BIBLIOTECA LATINOAMERICANA &
WASHINGTON UNITED YOUTH CENTER
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Located on the historic stagecoach route leading into San Jose, the Biblioteca Latinoamericana and Washington Area Youth Center anchors a redevelopment parcel surrounded by commercial, educational and residential uses one mile south of downtown.

The Biblioteca Latinoamericana plays a central role in the quality of community life by housing one of the state’s largest collections of Latin American literature. The main reading room with its curved glu-lam beamed ceiling is supported on a sandstone colored masonry block. The pilasters are split-faced masonry and the walls are precision block. A community room holds a weave of different colors and textures of masonry with a roll up door that extends to the Placita.

“La Entrada”, the primary architectural element of the project is a concrete block and clay brick “tapestry”, which narrates in abstract form the history of Anglo and Latin American relations. A traditional geometric motif serpentinates across the wall and is engaged by a free form abstract mass of masonry influenced by abstract modern paintings. The weave of the two symbolizes historical precedent and modernism. Where the two intersect a masonry projection occurs, casting deep shadows in daylight and sparks of electric light at night.

The primary spaces of the Youth Center are also constructed of expressed masonry similarly to the Biblioteca’s strategy. The entry to the Youth Center is marked by a tall tower element that acts as a landmark icon for the neighborhood.

Structural masonry in this project has been used in a new and innovative way that reflects the past and looks to the future.

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The Edwards Theatre Group is a strong supporter of concrete masonry design and construction. They look for traditional building elements used in non-traditional ways.

This 18 million-dollar complex contains effective use of concrete masonry units in non-traditional details. It also contains liberal amounts of marble and granite.

An old-fashioned moviehouse motif is used at the Mountain Village location. The two-auditorium facades nearest the entrance have 1950’s style mini-marquees crowned with tall, tapered neon pillars. Those pillars are designed and constructed using several concrete masonry units available. Special colors were chosen for the blended split-face, solid-color shadow block and scored split-face units.

The architect utilized concrete masonry units to achieve something as unique as the pillars and the design that is repeated throughout in the columns, pilasters, and in the exterior walls.

At other areas, concrete masonry units were used to create raised planter areas lending a dramatic park-like effect at the entrance. Also, an exterior wall of the red/brown split-face units was carried into the interior area.
Genentech’s plans called for a four-story, 100,000 s.f. office building situated in a key portion of the company’s hilltop campus, located in South San Francisco. DES designed the new building with a “Main Street” concept of common space for staff events, an outdoor plaza and an enclosed link to two existing buildings.

Among the factors influencing the design were:

1) The new building must be harmonious with the existing structures; 2) the links it provides to the other facilities must be done by creating a common design theme for the entire complex and 3) the landscaping and exterior spaces must blend with the campus as a whole.

The result is a new building built on a steep grade situated above the existing buildings which are placed at a higher level. Materials used for the lower level structures are different from the rest of the buildings to retain a sense of “earth.” At the base of the exterior walls, split-face and smooth-faced textured blocks in brown and charcoal colors add detail and visual variety. Additionally, concrete masonry at the ground level is scaled to a human scale. Its imperfect texture gives the building surface a tactility and feeling that it could have been crafted by hand.

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The Professional Schools Building responds to the twenty-three percent enrollment growth rate this Central Valley campus is experiencing. Housing the College of Arts, Letters & Sciences, the School of Education and the School of Business, this 96,000 square foot facility provides administrative and faculty offices and both specialized and general instructional classrooms. An outdoor lawn Amphitheater, plus several Multi-media Lecture Rooms with auditorium seating for 100 and 200 persons are also provided for both campus and community users.

Sited on the campus edge, the complex is designed as a geode with a restrained academic exterior in soft hues matching the overall historic campus architecture, with the courtyards embellished by stronger colors and textures. Classrooms are located on the first floors of the two of the structures, with administrative and faculty offices on the second and third floors. The one-story Lecture Hall structure is positioned between the parking lots and the courtyards to provide both campus and community access. As with all other instructional spaces, the Lecture Rooms accommodate multi-media presentation formats, and can also be used for recording.

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The Extended Education Building provides adult education within the Cal State Dominguez Hills Campus. The facility provides distance learning opportunities in a comprehensive program, supported by administrative offices, registration, a conferencing center for on-campus and off-campus groups, instructional classrooms and a teleconferencing lecture hall.

The new facility bridges the relationship of the educational community to the surrounding neighborhood with appropriately contextual scale and bold forms. Each independent function is expressed in a complex of three buildings, all organized around the intersection of two walls, one diagonal and one circular. The registration building reaches out toward the main campus and is strategically located as the primary point of entry. The classroom building is the center and heart of the facility. The administration building is formally located at the corner of the site, providing public access facing north and service access to the rear.

Concrete masonry provides a durable, low maintenance solution. It is a reflection of the original concrete masonry buildings that defined the birth of the campus. Two patterns, split face and precision block, and two colors, tan and grey define each element of the structure. Scored precision block gives the appearance of the square, stacked bond used in the original campus buildings of the 1960’s, integrating this new building form into the existing campus fabric.

This home for high-tech and experimental programs brings responsiveness and new vitality to an ever-growing need for continuing education.

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MARINE CORPS RESERVE TRAINING FACILITY
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This four building facility is used by the public, reservists and active duty Marines. Staffed by 30 full-time personnel, it gets very concentrated use during weekends when up to 350 reservists participate in “drill weekends”. Training is provided for vehicle maintenance, radio communications and administration with separate buildings designed for each.

The buildings have been arranged along a linear axis to create a variety of outdoor spaces and are linked together with a simple, clear circulation path. This continuous axis is delineated through the use of a blue stained precision face masonry spline wall. This wall, visible both on the inside and the exterior of the facility, serves to cohesively tie together the entire 45,000 square foot facility.

Alternating bands of precision and split face masonry units have been used to lower the scale of the buildings, while providing visual interest. The selection of masonry as an exterior material results in a minimum of maintenance, and durability to sustain ocean weather. Using masonry for bearing walls, the design incorporates the structure by expressing it, rather than concealing it.

With the program dictating a variety of massing and heights, the changes in heights define the different functional areas of the facility. These areas included warehouses, a drill hall, and vehicle maintenance bays, all of which use masonry as their interior wall surface, due to the material’s resistance to damage.

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Constructed in 1999, the Riverside County Sheriff Station rests on a 2.7-acre site near Hemet California. Coordinated and funded by the Economic Development Agency, the 22,000 square foot facility was constructed in a Design/Build format at a cost of $3,280,000.

Positioned on a long, rectangular site, the building separates a small public parking area from secured Sheriff vehicles. A prominent component of the building’s program was a large, high-security evidence warehouse. Banded masonry responds to both the requirement for high-security and the high standard of design appropriate to a facility dedicated to the safety of the citizens of Riverside County.

The building features a combined use of masonry units, which further serves to define various areas of the building. The masonry columns that support the wood trellis work at the entry and masonry walls include special split face units and precision blocks, manufactured by a member of CMACN. Complimentary wall surfaces are of exterior textured plaster, insulated glazing and standing seam metal roof.

The building houses both the Sheriff’s Station and the County Supervisor’s Administrative Office. A community meeting room affords building access to surrounding neighborhood organizations.

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- Technical information on concrete masonry for design professionals.
- Protect and advance the interests of the concrete masonry industry.
- Develop new and existing markets for concrete masonry products.
- Coordinate members’ efforts in solving common challenges within the masonry industry.

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**JANUARY 2001**