Submission Category:
History Renovation / Renovation

Project Type:
Higher Education

Project Address:
650 Eagle Street
Terre Haute, IN 47809

Substantial Completion:
October 2015

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY NORMAL HALL
Normal Hall is Indiana State University’s oldest surviving building planned and constructed for student education. Completed on December 17, 1909, the Normal Hall Library supported research and education for the college’s fledgling degree programs. The collection was relocated to Cunningham Library in 1973 and the building become largely unoccupied and used primarily for archival storage.

The 40 years that followed the closing of the library witnessed deterioration of the original structure. Previous renovations had damaged a significant amount of plaster cornices, scagliola and column capitals. Columns were wrapped in vinyl wallcovering and a portion of the Reading Room ceiling had been removed for a staircase. Only a few of the 60 original stained glass panels of the rotunda dome survived in tact and the skylight above had been replaced with corrugated metal. While many original items such as light fixtures, staircases and door hardware were lost to history, original interior doors, a fireplace surround, bronze and marble staircases with original candelabras and iron railings remained.

The renovation of Normal Hall was planned to create a building that communicates and facilitates the University’s commitment to the academic success of a diverse student body. Work on the exterior included restoration of dangerously deteriorated clay and limestone masonry veneer, window replacement, replication of the historic south staircase, replacement roofing and the rotunda skylight, structural support at masonry parapets, stabilization of the north façade entablature and water proofing the original concrete foundation below grade.

Work on the interior included restoration of the stained glass dome, 20 columns with original scagliola and faux-paint finishes, bronze and marble staircases, original wood doors and ceilings and other original finishes based on historic documentation and forensic analysis. The books stacks were replaced with usable floors for staff and students while maintaining their impressive visual to the Reading Room. A portion of the book shelving system, including the original glass floors, remain. Furnishings in the Reading Room were reproduced from photos and included reproduction lighting. A fire suppression system was added and building electrical/mechanical systems were replaced, including custom lighting produced from archival photography.

The Normal Hall Reading Room and Gallery, restored much as they appeared in 1909 and crowned by the magnificent stained-glass dome are now a campus destination for students and faculty. Together with recently renovated buildings, Normal Hall promises to relate the significance of ISU’s historic past and dedication to future success.
Before Photos

Deterioration

Plaster covered dome

South Façade
**During Photos**

- Stacks Wall Replacement
- South Stair Restoration
Exterior Restoration
Rotunda Dome
Exterior View – North Elevation

First Floor Stacks
First Floor Reading Room
New Addition
New Addition