

Alliance Française Village

New School and Cultural Center at 618 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, FL

Information provided by Mc Gowan Builders, Inc., General Contractor



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TEAM INFORMATION

Client: **Alliance Française de Miami**
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618 S.W. 8th Street, Miami, FL 33130

General Contractor: **Mc Gowan Builders, Inc.**
Aidan McConville, Vice President, tel: 305.774.7100
La Puerta del Sol Building, 800 Douglas Road, Ste. 205,
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Architect, Interior Designer: **Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.**
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4040 N.E. Second Avenue, Ste. 301, Miami, FL 33137

Owner's Representative: **Europtima USA, Inc.**
Eric Bordreuil, tel: 305.864.4999
9509 Byron Avenue, Surfside, FL 33154

Structural Engineer: **Bliss & Nyitray, Inc.**
Paul A. Zilio, P.E., Sr. Vice President, Partner
tel: 305.442.7086

800 Douglas Road, Ste. 300, Coral Gables, FL 33134

MEP Engineer:

SDM Consulting Engineers

Manny Montoya, tel: 305.446.2788

135 Almeria Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Civil Engineer:

EAC Consulting, Inc.

Mike Adeife, tel: 305.264.2557

815 NW 57 Avenue, Suite 402, Miami, FL 33126

A/V Consultant:

Technosystems, Inc.

Thierry Sparfel, President, tel: 305.828.0180

6135 NW 167th Street, Unit E1, Hialeah, FL 33015

Truss Roof and

Metal Decking Fabricator:

Nicholas J. Bouras, Inc./The New Columbia Joist Company

25 DeForest Avenue, Summit, NJ, tel: 908.277.1617

Steel Erector and

Sloped Roof Structure

Fabricator:

NJ Boom & Erectors

Terry Kolb, Vice President

RR1, Henryville, PA 18832, tel: 570.620.1546

PROJECT INFORMATION

Construction cost:	\$3.1 million
Building square footage:	15,000
Stories:	2
Maximum height:	40 feet (towers)
Site square footage:	17,000
Building footing:	10,500 square feet

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mc Gowan Builders served Alliance Française de Miami as general contractor for construction of its new facility in Miami, known as the Alliance Française Village. The project encompassed renovation and conversion of two pre-existing buildings – a 5,000-square foot, one-story warehouse and a 6,000-square foot, two-story industrial building; ground-up construction of a 5,000-square foot addition; related site work; and utility connections.

The facility is the new home for a not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to promote the French language and culture through the operation of a language school and other educational activities, encouragement of international travel, and cultural exchanges.

This renovation and revitalization project transformed a former printing facility and an adjacent property into a cultural and educational center that houses 14 classrooms; a reception

area/lobby atrium; a library; a bookstore; a large multi-purpose and event space; offices; two meeting/break rooms; a catering kitchen; and a retail component with six tenants, including a French café and a travel agency.

The facility features new and reinforced structural support systems, a custom storefront, new MEPS systems, a hydraulic elevator, zinc casework, kitchen equipment, and an energy recovery HVAC system.

Mc Gowan Builders, along with the HOK design team, engineers, and the client, performed a value engineering analysis aimed at meeting the available construction budget. Through scope changes and system and material revisions and substitutions, the team reduced the initial construction cost by approximately \$1 million or 25%.

According to Aidan McConville, Mc Gowan Builders' Vice President, "The project's logistical and technical challenges included coordination of labor teams, sub-contractors, and suppliers based outside of Florida, including in Pennsylvania and New Jersey; a fast-track schedule; limited site access; restrictive street and sidewalk closure permits and procedures; and coordination with government agencies, including Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Department (MDWASD), and City of Miami Building Department."

Structural work, foundations, walls, and roofing

The structural work encompassed installation of new steel trusses for the pitched roof and reinforcement of pre-existing concrete tie beams, tie columns, and column bases in the one-story building; and erection of structural elements for the new extension, including shallow footing strip concrete foundations, new reinforced concrete and masonry walls, two new 40-foot high towers (one of which houses an elevator shaft), and structural steel support for the sloped roof above the addition.

Paul Zilio, Senior Vice President and Partner at the Miami-based structural engineering firm of Bliss & Nyitray, Inc., describes the condition of the pre-existing building: "The perimeter columns and tie beams in the one-story structure, erected in 1946, had significantly deteriorated and needed to be reinforced. In addition, the original wood trusses supporting the roof were decayed and their design didn't meet current building codes, so they had to be replaced."

Bliss & Nyitray devised a procedure that reinforced the tie beams and columns, and designed a new structure supporting the roof of the one-story building. The construction crews stripped the deteriorated concrete from the beams and columns, and excavated the floor slab and ground around the columns, spaced at 16 ½ -foot intervals. The tradesmen then poured new two-foot deep concrete column bases, flush with pre-existing masonry wall footings. Holes were drilled in both old tie columns and tie beams to accommodate 16-inch long steel dowels. The dowels were installed in pre-existing concrete elements with Hilti HIT 500 Adhesive Epoxy grout. Each column received 12 dowels. Once dowels were placed, the crews installed re-bars for new columns and connected them to dowels extruding from the old columns and beams. The

crews completed construction of the new 24"x8" tie beams and 12"x12" columns by pouring 4,000psi regular weight structural concrete around the re-bar cages. The new columns and tie beams comprise a new structural support system for the building that currently serves as an event and multi-use facility. The redeveloped one-story building also features a new, large circular window installed in the northern gable wall and a new, seven-inch thick reinforced concrete floor slab.

The roof support system above the one-story building features open web trusses and bottom chord bracing, which are connected with 3/16" x 2 1/2" fillet welds. The trusses are welded to steel plates, which feature headed stud anchors embedded into the tops of new concrete columns. The chord bracing prevents buckling of the trusses due to wind uplift. This design was necessary to accommodate the Florida Building Code's (2004 addition) specific requirements for the Miami-Dade and Broward counties, which are located in a high-velocity hurricane zone. All buildings in Miami-Dade are required to withstand a three-second gust of 146 mph wind.

Despite increased local structural requirements, Bliss & Nyitray, which has extensive experience in hurricane-resistant design, was able to develop the truss and bracing system utilizing standard, pre-designed, and pre-fabricated elements manufactured by The New Columbia Joist Company, a subsidiary of Nicholas Bouras, Inc. Taking advantage of pre-designed structural elements allowed the team to significantly lower the construction cost by avoiding manufacture of a custom structural system for this part of the project.

NJ Boom & Erectors manufactured the structural steel system for the sloped roof above the addition and served as the steel erector for roof support systems in all buildings of the Alliance Française complex.

McConville recalls the logistical challenges of erecting the structural steel: "Access to the site was very limited and its small size prohibited storage of steel elements. To address this situation, Mc Gowan Builders closely controlled the timing of all steel deliveries. As the tractor trailers, traveling either from NJ Boom & Erector's plant in Pennsylvania or from Bouras' plant in New Jersey, pulled in front of the site, the steel was immediately lifted by a 40-ton hydraulic boom and installed by the crews. In total, we installed 50 tons of steel, including 40 tons on the one-story building and 10 tons on the addition."

To make the situation even more challenging, the street closure permit was very restrictive. Explains McConville: "South West 8th Street is one of the busiest thoroughfares in Miami. The FDOT permitted a permanent closure of only one lane, under the condition the project team performs patching and resurfacing on a portion the street. The necessary closures of the second lane were permitted only for a very limited time and mostly at night, forcing us to utilize an overtime schedule. Even this limited closure permit was frequently further restricted on many occasions, for example to accommodate the Superbowl celebrations and the Calle Ocho Parade, one of the largest street festivals in the world, that took place right in front of the construction site."

According to Terry Kolb, NJ Boom & Erectors Vice President, “Fabrication and installation of the structural steel for the addition required exact detailing procedures and high dimension accuracy due to the shape of the sloped roof and the wind resistance requirements. The addition’s structure comprises four W-8 steel columns, bolted with A325-SC bolts; fifty grade 50 structural steel, wide-flange W14x30 beams and W14x27 bracing beams; and a 4,000-square foot galvanized steel metal deck for the cantilevered mezzanine that overlooks the lobby atrium. NJ Boom & Erectors utilized TEKLA Structures 13 software during the design, detailing, and fabrication process.”

Based on drawings supplied by NJ Boom & Erectors, the concrete contractor pre-installed anchor bolts in the foundation slab of the addition. The columns were then anchored to the bolts. The addition’s beams connect to either the columns or anchor bolts installed in the walls.

Recalls Kolb, “The on-site construction of the roof structure for the addition was complicated by its shape, tight dimension tolerances, and the necessary speed dictated by the lack of storage space. The erection crew and the crane operators developed procedures to lift the beams into position at the exact 30-degree angle at which they were to be installed, which allowed for installation immediately upon delivery of steel elements. The quality control of welding was very stringent and an increased amount of welding was required for the metal deck. We utilized AWS D1.1 electrical structural weld process.”

The installation of steel took two weeks, including two days for delivery by trucks, seven days for the one-story building and five days for the addition. NJ Boom & Erectors’ crew of six flew to Florida from Pennsylvania and remained in Miami during the entire steel erection phase.

The total square footage of the new metal deck roofing on the Alliance Française complex is 10,000, including 4,000 square feet above the addition and 6,000 above the one-story structure. The new roofing features corrugated steel deck sheeting, thermal insulation, and 24-gauge Verti-Lok Architectural Standing Seam Metal Roofing Panels coated with white Kynar 500 PVDF resin, which were manufactured by SEMCO Southeastern Metals, Inc. (page 6 at www.semetals.com/MetalRoofingtechnology.pdf). The 3,000-square foot roof of the pre-existing two-story building was refurbished with bitumen material.

The roofing system features an interesting custom-designed element – a structural steel gutter drain located at seam between the sloped roof of the addition and the pitched roof of the one-story building. Manufactured by NJ Boom & Erectors, the U-shaped internal drain is 35 feet long, two feet wide, and one foot deep. The drain was manufactured from grade 50 steel plates, prime painted at the plant, and finish coated upon installation at the site. The sturdy design of the drain prevents leaks into the building below.

The reinforced concrete and masonry exterior walls of both the addition and the pre-existing structures feature stucco finish. The two-story, high-impact storefront of the addition was custom manufactured of aluminum and glass.

Site work and utility connections

The project team installed numerous new utility connection and performed site improvements and landscaping.

New utility connections include:

- 6-inch city sewer,
- 4-inch city water for the buildings,
- 1-inch city water for irrigation,
- 6-inch city water for fire sprinklers,
- 6-inch city water for a fire hydrant.

While the project was already in the early construction phase, MDWASD (Miami-Dade Water and Sewers Department) requested piping size increases for selected utility connections. The crews built utility taps within a very compact project site. The work area was further limited by installation of a deep injection well for site drainage and backflow preventers within a small, 600-square foot grass area. The function of the two feet in diameter, 144-foot deep injection drain is to disperse rainwater within the site. According to the local building code, total dissolved solids, as tested at the base of the pipe, have to be 10,000 particles per minute.

The site work also included fencing in the rear area of the site and installation of three 50-foot flagpoles. Both the flagpoles and their foundations were engineered to meet the required wind loads for Miami-Dade County. The poles are anchored in 2'x2', partially exposed, four-foot deep, reinforced concrete pier foundations. The piers feature three-foot long anchor bolts that connect to the pole bases.

Building systems

Mc Gowan Builders installed all new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and sprinkler systems, and coordinated installation of security, telecommunications, and audiovisual systems in both the pre-existing structures and the addition. During the pre-construction phase, the team performed a value engineering analysis of the MEP systems that resulted in 10% reduction in cost of this component of the project.

The center is equipped with an energy recovery wheel air conditioning rooftop unit that recirculates a portion of the cold inside air by mixing it with the intake warm outside air. This unit was custom-built by Trane, according to the MEP engineer's specifications.

The Alliance Française center features an extensive A/V system that aids its educational and cultural activities. Technosystems, Inc. served as the A/V and telecommunications consultant and designer, and as the low voltage subcontractor. The A/V system encompasses amplification, sound, video, lighting and control components in the classrooms, and a multi-functional system in the event room.

According to Thierry Sparfel, President of Technosystems, "The audiovisual system developed for the event room is based on our firm's designs for the hospitality market, particularly the cruise ship facilities that require suitability for a wide variety of uses and configurations." The A/V system was built around a computerized Crestron control panel. Through a simple touch-

screen interface, the event room can easily be configured by a layperson for a variety of functions. Possible A/V configurations may include surround-sound audio for movie screenings; one-directional audio for speaker events; computerized projector presentations; as well as different sound, lighting, and visual arrangements for banquets, weddings, and other social or business gatherings. “We devoted a significant amount of time to understanding the needs and functions required for this project. A thorough understanding of the client’s functional needs is key to the successful integration of all systems in a user-friendly manner,” ads Sparfel.

Technosystems worked in close partnership with Bose to specify speakers that would provide accurate acoustics and complement the interior design. All classrooms have audio playback capabilities. Five classrooms feature 37" LCD flat screens.

Amir Stamper, Technosystems’ Director of Marketing, describes his firm’s procedure for A/V equipment and wiring assembly that was utilized on the Alliance Française project: “Once the system was designed, our technicians built and fully pre-assembled the equipment racks at our firm’s facility. The systems were then extensively tested. Upon completion of testing, the most sensitive equipment was removed from the racks and packed. Both the pre-wired racks and the equipment were then shipped to the project site and re-assembled. This procedure expedited the final installation at the client’s facility and greatly minimized the possibility of technical problems.”

The A/V system features the following main components: BOSE speakers, QSC amplifiers, Crestron automation system, Sanyo projectors, LG plasma displays, Middle Atlantic equipment racks, SGM lighting control board, and Elation stage lights. The television distribution system includes Dish Network equipment that was programmed to receive TV5’s French-language programming. Wireless Internet access is provided throughout the entire campus. The Internet Café features a separate, independent audiovisual system. The outdoor and indoor surveillance system includes cameras and IP-based DVR (digital video recorder) accessible through the Internet. The reception area showcases digital signage consisting of a 42" plasma screen and a video server that broadcasts advertising, TV programming, or live feeds of events.

Technosystems also installed the center’s telecom and data wiring, Panasonic PABX equipment that connects to BellSouth’s outside lines, and Panasonic telephones. The school’s data network features Cat 5 cables, cable racks, and a patch bay.

Architectural description

Program and location context

The project is located on Calle Ocho (8th Street) in Miami’s “Little Havana” district. The street is currently undergoing accelerated growth and revitalization, as it links Little Havana to the adjacent developments near Brickell Avenue.

Tim Blair, Vice President of Architecture and Yann Weymouth, Director of Design for architecture firm Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc.’s (HOK) Florida offices worked together to devise a design approach for this project. Blair describes the architectural team’s approach: “The design challenge was to economically rehabilitate two old industrial structures in order to

accommodate new uses, including classrooms, a library, a bookstore, a meeting hall, administrative offices, and a French café – all while creating an exciting, fresh image for the center. This has been accomplished by housing the entry between two bold towers, red and blue, transected by the strong diagonal slope of the new white metal roof. The entrance, reception, and sidewalk café are situated in the new addition. This design approach was employed to avoid the equipment, infrastructure, elevator, and stairs intersecting the floors of pre-existing structures. The new elevator and restrooms are housed in the towers. The iconic power of the towers and new roof echo the blue, white, and red of the flags flying in front of the entry ramp. The new café, serving the visitors and students, spills out onto the front porch – an inviting image reminiscent of a European streetscape.”

Zoning and permitting

The project site is located within a Special Overlay District. This zoning category required a Class II Special Permit process for any changes to be made to the existing buildings and site.

The existing buildings were renovated and reused in order to take advantage of existing resources and to maintain some of the original character of the older building’s façade on the streetscape. This approach also had advantages in the zoning review process, as a larger than typically allowed building footprint was approved through a special permit, and the existing zero front setback was allowed to be maintained.

The pre-existing buildings and the addition occupy 10,500 square feet of the 17,000-square foot site, which prevented creation of a sufficient on-site surface parking area. The team obtained a zoning variance that permits all parking offsite. This was allowed due to both metered street parking and the current lease for the parking lot of a nearby church that the owner must maintain. The owner also agreed to provide valet parking service to the church lot during the school’s peak operating hours.

Special systems and materials requirements

The entire project – both the pre-existing and new structures – was required to meet the Florida Building Code and special requirements for High-Velocity Hurricane Zones. In addition to structural elements, all exterior enclosure components and systems have product approvals from Miami-Dade County, which were issued based on special testing requirements.

As the project site is located in a fire zone established by the City of Miami, the roof and roof structure were required to have a 1-hour fire resistance rating.

Interior design

Both the exterior and interior color palettes are influenced by the colors of the French flag – blue, white, and red. The red- and blue-clad towers read through from the exterior to the interior, as a contrast to the sloping white roof and predominately white walls. The interior finishes are simple and were chosen for durability, ease of maintenance, and budgetary considerations. The pre-existing and new concrete floors feature a sealed, medium-grey stained concrete topping. The classrooms, offices, and library have Interface carpet tile flooring in a blue/grey pattern, which was selected due to its sound absorption and durability.

Many of the rooms feature exposed ceilings, painted white, to accentuate their height and to retain the industrial feel of the original buildings. The corridors leading to the classrooms have a custom ceiling composed of corrugated, perforated aluminum panels suspended by a metal framing grid. The main lobby and some offices feature acoustical tile ceilings to increase sound absorption. The zinc countertop of the café counter is a reference to use of zinc as a traditional French bar-top material. The reception desk is custom designed to accommodate up to three staff persons. The semi-circular reception desk is clad in zinc and a bamboo veneer, which is a sustainable material.

According to HOK Associate Marie Mihalik, “Maximizing the use of natural light was very important in the design concept. The existing clerestory windows in the classrooms were replaced with impact windows of the same configuration. The glass doors to the classrooms allow borrowed light to spill out into the corridor. The interior glass walls and doors of the classrooms and offices allow views and light from the corridors. When budget constraints required that some exterior storefront windows be omitted from the lobby space, individual 8”x8” glass blocks were installed instead. The north-facing, two-story storefront of the entrance lobby also allows much natural light into the café and reception areas, with minimal glare and heat gain. An interior circular window in the office of the organization’s director overlooks the lobby.”

Interior construction

McConville describes this part of the construction process: “The project interiors feature not only Alliance Française facilities, but also retail outlets for commercial tenants. Construction of these spaces required coordination of an increased number of vendors and accommodating varying functional needs of individual tenants, while maintaining the overall project budget.”

The addition houses a striking lobby atrium, a café, a two-stop hydraulic elevator manufactured by Otis, and public restrooms. Classrooms, offices, the event space, retail outlets, and other spaces occupy the pre-existing buildings.

Many of the spaces feature zinc cabinetry and shelving. The custom-designed and manufactured lobby reception desk features zinc cladding and a bamboo veneer, which was also used for doors and other millwork. British Boys & Associates manufactured and installed bamboo and other millwork, and zinc cabinetry. Other finishes, fixtures, and furnishings include:

A. Flooring and tiling

- Doverra self-drying and self-leveling concrete floor sealer, manufactured by CarpenterCrete, with color admixture. Approximately 6,800 square feet of flooring features Doverra.
- Entropy 18”x18” carpet tiles manufactured by Interface, color: 4985 Basalt,
- Vitrestone 12”x12” ceramic floor tiles manufactured by Dal-Tile, color: VS06 Grey Granite,
- 2”x2” ceramic wall tiles manufactured by Dal-Tile, color: Glash Grey

B. Ceilings

- Armstrong Optima Open Plan 15/16" square tegular, acoustical 2'x2' tiles and 2'x6' planks.

C. Wall and ceiling paint

- Sherwin Williams SW7005 Pure White Latex
- Benjamin Moore 2066-10 Blue Latex
- Benjamin Moore 2001-10 Ruby Red Latex
- Sherwin Williams SW7006 Extra White Latex (ceilings)

C. Plastic laminates

- 7018-58 by Formica, color: Navy Grafix, matte finish
- 4829-07 by Wilsonart, color: Satin Silver
- D73-60 by Wilsonart, color: Pewter

D. Other finishes and hardware

- Johnsonite Medium Grey 28 (4-inch high cove base)
- cabinet pulls: Hafele stainless steel handles 115.61.602, matte finish

E. Windows

- main entrance: custom, hurricane-resistant, high-impact aluminum frame and glass storefront window system by PGT Industries,
- interior aluminum and glass walls by BEASAM,
- circular window: custom-manufactured by PGT Industries,
- other windows: hurricane resistant, high-impact, manufactured by PGT Industries.

F. Lighting fixtures

Please see enclosed list of lighting fixtures.

Mc Gowan Builders

Headquartered in North Bergen, New Jersey, with a regional office in Coral Gables, Florida, Mc Gowan Builders, Inc. is a premier full-service general contracting and construction management firm. The company provides construction services to commercial and institutional clients, including office, retail, hospitality, healthcare, educational, cultural, transportation/airport, warehousing, and industrial organizations. The firm delivers projects in Florida, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Virginia, Louisiana, and Rhode Island.

Led by company founder Patrick Mc Gowan, the Mc Gowan Builders team includes licensed architects, engineers, estimators, CPAs, project managers, superintendents, artisans, and laborers. In-house estimating, budgeting, scheduling, value engineering, and accounting departments support all project teams. The firm's in-house capabilities allow it to assist its clients throughout all phases of even the most complex construction projects, from the initial consultation to the final close out.

The Mc Gowan Builders team has delivered projects for some of the most prominent firms and organizations in the nation, including JPMorgan Chase, Columbia University, Rockefeller University, Harvard Medical School, Saks Fifth Avenue, The Tides Foundation, The Noguchi Museum, Hudson Valley Hospital Center, and others.

Mc Gowan Builders' expertise encompasses turn-key projects, interior fit-outs, ground-up and base building construction, building systems upgrades, capital improvements, and renovations. The firm's bonding capability exceeds \$60 million.

HOK

HOK is a global architectural firm that specializes in planning, design, and delivery solutions for buildings and communities. Through its collaborative network of 25 offices worldwide, the firm serves diverse clients within the corporate, commercial, public and institutional markets. HOK is committed to developing resources and expertise to help lead the world toward sustainable communities and building environments. Founded in 1955, the firm's expertise includes architecture, engineering, interiors, planning, lighting, graphics, facilities planning and assessment, and construction services.