



Trinity Christian Academy Weatherford, Texas

Just 20 minutes from Fort Worth, Texas, sits Weatherford, a historic town with a community-minded spirit. It is one of the fastest growing cities in the state, and following right along on this course of growth is Trinity Christian Academy (TCA), the largest Christian school in the county. Like the town in which it was founded nearly a decade ago, TCA has given new meaning to the concept of community, in particular with its most recent construction project.



Founded in 1993 in response to a growing need in the community for a Bible-based Christian school, TCA opened its doors with just 10 elementary school students. A school board was established and the school began the process of accreditation through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Enrolment grew steadily with each new school year, and soon the school had little choice but to add portable buildings.

"This was not only aesthetically displeasing, but the portables exposed our students to the elements and reduced campus safety," said Michael Skaggs, TCA chief administrator. "These factors led to the necessity of constructing a new facility."

TCA hired Building God's Way for the building design and Joe R. Jones Construction to build the project.

TCA's plan was to build a new building that would serve students in grades 6-12. The 55,000-square-foot, three-story building would include classrooms, two science labs, office space, and a cafeteria, a gymnasium, computer lab, and a library/media center.

The gymnasium was designed with a weight room and dressing rooms, and made large enough so that the school could host tournaments on the site. The computer lab featured 28 workstations that would allow older students to earn college credit by completing dual enrollment coursework online.

The focal point of the new building would be the second floor library/media center. It was designed with a contemporary coffee shop theme, with stained concrete floors and an open ceiling.

The building's placement on the site also made room for a new playground, which was set to tie both the primary and secondary school buildings together.

Because of the site grading, the school's main entrance would be on the first floor with a separate entrance on the second floor. For added security, classrooms and offices were placed on the second and third floors.

Construction began in July 2010 and would labor on during the entire 2010-2011 school year. For this reason, extra measures were taken by both the school and the construction company to ensure

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and the school family*

students were kept away from any potential harm.

"Barriers were erected to protect students from wandering too close to the construction site or from being distracted by work being done," Skaggs said.

Security on the site was also stepped up. All workers had to receive a badge before they were let onto the campus."

Once the foundation was poured and steel arrived on the site, the school held a "Holy Graffiti" event.

"We had a pancake breakfast for families and then everyone went to the construction site where we wrote prayers, scriptures, and words of encouragement, and blessed on these materials," Skaggs said.

Building a new facility was priority, but the school had a secondary mission.

"Our desire was that workers on the site experience the love of God as expressed through elements of the school family. We saw this project not only as a means to increase our facilities, but as a means to further the kingdom of God," Skaggs said.

In light of this, the school hired a part-time individual whose job was not only intended to facilitate the process of transitioning into the new building, but also to minister to the workers and their families.

Along with volunteers and TCA staff members, this Ministry of Construction director oversaw numerous acts of outreach at various times throughout construction. These acts included monthly lunches for workers, which included special gifts such as Bibles, tools, and toys.

The school also conducted a Christmas gift drive for workers, pro-



viding them with tools, work gloves and clothes, and toys for their children. Students even got involved, hand-delivering letters of encouragement to workers or posting laminated signs of praise on construction fences.

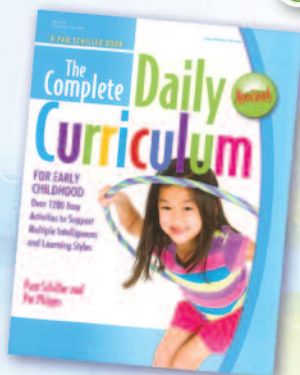
The efforts did not go without notice or appreciation by the crew.

"I have never experienced anything like this. You experience all kind of owners in the construction world. They are always unhappy about something. But these guys, even through struggles, always shared a wonderful heart and that they truly cared about us as contractors," said Dustin Brown with JRJ Construction.

Skaggs said, "The Ministry of Construction component of the proj-

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2011-2012 school year, and the new gym was completed shortly thereafter. Since then, the school has seen its enrollment surge past the 450 mark. The good news is that the new facility offers plenty of room for continued growth. **CSP**

Joe R. Jones Construction, based in Weatherford, Texas, is a complete service general contractor. For more than 20 years, the firm has worked with the goal to far exceed industry expectations in construction, www.jrjinc.com.

>> FAST FACTS

School: Trinity Christian Academy

Location: Weatherford, Texas

Grades Served: PreK4-12th Grade

Size: 55,000 square feet

Cost: \$7.4 million

Project Goal: To construct a new secondary building

Challenge: Construction during school months required special practices to keep students away from potential harm.

Solution: Barriers were put up around the construction site, and all workers were required to get a badge before they were allowed on the construction site.

ect is something I will never forget. What a blessing it was to see relationships develop between construction crews and the school family. Beyond it being the right thing to do, I believe that this resulted in a level of care and commitment that might not have been present had workers seen this as "just another job."

Construction on the new building was completed in time for the

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