0 rating system. More importantly, the project team hopes and expects that the building environment will positively affect attendance and test scores. The students benefit from a dynamic educational setting that fosters learning and a responsibility to the environment. For example, scholars will learn that the soft flooring of their outdoor play space is made from recycled tires.

"Our new facility is the realization of our vision many years in the making," said Bill Baccaglioni, The Foundling's Executive Director. "As an environmentally-friendly, LEED-Certified complex, the building was designed so that the physical elements of the school will enhance the overall health and well being of the students."

The lower level of the eight floor structure houses a cafeteria, multipurpose and conference rooms that will be used by the charter school and Foundling staff. The first three floors house Haven Academy homerooms and specialized spaces, including those for art, science and music, outdoor play space for the students, and administrative offices.

The fourth floor is devoted to The Foundling's community-based services and medical clinic, which provide medical services to Haven

Academy students and children in the community who are served by The Foundling. The upper floors of the complex house the nearly 200 staff members of The Foundling's Bronx-based community programs, which have been serving the Mott Haven neighborhood for more than 40 years.

#### Haven Academy Charter School and The New York Foundling

Haven Academy is the first school in the nation to combine a rigorous academic curriculum with supportive social services. The New York Foundling, one of New York's oldest and largest child welfare agencies, developed Haven Academy to address the obstacles to educational achievement that plague children growing up in poor, underserved, urban communities and particularly those in the child welfare system.

Founded as a home for abandoned children, The New York Foundling has been saving children, preserving families and building communities since 1869. The Foundling's extensive network of community-based services provides havens for children whose safety is at risk, loving foster homes and specialized facilities to protect children, and support for families to strengthen them. In the tradition of openness and compassion of its sponsors, the Sisters of Charity, the agency touches the lives of more than 13,000 people each year in the New York City area and in Puerto Rico as it upholds its guiding principle: Abandon No One.