

Converse College
Phifer Hall
Spartanburg, SC

Architect:
Jenkins•Peer Architects
Charlotte, NC

General Contractor:
FN Thompson
Charlotte, NC

Masonry Contractor:
Pyramid Masonry
Contractors, Inc.
Charlotte, NC

BRICK

works



**Science Building
Heralds New Era
For Women’s
College**

Converse College, founded in 1889 as a liberal arts college for women, is nationally recognized for its programs in science, education, interior design and music. School administration wanted to showcase the college’s exceptional science programs and attract the highest caliber students and faculty. So the search was on to find an architectural team to design a new science building that would achieve the school’s vision of being at the forefront of science education while honoring the college’s heritage that spans over a century.

Jenkins•Peer Architects of Charlotte was selected from dozens of firms

“Brick not only allows us to capture the historic architectural traditions of a campus like Converse; also, given brick’s durability and timeless character, we know that Phifer Hall will carry on that tradition for generations to come.”

Benjamin Benson, AIA, Jenkins•Peer Architects





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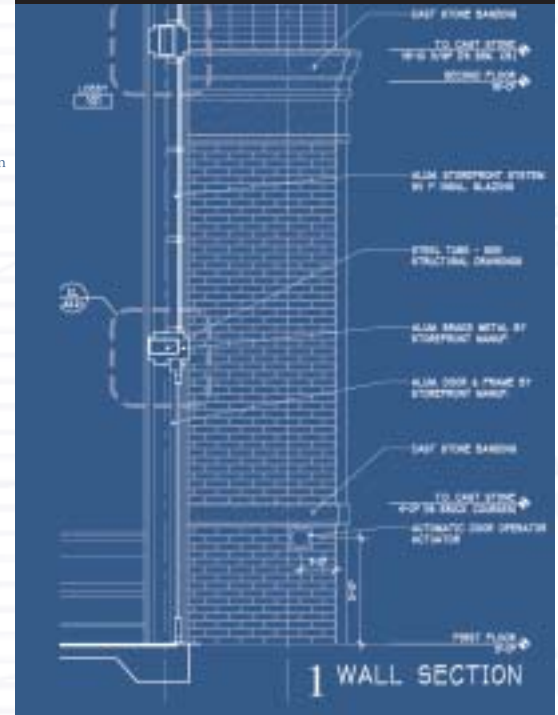
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THE DETAIL FILE

Take a closer look at how the Architect detailed this section.

Of course, this depiction is not to be construed as an exact detailing recommendation by the Brick SouthEast.



across the country based on its understanding of Converse’s prominent place among Southern colleges and its need to distinguish itself as a flagship school for women pursuing a career in science. “Our goal was for Phifer Hall to mirror the real-world scientific research environment students will encounter after they graduate,” says Benjamin Benson, project manager for Jenkins•Peer Architects. “Twenty-first century research is a highly collaborative process, and it was important that the new lab areas and classrooms support group study and exploration.”

Phifer Hall offers students and faculty access to the latest in equipment and technology for the study of botany, ecology, chemistry and biology. With plenty of public space, inviting porches and classrooms designed for subjects other than science, non-science majors and visitors also feel welcome.

The 36,000-square-foot science building derives much of its architectural

style from existing campus structures, which follows the college’s larger master plan of giving new buildings their own presence while honoring Converse’s traditions. To achieve this, the Jenkins•Peer team worked closely with the brick manufacturer to find a texture and color of modular brick that closely mirrors the brick used on other campus buildings. The large tower adjacent to Phifer Hall’s main entrance was designed to pay homage to the distinctive clock tower on Wilson Hall, which has come to symbolize Converse College.

Integral to the design are numerous masonry arches, banding, corbelling and cast stone accents, all of which are created to evoke classic architecture while also adding balance and scale. Large Roman arches, created by successively corbelling four courses from the face of the wall, sweep over the front and back entrances of Phifer Hall. Smaller Roman and radial arches are similarly corbelled and top the

many windows and recessed brick panels prominent throughout the project. Simple stretcher-course horizontal banding is also corbelled from the field. Even the brick below the cast stone coping is either corbelled or set in rowlock courses to create visual interest. A masonry parapet, built on the opposite end from the tower, balances the building’s composition.

Phifer Hall has quickly become a landmark on the Converse College campus. Students in all majors gather to study in its public areas or to relax on its spacious porch. Susan Phifer Johnson, a Converse trustee and the woman for whom the building is named, was instrumental in raising funds for the construction of Phifer Hall. She is thrilled with the finished product. When asked by the *Herald-Journal* in Spartanburg to describe her favorite feature of the building, she replied, “I like the exterior and interior arches. You can see the brick outside reflected in the glass here.”



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