

Case Study

Kimball® Office



Abundant use of glass floods these Cetra work stations with natural light — an aesthetic asset and an electricity-saving plus in LEED certification.

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) realized its ambition to create an environmentally advanced, technological, people-pleasing space in historic downtown Harrisburg.

Pennsylvania
Housing Finance
Agency



Executive offices glow, dressed in Definition casegoods with Skye and Bingo seating.

“It’s important for us to convey a sense of confidence, security and institutional endurance.”

Members of the team that created the new headquarters agree: “I’ve never worked on another project quite like it.”

The highly collaborative, determined group included the architect, interior designer, PHFA employees and executives, two dealer representatives and one from Kimball Office. All seem to share equal enthusiasm for the 18-month creative process — and its impressive results.

Design Challenge

The agency, whose purpose is providing “affordable housing for older adults, families of modest means and persons with disabilities,” is highly regarded throughout Pennsylvania for its stability and effectiveness.

Accordingly, “We try to present ourselves as a respected bank would,” says Rick Nichols, PHFA Director of Information Technology. “It’s important for us to convey a sense of confidence, security and institutional endurance.”



The Transwall ZWall system and Coliseum chairs surround an Aspire table, which can be folded, moved and stored as needed.

In addition, the agency was determined to have its headquarters earn LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification through the U.S. Green Building Council.

There were also civic considerations, due to the fact that the agency was moving into “the last remaining prime space on the banks of the Susquehanna River.”

Last – but far from least – the PHFA wanted to be sure its new space supported high morale among its 300 employees, all of whom were moving from hard-walled offices.

“It’s always a challenge when people feel like they’re losing their office,” says architect Benedict Dubbs. “We did mock-ups to show them they’d have more storage and more work space. Those were very beneficial.”

The Kimball Office Solution

As one of six furniture companies contending for the PHFA contract, Kimball Office was chosen because its products were “aesthetically pleasing, made with quality materials,” says Rick Nichols.

“To earn LEED certification in an urban site such as ours, we had to rely a lot on interior elements such as HVAC, lighting, and furniture,” he points out. “It’s not like a rural or suburban site where the concerns are more about drainage and erosion.”

Fortunately, Nichols noted, Kimball Office offers furniture that is also made to last, which makes buildings more sustainable. Also, Kimball Office products are designated label-free by the EPA for ozone-depleting chemicals.

These factors helped make Kimball Office products “important in obtaining our certification,” Nichols said.

“We used light woods and fabrics that don’t show much wear and tear, and lots of glass,” says architect Dubbs. “The result is a space that’s very bright throughout. In fact, more than 90% of the spaces have some direct natural light, which is also an important LEED consideration.”

Power and data connectivity were also significant factors in employee satisfaction. “We rely on advanced technology and a highly controlled environment, with lots of sensors for light and temperature,” says Rick Nichols. With abundant base options and flexible outlet/port placement, Kimball Office products easily supported the agency’s needs for plentiful power access and data connectivity.

Installation went smoothly, according to all reports. “The systems went together fast, and the installers were very complimentary of how things were packed and shipped,” Dubbs notes.

The end result? “When you walk into this space and see all the wood, it’s so comfortable, you immediately feel at home,” says Rick Nichols.



Vista lounge furniture and a Definition occasional table complement the adjoining Cetra workstations and set PHFA clients at ease.

Kimball® Office. A place that works for you.



PHFA conveys confidence with Footprint workstations, Bingo side seating and award-winning Skye chairs.

Product specifications: Cetra® systems; Footprint® worksurfaces and storage; Definition® casegoods; Aspire® tables and Conferencing Solutions; Fundamental® files; Skye®, Coliseum®, Bingo®, and Vista™ seating; Transwall's Corporate Wall and ZWall.

Project Team: Rick Nichols, PHFA; Benedict Dubbs, Murray Associates; Reuel Ryman, Total Office Solutions.

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