

## Constructor Magazine

### An AGC Publication

#### Short Takes

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#### Perfect Attendance

#### University renovation modernizes classrooms

By Tom Nicholson

**W**ork is wrapping up on a major renovation project at Tennessee State University to upgrade 190,000 sq ft of classrooms and administrative spaces.

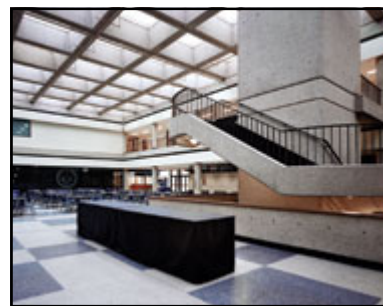
The \$16.8-million project to refurbish TSU's Avon Williams campus in Nashville, led by Johnson Johnson Crabtree Architects PC and Hastings Architecture Associates LLC, both of Nashville, was started in 2005 and performed in 13 stages. Birmingham, Ala.-based Doster Construction Co., a member of the Alabama AGC chapter, handled construction and construction management.

"We are finishing up paint and patch jobs now," says George Herring, Doster project manager. "This was a large interior project."

The project marks the first time TSU employed a construction manager on a campus project. TSU selected the project team through a negotiated process.

Included in the renovations were complete interior modernizations to the Avon Campus' main four-story building. It was built in the 1960s and lacked up-to-date data wiring and mechanical systems.

An addition to the original project scope was the refurbishment of a 14,400-sq-ft auditorium, says Bob Grummon, architect at Hastings Architecture. "We worked with the contractor to make mock-up classrooms so that we could physically see and test our design ideas. Our goal was to make classrooms as functional as possible for students."

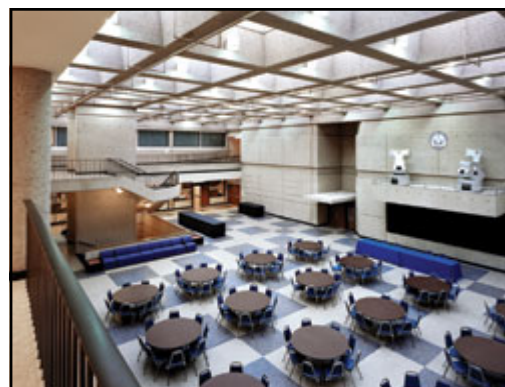


Refurbishment of an auditorium and 190,000 sq ft of classroom and common-area space was accomplished without interruption to class schedules. (Photo courtesy of Tennessee State University)

Classes were ongoing in the same building during construction. "It was a high coordination type of job with lots of communication between client and contractor," Herring says. "Working while the school was still in operation was a huge challenge. Educators are not used to having construction going on while they are teaching."

Designers took the situation into account, calling for dust barriers to be built where construction was taking place. "We lived by the tenet that if students miss one day of class, they don't get that day back," Herring says.

Herring, a TSU alumnus who graduated two decades ago with an engineering degree, says his connection to the school played a role in securing the contract. "It was a tremendous opportunity to go back to my alma mater and use the skills I was taught there," he says.



In a first for Tennessee State University, the school hired a construction manager to handle the large-scale interior project, which included classroom modernizations and infrastructure upgrades. (Photo courtesy of Tennessee State University)