Altieri

YALE UNIVERSITY JOSEPH SLIFKA CENTER FOR JEWISH LIFE

ARCHITECT
Landow and Landow Architects

LOCATION
New Haven, CT

SIZE
20,000 SF

COMPLETED
2022

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Although organized Jewish life at Yale dates back to 1913, the University did not unite its main Jewish student programs - Hillel, The Kosher Kitchen, and Young Israel House – under one roof until 1995. The Slifka Center, today the campus hub for Jewish life, consists of three levels including a garden courtyard, Kosher kitchen, chapel, reading room, and library.

Altieri initially completed an existing conditions report for the mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems in serving the building.

The major scope of work involved the comprehensive renovation of two distinct commercial kosher kitchens, meat-only and dairy-only, which require strict separation in order to adhere to Jewish dietary laws. Mechanically, heating and cooling loads had to accommodate this new kitchen programming, as well as the additional cafeteria square footage at the new skylight area. The existing kitchen exhaust makeup air unit was replaced to meet current building codes and kitchen hood exhaust requirements. This posed coordination issues as the prepackaged unit had to be split into individual components due to the tight ceiling constraints. Additional challenges were presented by the existing concrete cast building structure. Design of new mechanical ductwork and piping had to be tightly coordinated in order to seamlessly integrate all services and devices, prioritizing architectural integrity by avoiding surface-mounted “interruptions.”

Electrically, all-new kitchen, mechanical, and plumbing loads were calculated and the existing equipment loads were assessed to confirm that newly-designed electric service capacity would be adequately sized. The multi-voltage system was identified and distributed throughout the lighting and power circuiting for re-use in the newly programmed design. The existing sprinkler system did not comply with required pressures resulting in re-connecting the high pressure main and using code compliant sprinkler heads. The plumbing system, primarily piping for the new kitchens, presented its challenges and ultimately required full basement slab removal and piping replacement due to decaying, existing infrastructure.

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