

Best Interior • Award of Excellence

IT Center at Concourse

Owner / Developer: Anthem Inc.

Architect: TS3 Architects PC

Contractor: Whiting-Turner Contracting Company

Anthem, a national company that manages health insurance programs, leased a 315,000-square-foot, four-story circa 1992 building so it could reorganize its regional operations. The building, renovated in four phases over three years, created workspace for 2,000+ associates. In addition to the work areas, the cafeteria was renovated, and a wellness/fitness center, conference area and recreation zones were added.

What was once an awkward, dated layout has been retooled into a workplace full of daylight, vibrancy and interaction. Private offices, conference rooms and workrooms were combined into central architectural “pavilions.” Large expanses of glass and bright accents of color open up atrium spaces. Public and collaboration spaces are now clustered around the atriums, making them hubs of activity.

The second floor was reinvented as an IT center. People entering can see all the way through and immediately get a feeling of openness. Workstations are planned so associates can engage in collaborative and individual work simultaneously.

As requested, the new work spaces amplify collaboration and creativity so consultants can focus on doing their best daily while wanting to return for future assignments. The project is a successful real estate property that continues to attract and retain high-quality employees in Hampton Roads.

Judges’ comments: The jury found the IT Center at Concourse well deserving of the Best Interior Award of Excellence with energetic building interior features creating multiple community centers. The project is noteworthy through the development of a set of common and breakout spaces that offer a lively palette of volumes and colors. These moves animate spaces situating a large, dense office community with places to take breaks, meet, and relax.

As the clear alternative to the other spaces in this IT Center, the common areas hold together well as complex atria. For a call-type center environment, the common spaces feel quite nice. They did a pretty bang-up job with open spaces. These spaces carry the project.

The jury found the success of the community spaces through anchored moves brought parts of the existing building into play. Floors become walkways as they near the airy stairways. Spatial intersections joyfully melt together with the opacity of adjacencies dissolved through geometry, multi-level volumes, and framed voids highlighting carved-out space punctuated by color.

Creation of depth with folding wrapped frames further developed a diverse set of elements using a palette ranging from strong opacity to graded transparencies. In this project, the jury found the conference meeting rooms with window expanses inversed the cadence of the common spaces by further highlighting the transparency of meeting with broad graphic strokes. All around, the jury found this going far beyond a simple surface action using transparency and translucent walls to bring space into adjacent spaces; all like the other parts, they contribute and interact.

