

BEST COMMUNITY IMPACT / OUTSIDE SAN FRANCISCO

Alameda Boys & Girls Club

BY HANNAH ALBARAZI
San Francisco Business Times

The new Alameda Boys & Girls Club clubhouse extends well beyond its walls, deep into the community.

When Executive Director George Phillips set out to build the \$9 million new clubhouse, he believed it could help local kids stay off the streets and develop into healthy adults. It turns out the positive impact on neighborhood families exceeded his expectations.

"We've brought a first-rate facility to a neighborhood in Alameda that didn't have anything like this. Kids feel good about it. People from other neighborhoods are coming over here. I think we've created a melting pot and are bringing people together," Phillips said.

The Boys & Girls Club moved from its former location in a crowded 1950s tilt-up on Lincoln Street to a custom-designed building on the grounds of Woodstock Elementary School, adjacent to public baseball fields and a playground in West Alameda. The project is in the middle of the poor Woodstock neighborhood and has provided a fun and safe environment for youth at the end of the school day and on weekends. Open six days a week and 52 weeks a year, the new building is more than three times larger than the previous clubhouse and within walking distance of numerous schools.

"We wanted to integrate the club into the neighborhood. It's invitational to the public. We want to make sure the building expands beyond the walls. It's a depressed side of Alameda and the location is ideal," said project architect Tom Lee of LDA Architects. "It's a playful space and we created a lobby that became a place for people to hang out. It takes advantage of sunlight and the gymnasium is naturally ventilated and uses no power. The fiberglass windows let light through, but keep it cool."

The 25,000-square-foot clubhouse houses health and dental clinics, classrooms, a music room, a gym and a commercial kitchen, in which lunch is served. The club continues to offer services available at the old facility such as career-counseling, technology training, leadership mentoring and homework help.

"We've hosted a lot of community involvement such as town hall meetings and screening clinics for dental and respiratory health. We've become a gathering place for community events. We're hosting a program



The \$10 million project in the struggling Woodstock neighborhood is open six days a week and 52 weeks a year.

WINNER

Location: 1900 Third St., Alameda.

Size: 24,780 square feet.

Cost: \$10 million.

Developer: Alameda Boys & Girls Club.

Contractor: Nibbi Brothers General Contractors.

Architect: LDA Architects.

that has professionals help (adults) prepare their taxes," Phillips said.

Of course, the project faced its share of challenges. While the 99-year lease for the new clubhouse was provided for free to the Alameda Boys & Girls Club by the Alameda Unified School District, the project required all aspects of the building's construction to uphold the rigorous standards of the Division of the

State Architect, which oversees building on school district land. The cost of the clubhouse came from a mixture of public funds, philanthropic grants, and donations from corporations and individuals. A unique partnership between the club, city government, the school district, the architects, the developers and the Division of the State Architect, resulted in the creation of one of the most seismically sound buildings in Alameda.

Project architect Lee noted that while the high standards set by the Division of the State Architect and the project's subsequently long review process increased the original construction estimates and required more time to be invested in planning than originally estimated, it ensures a safe space for future generations of Alameda children.

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Finalist: QB3 East Bay Innovation Center

Wareham Development knows innovation doesn't grow on trees. Seeing an opportunity to nurture life science and green technology startups and bring long-term economic growth to the East Bay, Wareham Development built the QB3 East Bay Innovation Center.

Chris Barlow, a partner at Wareham Development, worked with the cities of Berkeley and Emeryville, the University of California's QB3 institute and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory to create a 9,300-square-foot incubator space to attract and retain startups within the broader East Bay.

FINALIST

Location: Aquatic Park Center, 2929 Seventh St., Berkeley.

Size: 9,300 square feet.

Cost: \$1.2 million. Tenants pay about \$750 per month.

Developer: Wareham Development.

The renovation of the space — a former Twinkie bakery — cost Wareham \$1.2 million and created a state-of-the-art laboratory and research center.

Innovators who lease space in the new West Berkeley building will have access to wet labs and research equipment and are encouraged to collaborate with local corporations such as Bayer Healthcare, Novartis and Siemens, Barlow said.

"After successful incubation, Wareham will help direct all QB3 EBIC companies who are ready to branch out on their own to larger spaces across the Bay Area," Barlow said. Among the companies already leasing space with QB3 East Bay Innovation Center is Lygos, which is working to develop high efficiency, novel processes to produce valuable industrial chemicals.

—Hannah Albarazi ■



Wareham's Chris Barlow worked with QB3 to create a 9,300-square-foot incubator for startups.