Altieri

The Spence School

Courtesy Kliment Halsband Architects

Architect: Kliment Halsband Architects

Location: New York, New York **Completed:** 2013

Program: Education **Size:** 110,000 SF

The Spence School was founded in 1892 as a school for girls. It is a nationally-recognized leader of the education of girls and young women. Its core upper and middle school facilities date from 1929, with a gymnasium and office addition in 1987. The purchase of an adjacent townhouse provided an opportunity to create a unified campus while maintaining a distinct identity for Middle and Upper Schools. The project included reconfiguration of three floors in the main building for the Middle School; renovation of the townhouse for the Upper School; design of a Physical Education Center with an improved gymnasium, fitness center, and practice rooms; Performing Arts Center with a theater, dance studio, and music room; and enhanced faculty work areas and faculty/student meeting spaces. The atrium is a light-filled café and study space connecting the three campus buildings.

The school was renovated in six phases over three years. The majority of the work took place at a rapid pace during the short summer school construction period. Design of new mechanical systems was challenging due to an existing structure of poured concrete and low-height structural beams. A system of ceiling-mounted chilled beam systems and perimeter hot water radiation was designed to minimize the need for ductwork and to keep new ceilings as high as possible. The system also offered increased energy efficiency as a result of its use of higher temperature chilled water and ventilation air only at the active chilled beams. A new central plant utilizing modular chillers now serves the entire campus. New lighting and lighting control systems are programmable and vacancy-/occupancy-sensor based. AV designs feature prominently in our K-12 Independent and public school programs. Classroom AV support was a key feature of the program for The Spence School.