

CONTEXT

SUMMER 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Redeveloping the Refinery

Design As Protest

The Social Architecture
of Communities

2021
DESIGN
AWARDS
ISSUE

SCHOOL IS OUT

Happy
B Day
Alyssa

No

DESIGN PROFILE

ESPERANZA HEALTH CENTER

Brawer and Hauptman Architects





PROJECT: Esperanza Health Center
LOCATION: 861 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, PA
CLIENT: Esperanza Health Care
PROJECT SIZE: 35,000 sf.

PROJECT TEAM:
 Brawer & Hauptman Architects (Architecture)
 Orndorf & Associates (Structural Engineering)
 Smith Miller Associates (M/E/P/FP Engineering)
 Target Building Construction (General Contractor)
 Omnivest (Owners Rep.)

The adaptive reuse of the Kensington Trust Company Building as a state-of-the-art outpatient facility for this health-care client provides a beacon of hope for one of the most troubled neighborhoods of Philadelphia. As a landmark historic building at the intersection of Kensington and Allegheny, ground zero for the city's devastating opioid epidemic, the building's renovation promises to uplift a neighborhood in desperate need of optimism and support.

The owner/client organization is a multi-cultural faith-based ministry providing affordable, holistic healthcare to the Latino and under-served communities of North Philadelphia. Services include primary medical care for adults and children, dental care, prenatal care, behavioral health services, on-site medication dispensaries, social services assistance, and many others.

The architectural vision was for a light-filled, transparent, welcoming facility that features rich materials and classical details with modern elements that overlook the dramatic lobby from numerous upper-level waiting areas and offices, bringing architectural interest and openness to a building type that is often dreary, clinical and defensive when located in areas of poverty and crime.

The grandeur of the lobby's space, materials, and detailing provides the focus of the project and reflects the owner's vision to bring pride back to the community. All of these features are compatible with the restored decorative plaster ceiling, the marble walls and the extensive decorative plaster moldings.

This project serves as a model for adaptive reuse excellence in Philadelphia and will hopefully serve as a precedent for the future development of our city. This health center is an exemplary project that demonstrates how an enlightened client with a visionary mission paired with a creative design team clearly demonstrates how preservation and adaptive reuse of a neighborhood's architectural assets can build community and uplift its residents. ■

