
2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROJECT DATA



PROJECT DATA

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Project Name CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY Location 697 S. BURLINGTON AVE.,
LOS ANGELES, CA 90057
 Owner PUEBLO NUEVO DEVELOPMENT
 Project Use(s) PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
 Project Size 15,000 SQ. FT. Total Development Cost \$2 MILLION
 Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) \$3 MILLION
 Date Initiated JANUARY 1999 Percent Completed by December 1, 2002 100%
 Project Completion Date (if appropriate) SEPTEMBER 2000

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates

Application submitted by:

Name PHILIP LANCE Title EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 Organization CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY
 Address P.O. BOX 17778 City/State/Zip LOS ANGELES, CA 90017-0778
 Telephone (213) 483-2000 Fax (213) 483-2003
 E-mail plance@pueblonuevo.org Weekend Contact Number (for notification): 323-731-6784

Key Participants (Attach an additional sheet if needed)

Organization	Key Participant	Telephone/e-mail
Public Agencies <u>GRACE ARNOLD</u>	<u>LAUSD</u>	<u>(213) 241-4625</u>
<u>LAUSD</u>	<u>GRACE ARNOLD</u>	
Architect/Designer <u>DALY GENIK</u>	<u>KEVIN DALY</u>	<u>310-656-3180 ext. 11</u>
Developer <u>PUEBLO NUEVO DEVELOPMENT</u>	<u>PHILIP LANCE</u>	<u>213-483-2000 ext. 16</u>
Professional Consultant <u>EXED</u>	<u>ANITA LANDECKER</u>	<u>310-394-1152 ext. 16</u>
Community Group <u>PUEBLO NUEVO CHURCH</u>	<u>ZOILA MANZANARES</u>	<u>213-483-1178</u>
Other <u>LIISC</u>	<u>LOUISE MANUEL</u>	<u>213-240-3117</u>
<u>LIHF</u>	<u>NANCY ANDREWS</u>	<u>510-893-3811</u>

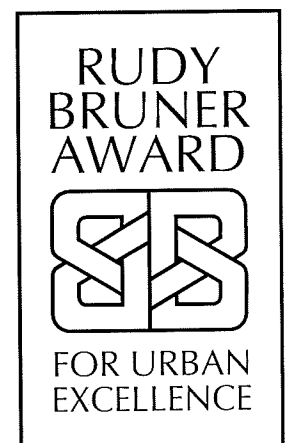
Please indicate how you learned of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. (Check all that apply).

Direct Mailing Magazine Advertisement Previous RBA entrant Other (please specify)
 Professional Newsletter Previous Selection Committee member
 Organization Magazine Calendar ARCHITECT

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Signature Philip Lance

2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
ABSTRACT



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Project Name: CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY

Address: 697 S. BURLINGTON AVE. City/State/ZIP LOS ANGELES, CA 90057

1. Give a brief overview of the project, including major project goals.

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy is a vibrant new elementary school located in a formerly blighted, vacant mini-mall in one of Los Angeles' grittiest neighborhoods. The school was founded and built by a community development corporation, Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND), that recruited an outstanding team of partners who worked with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to meet an urgent community need. The project involved a full range of school development; beginning with a dream of what an excellent community-based school could be, to petitioning the school district for a charter, to purchasing and remodeling a building, to hiring teachers and enrolling students. The developer's goals were to respond to despairing parents whose children were bussed to distant schools where they were failing to make academic progress. Other project goals included eliminating neighborhood blight by recreating a vacant, half-burned mini-mall, that had been a nuisance for eight years, into a school that would be an instrument in reaching a neighborhood constituency in need of educational and other resources.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.)

The Camino Nuevo Charter Academy project merits the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence because its extraordinary architectural design is reflective, in part, of its community synergy; synergy created by a mix of talent, commitment, experience, vision and risk. The unusual, bold building that emerged from the development process houses an equally bold education venture -- a start-up charter school that offers resources for learning that are rarely found in poor urban neighborhoods. Unlike most charter schools, which are initiated by educators and parents, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy was created by a nonprofit development corporation that believed an excellent school is a resource *for* the community as well as a being a beneficiary *of* the community. The origins of the school are wed to PND, a community development corporation with an agenda much broader than elementary school education. The school is the newest sister to a series of grassroots PND organizations which include a church and two businesses employing over 60 neighborhood residents.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION



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1. How has the project impacted the local community?

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy addressed school overcrowding, lack of land to build new schools in Los Angeles, neighborhood blight, and the separation between public schools and their communities.

The school age population in poor neighborhoods of Los Angeles has burgeoned during the last decade and the public school infrastructure has stagnated. The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has been unable to accommodate more children without modifying the education program in ways that short change the students; the district has created year-round, multi-track schedules that reduce the number of days that students attend from 181 days to 163. Rather than attend school for ten months, with a traditional summer vacation, students attend school on staggered schedules that break the year into segments with multiple vacation sessions. Camino Nuevo Charter Academy students attend school for 200 days and for 30 more minutes per day. Their learning calendar remains uninterrupted except for a six week summer vacation.

The LAUSD needs to build 100 schools almost immediately. The district has not built a high school for the past 30 years. The district has been unable to acquire land for new schools in Los Angeles because of community opposition to proposed sites, environmental problems with proposed sites, and unrealistic guidelines and laws that require very large sites. Camino Nuevo Charter Academy was built on a very small site with overwhelming community support. The empty mini-mall, which was on a list of city nuisance properties, has become a glowing neighborhood landmark. The project was driven and executed by the community rather than the district and has created a central rallying point for the community and increased community pride and "ownership".

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

The fundamental values that guided the project were faith in the ability of a community to leverage local resources in order to solve neighborhood problems without depending upon a bureaucracy and equity. Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND) leaders believed that children in urban Los Angeles were getting less than they deserved in respect to education and that they could create an excellent school without waiting for the Los Angeles Unified School District and without being "educators".

There were two main trade-offs required in order to implement the project. First, by founding a charter school we were redirecting resources from the traditional public school system into an independent, reformed public education vehicle. Secondly, although we value diversity, we had to choose between, 1) giving priority to neighborhood children who have the fewest choices, but who are almost 100% Hispanic, and 2) recruiting from outside the neighborhood to gain African-American, Asian and Anglo children thereby making fewer seats available to neighborhood children. We chose to remain with our vision of building a community-based school for neighborhood children.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONTD)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The key elements of the process included community initiative, team formation, property development and finally, charter school development.

The impetus for developing Camino Nuevo Charter Academy came from discussions that Philip Lance, Executive Director of PND, had with constituents of the Pueblo Nuevo Church congregation. The members were overwhelmingly discontent with what the LAUSD had to offer in terms of education for their children. PND has a ten-year history as a community organizer in the MacArthur Park neighborhood, and has dedicatedly met the needs of the community by building sustainable, community-based organizations which have helped to develop and sustain this often overlooked area of Los Angeles.

When it became clear that there was sustainable support for PND to lead an education initiative in the area, Mr. Lance interviewed dozens of educational professionals and ultimately formed a partnership with Dr. Paul Cummins, founder of Crossroads School in Santa Monica, CA. Dr. Cummins identified Excellent Education Development (EXED) as a professional consultant and Daly Genik Architects were selected to design and build the future home of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. There was a pre-design phase led by Dr. Dana Cuff of Community Design. Dr. Cuff has a 15-year history of developing new strategies for low-income neighborhood development and is recognized as an authority on the architectural profession and its practice. Dr. Cuff held numerous community workshops and focus groups in order to illicit community input for the design and functioning of their future elementary school.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The Camino Nuevo Charter Academy project was financed by a combination of fundraising from private sources and loans from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Low Income Housing Fund (LIHF).

PND had less than \$1,000 in its bank account when it entered escrow to purchase the mini-mall for the future school. Despite the fact that PND had never been awarded a grant larger than \$30,000, the Board of Directors had faith that the philanthropic community would respect PND's track record in the neighborhood and a team was formed to execute the project. In the course of nine months, PND raised \$1.1 million.

In addition, Anita Landecker (Executive Director of EXED) worked with LISC and LIHF to loan \$900,000 to the project with the source of re-payment being the operating budget of the school which is funded by the State of California based on students' average daily attendance.

The cost of construction was \$100 per square foot. The per student cost to develop the school was less than \$8,000 which is about a quarter of the amount that the LAUSD spends to build an elementary school.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The project has been widely discussed and showcased in Southern California. Many community groups are working on plans for their neighborhoods based on our experience. There is no reason why this project could not be adapted to many other urban settings. The biggest hurdle that developers face is the financial one. It is difficult to secure loans for charter schools because the source of repayment is the operating budget of the school. Few charter schools can afford more than \$500 per student, per year toward occupancy costs (mortgage or rent). This is insufficient to finance a facility unless the rent is artificially low or the project is subsidized, as in Camino Nuevo's case, by heavy fundraising.

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1. How has the project impacted the local community?

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

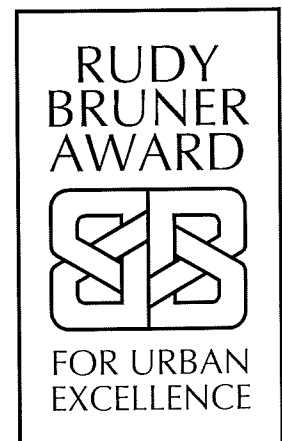
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

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2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
COMMUNITY
REPRESENTATIVE
PERSPECTIVE



COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name: ZOILA MANZANARES Title: REVEREND
 Organization: PUEBLO NUEVO CHURCH Telephone: (213) 483-1178
 Address: 1738 W. 7th STREET City/State/Zip: LOS ANGELES, CA 90017
 Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

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Signature _____

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

As the pastor of Pueblo Nuevo Church I am in daily contact with members of the MacArthur Park community. Many parents in the community had been coming to me expressing their concern about the quality of education offered in the neighborhood. They had seen how Philip Lance, the man who founded the Pueblo Nuevo Church and subsequently the Pueblo Nuevo Thrift Store, had developed so many opportunities in the neighborhood and they were hoping he would be able to help with creating a better educational option.

We began organizing the community to collect signatures and invited Mr. Lance to work with us to create a concept of a community-based school that would provide a better education for neighborhood children. The community members were involved with every step of the process; meeting with architects to give them ideas about how the school should look and what functions it needed to serve, meeting with potential principals in order to learn their educational philosophies and see if they would be an appropriate addition to the community, and participating in some of the school's curriculum design.

2. From the community point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

The major issue was to establish a community-based, year-round school that offered a stronger curriculum than the other schools in neighboring areas. Our parents did not want to have to bus their children out of the neighborhood, thereby limiting the amount that they could be involved in their child's school (due to high poverty rates transportation is difficult to obtain). Another issue that community members wanted addressed was making sure that their children were learning English. Many of the parents in the area are immigrants and their children need to learn English in order to succeed and many of the schools in the area were not providing comprehensive English proficiency programs. Parents also wanted to insure their childrens' safety and expressed this concern as the building was being designed.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

From the community's perspective, there were very few trade-offs that needed to be made with respect to this project. A community-based school was being built where neighborhood children would receive a better education for free. In addition, the building itself provides such a respite from the eyesore that once stood in its space that they were thrilled. The only draw-back that might have been expressed was that they wished the school could have been bigger, but everyone was in agreement that some was better than none.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

4. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how?

Everyone is very pleased with the outcome of the school, both visually and educationally. The building itself, with its bright colors and all of the trees, make this a better and more beautiful neighborhood. Having such an impressive school has led to increased community pride which in turn has led to increase community participation. Everyone feels invested in the school, but most of all seeing all of our children being given the opportunity to expand their minds with a better education and have greater opportunities available to them (as well as playing and running around in a safe environment) fills our hearts with increased hope for the future.

5. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through?

Again, we are so pleased with the outcome of the school; it is hard to think of what we would change. Perhaps we would have tried to make the school bigger. We are excited that now there is a middle school that our children can attend when they have finished with the elementary school grades. We are looking forward to having a pre-kindergarten program established and perhaps, someday a high school.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____ Telephone () _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____

Fax () _____ E-mail _____

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Signature _____

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play?

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project?

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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2003
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PUBLIC AGENCY
PERSPECTIVE



PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

Name: GRACE ARNOLD Title: DIRECTOR OF LAUSD CHARTER SCHOOL
Organization: LAUSD Telephone: (213) 241-4625
Address: 333 S. BEAUDRY AVE. City/State/Zip: LOS ANGELES, CA 90017
Fax: (213) 241-8450 E-mail: grace.arnold@lausd.net

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Signature Grace Arnold

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g. zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements).

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) played a major role in the development of the charter school entity, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA), and a minor role in the development of the building that now houses the school entity.

As the public agency that granted the charter to the petitioner, Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND), LAUSD essentially "licensed" a private nonprofit corporation (PND) to receive public money from the State Department of Education to operate a public school. The LAUSD has a School Reform Office that assists charter school developers with the petitioning process. During a six-month period from May 1999 to November 1999, our staff reviewed various versions of the PND charter petition and assisted them in preparing a final version that was presented to and approved by the Board of Education.

As a charter school, the CNCA building must comply with the City of Los Angeles building code however, it does not have to meet the requirements of the State Architect as mandated in the legislation governing public school construction known as the Field Act. Nevertheless, the LAUSD does have an obligation to determine whether or not the charter school facility is safe and meets the minimum requirements necessary to fulfill their educational purposes. LAUSD architects inspected the architectural plans and the building on several occasions and recommended that certain conditions be fulfilled as a condition for final charter approval.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them?

Los Angeles desperately needs to build new schools in order to educate our growing population. Our agency recognizes that we cannot meet the demand for new schools without help from other public agencies, nonprofit organizations and the private sector. We are looking for creative ways to develop new schools and classrooms by working with organizations that have not traditionally been in partnership with District. In the case of CNCA, the developer produced a non-traditional school program and facility design in order to make it possible for PND to bring 260 (at the time of establishment) badly needed K-5 school seats to the neighborhood.

As a charter-granting agency, the LAUSD lives with tension of being legally mandated to grant charters but only to qualified petitioners. In many cases the petitioners believe themselves to be qualified and yet the District has insufficient evidence to support that assessment. Our experience working with the developers of PND was extremely successful. We forged a partnership that has strengthened and benefited each side.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the project's impact on your community. Please be as specific as possible.

In order to accommodate more children in our existing schools, Los Angeles now has more year-round campuses than New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Miami and Houston combined. California has 1,035 multi-track campuses serving more than 1 million students, primarily in poor and minority communities. LAUSD's year-round students are among the neediest in the state. Nearly all qualify for federal lunch assistance, the leading indicator of poverty among school children. Almost two-thirds are still English Language Learners. Furthermore, roughly 15,000 students in the LAUSD are bussed, sometimes far outside of their neighborhoods, to reach schools with enough space to accommodate them. CNCA, however offers a traditional two-semester calendar. Over 1,000 children in the neighborhood are now able to attend school in their own neighborhood.

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

This project is clearly a new model for public/private relationships. By turning an unused, burned-out mini-mall into a true community facility, the developers of the school brought a creative, community-based solution to major land use and educational facility problems at the same time.

In May 1999, CNCA was featured at a symposium entitled, "New Schools, Better Neighborhoods" (see attachments) at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. Hundreds of elected officials, school board members, civic leaders, architects, urban planners and corporate leaders attended the symposium in an effort to craft a new public/private coalition to address the school construction crisis in Los Angeles. CNCA was presented as an outstanding example of how public and private agencies can solve intractable problems that they could not conquer alone.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The project was most successful in that it serves as a concrete example of how blighted commercial property can be transformed into a school by a non-profit community development corporation in collaboration with the LAUSD, thereby offering both educational and community revitalization. The only "unsuccessful" aspect of the project was the limitations it experienced in terms of not being able to create a cafeteria, a gymnasium, large amounts of green space and art rooms.

PUBLIC AGENCY PERSPECTIVE

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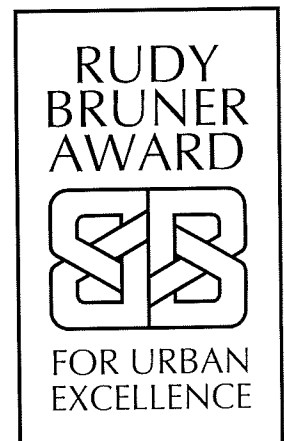
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2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
DEVELOPER
PERSPECTIVE



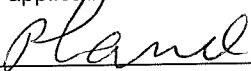
DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

Name: PHILIP LANCE Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Organization: PUEBLO NUEVO DEVEL. Telephone: (213) 483-2000
Address: P.O. BOX 17778 City/State/Zip: LOS ANGELES, CA 90017
Fax: (213) 483-2003 E-mail: plance@pueblonuevo.org

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Signature 

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

After listening to the urgent concerns of local residents, Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND) conceived of the idea to create a charter school in the MacArthur Park neighborhood we serve. PND leadership began attending conferences for charter school developers and meeting with other parties interested in community and school reform; gradually putting together a strong team that encompassed all of the skills needed to execute the project. Our organization led the development of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) by raising money, hiring the architect and professional consultants, petitioning for the charter and managing the construction.

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

This project was very unique in that it began with many unanswerable questions because we were charting new territory—the city and the Board of Education had very little experience regulating and governing the construction of charter schools. For instance, city zoning officials were unsure whether the project was a public school or a private school (the property was being developed by a private entity for public school use). Due to the numerous “unknowns”, the cost of the project increased considerably during the course of development. The biggest trade-off we faced was whether to minimize enrollment, thereby allowing more space for special purpose rooms or maximize enrollment by using all available space for classrooms. We chose the second option in order to achieve sufficient enrollment and much needed ADA (Average Daily Attendance) to finance the project as well as to provide as many urgently needed school seats as possible.

3. How was the project financed? What, if any innovative means of financing were used?

This project had a unique financing structure in that it created a shared lending relationship between the Low Income Housing Fund (LIHF) and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). LISC and LIHF have similar, yet different loan rates and terms, and slightly different underwriting and reporting requirements for their respective loan products.

LISC and LIHF provided three forms of financial assistance for this project: (1) a \$10,000 grant to pay for an appraisal, a Phase I Study, and engineering costs to determine how much it would cost to complete the building as a mini-mall; (2) a \$50,000 recoverable grant (0% interest) for architectural and engineering costs related to renovating the property for use as a school, and, (3) a \$400,000 below-market-rate mini-perm loan for a major portion of the \$900,000 renovation costs. The two lending groups worked closely ensuring that the loan approval and disbursement process went quickly and smoothly. The LISC and LIHF co-lending arrangement has paved the way for a willingness on both organizations' part to collaborate on future lending opportunities

In addition, PND raised money from private foundations and corporations such as the Ahmanson Foundation, The California Community Foundation, the Weingart Foundation, Parsons Foundation, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, the Bannerman Foundation, the Walton Foundation and the Joseph Drown Foundation as well as from many individual donors.

DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

4. How did the economic impacts of this project on the community compare with or differ from other projects you have been involved in?

Although our organization has developed two small businesses, both of which have become self-sustaining, we had never before been involved in a real estate development project. We had zero net worth when we began developing Camino Nuevo Charter Academy and now we have a strong balance sheet. The assets we now hold enable us to pursue additional projects with greater leverage, providing greater resources to the community we serve. In addition, while the thrift store and janitorial company we started have provided jobs to community members, we are now educating an entire generation, and generations to come who will, in turn, be able to command greater salaries and continue the revitalization and growth of the community.

5. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

Our professional consultant, Excellent Education Development, has been sharing our experience with other charter school developers throughout the state of California. We give frequent, almost weekly, tours of our school to potential developers. Some of the issues we tell developers to look for, when considering remodeling a building for a charter school, are: (1) the need for hallways and stairwells that are at least five feet wide; (2) making sure that they have sufficient funds to abate lead paint and asbestos hazards; (3) to install a comprehensive fire alarm system; (4) if the developer is seeking a change of use permit, they may need to install seismic upgrades.

Developers can also benefit from studying our financial statements which show how much money a charter school can earn from the state of California and the local school district for average daily attendance. In addition, developers can learn from our project about involving the community. We went to great lengths to solicit community opinion and involvement. Since the opening of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy there has been a strong sense of ownership among community members, particularly parents, resulting in increased parental involvement in our students' education and success.

6. What are the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The project was most successful in that it resulted in a high-quality school in record time and for record low cost. The project was developed in less than two years from the time that the idea was first discussed among local residents to the time that the school opened its doors. Furthermore, Roy Romer, the former governor of Colorado and current superintendent of Los Angeles Unified School District announced at the school's inauguration that the school cost a quarter of the amount to build (per student) than it has historically cost the district.

In many ways the "least successful" aspect of the project is actually a testament to the "success" of the project. The city of Los Angeles is desperate to build schools and bond monies are available, however Los Angeles Unified School District has been unable to locate and develop sites. Our organization has done what the district has been unable to do and yet we were not allowed to use bond monies. In order to finance the project, a significant amount of philanthropic money was used for real estate when it should have been paid for by public funds.

DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing or is a representative of the group which did.

Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____ Telephone () _____

Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____

Fax () _____ E-mail _____

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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

2. What trade-offs or compromises were required during the development of the project?

3. How was the project financed? What, if any, innovative means of financing were used?

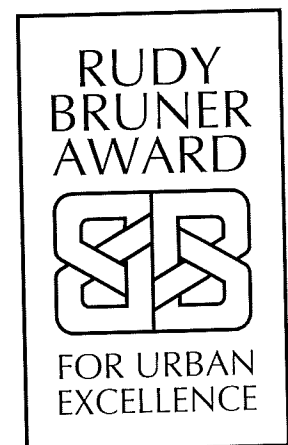
DEVELOPER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

4. How did the economic impacts of this project on the community compare with or differ from other projects you have been involved in?

5. What about this project would be instructive to other developers?

6. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
PROFESSIONAL
CONSULTANT
PERSPECTIVE



PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

Name: ANITA LANDECKER Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project?

Excellent Education Development (EXED) played a significant role in the development of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) from the start. Specifically, EXED: (1) created and modified the financial feasibility plan for the school based on the anticipated revenues from the state and federal funds and all expenses, (2) acted as the lead writer and project manager for the development of the state planning grant, state implementation grant and Walton grant, which were all successful, (3) served as lead writer of the 168-page charter petition and lead negotiator on all elements with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), (4) packaged the construction and permanent financing, (5) continually modified the construction and development budgets, (6) assisted in fundraising, (7) set up revenue accounts with Los Angeles county and all the required infrastructure for efficient management of the school, (8) created enrollment packages for parents, (9) advertised for teachers, and (10) generally put out any fires when needed in order to insure successful development of the school.

2. From your perspective, how was the project intended to benefit the urban environment?

The CNCA site on Burlington Avenue site was chosen as part of an overall neighborhood revitalization strategy initiated by the grassroots, neighborhood organization, Pueblo Nuevo Development (PND). The abandoned mini-mall contributed to blight in the neighborhood. By turning this building and site into a productive facility, serving the neighborhood, (a public school and a place for the community), PND transformed the urban environment. The project was designed to be the catalyst for the redevelopment of the entire block. The school was intended to be a symbol of hope for the neighborhood, and a demonstration that the lowest income census tract in Los Angeles deserves excellently designed buildings for the community's benefit. The benefit is not only physical, but the transformed building tells the neighborhood that it is special and valued.

3. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible.

Because CNCA was built quickly and was well-designed, funders and lenders are now willing to support the much larger plan of redeveloping the entire block for the middle school as well as recreation and community space. Now funders, politicians, and the community can see and touch the successful project and clearly imagine how the whole block can be re-created. CNCA has also made a statement about educational quality for the community by insisting on a single-track, 200-day year. There are at least six other charter school developers hoping to rehabilitate existing buildings within a two-mile radius of CNCA, and all use CNCA as a model. About half of CNCA's students were previously bussed to schools outside the neighborhood. The vast majority of parents at CNCA had kids in schools with multi-track scheduling which was very difficult on the family. Parents are happier with the new schedule and everyone seems to feel and increased level of pride in their neighborhood.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONTD.)

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them?

EXED participated most in the trade-offs and compromises related to the construction budget and desires of PND. At first the development team thought the rehabilitation would cost no more than \$500,000. Then it was determined that it would cost \$800,000. When bids came in from selected contractors, the cost jumped to \$1.6-\$1.8 million. EXED worked hard to get below-market-rate financing from non-traditional lenders (Low Income housing Fund and Local Initiatives Support Corporation) and explored financing such as the Qualified Zone Academy Bond to maximize the loan based on the limited amount of dent service. EXED informed PND that it could borrow \$900,000 to pay for improvements based on the likely lenders. The goal was to trim the construction program from \$1.6-\$1.8 million. There were trade-offs such as postponing the playground equipment, removing cabinetry and shelving and cutbacks on skylights, some windows and lighting fixtures. Through fundraising, the final contract was closer to \$1.1 million. EXED served as the prime contact with lenders, constantly revising the budgets, meeting all due diligence requirements of the lenders and keeping all parties informed of the trade-offs made relative to construction. Educationally, we are proud that there were very few compromises and trade-offs in the educational vision for the school that need to be made with LAUSD. A key area of negotiation was on the payment process for special education services.

5. How might the project be instructive to others in your profession?

The lessons learned for charter school developers and technical assistance include the following: 1) It is possible to get \$7,000 per student for a charter elementary school in the inner city of Los Angeles. 2) Have contingencies for cash flow problems, due to late processing by the state or the district. 3) Have a city building inspector and a LAUSD facilities staff person review the site before committing funds. 4) Hire an architect who will create a place in which students and teachers will be proud to work. 5) Anticipate that it will be hard to recruit the last grade of the school (5th grade in our case) because students will not want to transfer for one year, unless there is space planned for expansion to the next grade. 6) A strong development team that includes a community-based organization, an educator with a track record of success and school financial management and development organization is critical to the success of the school. 7) Create a long-term physical and social asset for the community.

6. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project?

The least successful aspect of the project is that the Burlington Avenue site is small for the needs of the children. There is not adequate play space, no cafeteria, no auditorium and no art room as they were sacrifices that needed to be made in order to insure the core educational needs of the children could be met. The most successful aspect of the project is that it serves as a symbol of success and hope, first and foremost to the community, but also to the LAUSD, the Mayor, the City Council, educators, charter school developers, community organizations and the students. In a city where there is a tremendous need for school facilities CNCA stands as a living symbol of how to build a community centered school. This project will be even more successful when students from CNCA have high graduation rates from college.

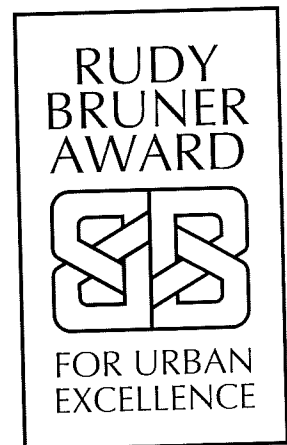
PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONTÓD)

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2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
ARCHITECT
OR DESIGNER
PERSPECTIVE



ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

Name: KEVIN DALY Title: PRINCIPAL
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Address: 1558 10th STREET City/State/Zip: SANTA MONICA, CA 90401
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1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc.

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) was created in response to crisis conditions and overcrowding at the local schools in the MacArthur Park area of Los Angeles and serves as a haven for elementary school children. The first phase of the project (the elementary school) was conceived in two parts: the existing abandoned mini-mall on the site, which retained its basic L-shaped form, and the bathroom addition that creates a new entry and face to the street. By reusing and renovating the mini-mall and parking lot, this commercial building has been transformed into an inviting, 12-classroom elementary school focused around a secure courtyard. The design of the elementary school consists of three main elements: a new freestanding extension which widens the upstairs passageways -- allowing ambient light into the classrooms, the sloping parking lot which is converted into a pleasant outdoor assembly/play area, and the curved, recycled wood lattices that shade most of the building. For the elementary school Daly Genik proposed a strategy of four R's:

1. Remove

The building had been vacant for some period of time and it was important for the community to see the school as a public institution for their use. It was essential to transform the building completely. We set about to remove all conspicuous mini-mall features and oppressive architectural elements that reinforced the image of the site as a derelict commercial building. We removed surfaces, finishes and architectural elements that were not code compliant.

2. Recover

We tried to recover lost and under-utilized space including the area under the second floor that was no longer needed for parking access. We recovered additional classroom space in the existing building by constructing new restroom facilities at the street perimeter in a unit that also helps to enclose the school courtyard from the street.

3. Reconfigure

The existing surface parking was reconfigured as space that serves for play, assembly, performance, and lunch.

4. Replace

The existing courtyard facade was replaced with a new exterior infrastructure that combines the functions of exiting, sun shade, benches and an outdoor reading room.

CNCA's building is covered with brightly colored stucco & plaster in order to create a unique identity on the street with minimal financial impact. The materials used are part of an every day palette of the local area. Due to limited resources, the building has a selective polish; individual design elements such as the shade structures, are the architectural focus. The goal is to alter the appearance of the body of the building enough to create a coherent identity for the entire campus.

In order to accomplish the execution of the overall master plan to create an "educational village" which will rest on a lot between the elementary school and the developing middle school, with shared playgrounds linking each building, the urban design of the phased campus is borne of necessity. Resources are limited requiring goals to be extremely focused.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design.

The primary programmatic goal of CNCA is to provide comprehensive literacy programs for local children. Due to the constrained sites, all spaces (indoor and outdoor) are maximized to provide efficient and flexible learning spaces. An intense planning effort by Daly Genik resulted in the congregation of complementary activity spaces adjacent to one another. This effort helped achieve the secondary goal of creating a charter school that was inviting and invigorating to the local community.

Since many of the students' families have recently come from other countries, the design of the school needed to be readily accessible to students as well as parents whose first language many not be English. A welcoming community-friendly entrance on Burlington Avenue eases the transition from home to school and classrooms are clearly organized and comfortable for new students.

The center courtyard is the focus of activity for the school. Shallow steps allow for students to sit during assemblies or performances, scattered benches provide locations for eating lunch, and the large sloped play space is ideal for handball. The courtyard is perhaps the most important programmatic element because it is where students interact with their peers and socialize with friends in a safe environment.

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project.

The biggest challenge of implementing the master plan is that the design process is not systematic, therefore design issues are reconsidered frequently. This often takes a toll on the momentum of a project and contributes to a level of inefficiency for all parties involved. When a project is not phased and most of the funding is available, most design decisions are completed in the design development stage thus streamlining the entire construction process.

4. Describe the way in which the project relates to its urban context

The south end of Burlington Avenue is bounded by a local restaurant on the corner of Burlington and 7th and the developing middle school anchors the north end. There is a slight rise as Burlington Avenue heads north from 7th Street. Directly across from the elementary school is a large Victorian house from the early 1900's that has a number of tenants and a large office building is across from the middle school. The MacArthur Park neighborhood is one of the most impoverished and densely populated areas of Los Angeles; within Westlake there are 145 persons per acre versus a citywide rate of 14.4 persons per acre.

The bright colors of the schools emphasize the function of the building as a children's place, as well as blend into the colorful nature of the surrounding neighborhood. The school retained the height of the original building and does not infringe on the low-rise nature of the street. Retaining the original massing allows the school to exist as a gem that is essentially in plain sight. Because of the progressive approach to development, CNCA has been built in the same way as its surrounding context -- one piece at a time.

5. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the project's design and architecture.

The greatest strength of the project is the sense of pride the children and community members have in the building. They call it "chide", Spanish for cool. The greatest weakness is that phased projects often feel as though they will never be completed. Many times clients prefer a single opening or ribbon cutting to mark the end of the building process.

ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE

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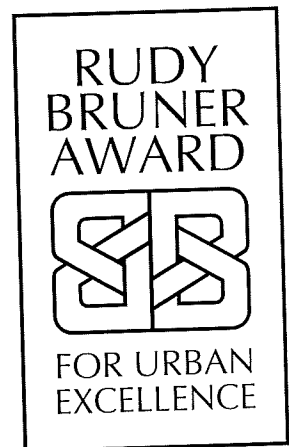
ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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4. Describe the way in which the project relates to its urban context.

5. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the project's design and architecture.

2003
RUDY BRUNER AWARD
OTHER
PERSPECTIVE

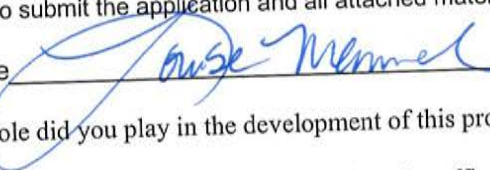


OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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Name: LOUISE MANUEL Title: SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER
Organization: LISC Telephone: (213) 240-3117
Address: 1055 WILSHIRE BLVD. City/State/Zip: LOS ANGELES, CA 90019
Fax: (213) 250-9889 E-mail: lmanuel@liscnet.org

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

I am a Senior Program Officer in the Los Angeles office of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), a national non-profit financial intermediary. In 1999, I learned of PND's interest in buying the property at 697 S. Burlington, an abandoned, burned-out two-story mini-mall with an underground parking garage. Philip Lance initially wanted PND to own this building as an alternative to renting storefronts for PND's other ventures. LISC investigated the public building records as part of the "early due diligence" effort to see if there were any problems with the building's construction. Then LISC provided three forms of financial assistance to PND for this project: (1) a \$10,000 grant to pay for an appraisal, a Phase I Study, and engineering costs to determine how much it would cost to complete the building as a mini-mall; (2) a \$50,000 recoverable grant (0% interest) for architectural and engineering costs related to renovating the property for use as a school and, (3) a \$400,000 below-market-rate mini-perm loan for a major portion of the \$900,000 renovation costs. I was the underwriter for all three of these program actions, and worked very closely with my counterparts at the Low Income Housing Fund (LIHF), the co-lender with LISC on this project, to make sure that the loan approval and disbursement process went as quickly and smoothly as possible. My work on this project continued as a funder for the expansion of PND's school development efforts to include a middle school on property located nearby the Camino Nuevo Charter Academy, and for the improvement of other commercial and residential properties in the neighborhood by PND or other nonprofit organizations.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the community. Please be as specific as possible.

There have been numerous articles in the local and national newspapers and magazines about the pioneering and innovative qualities of this project. Its merits as a neighborhood improvement are many. Architecturally speaking it is beautiful, unique, and highly visible as something "new and different" in an otherwise beleaguered and unremarkable environment. Everyone who visits the project immediately gets a deeper sense of its importance as a place of great purpose, joy, learning, and promise in a neighborhood whose residents are nearly all recent immigrants from Mexico and Latin America who are poor, but ambitious. Perhaps the most telling story of the impact this project has had on Los Angeles is seen by reviewing the list of speakers for the school's opening. It included the superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District, former Colorado Governor Roy Romer; LA City Mayor Richard Riorden; and LA City Councilman Michael Hernandez. It also included the school's prestigious education partners, William Siart, founder of Excellent Education (a charter school development firm) and Paul Cummins, the founder of Crossroads School and New Roads Schools in Santa Monica. In the midst of Los Angeles' search for solutions to its many public school problems, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy has clearly caught the attention and earned the support of many important people. Mostly though, it has clearly captured the imagination of the children who attend the school. They sang, and spoke, and cheered the school as part of the opening program, and their attendance record at the school has been remarkable thus far.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONTD.)

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them?

I participated in the loan making process at every level of its development and implementation. From a lender's perspective the most significant issue LISC faced on this project was whether to fund the entire \$900,000 rehabilitation loan alone or to share the loan with another lender in order to lessen the "risk" to LISC. Given the project's relative uniqueness, and the fact that PND had never before undertaken a real estate development project of any kind, the governing entities at LISC deemed it most prudent to make the loan, but also to "share the risk", resulting in a fairly complicated, but ultimately very successful shared lending relationship on this project with the Low Income Housing Fund (LIHF). The complications resulted from the fact that LISC and LIHF have similar, but different loan rates and terms, and slightly different underwriting and reporting requirements for their respective loan products. Nonetheless, the LISC and LIHF co-lending arrangement for this project has paved the way for a willingness on both organizations' part to participate on collaborative lending projects for similar projects for PND and/or other community development corporations.

Other trade-offs involved PND's interest in redeveloping another property; a blighted and mostly vacant mixed-use (commercial and residential) building very close to the school site, to improve the immediate area in which the school is located. While this property was of major interest to PND, at the time it was simply not prudent for PND to take on another major project.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of the project?

One of the most successful aspects of the project, in my mind, is that it was planned and implemented in a very short timeframe (less than 2 years from conception to school opening). Its success is also owing to the fact that the project involved a large number of highly motivated, talented and resourceful people in the production of a very visible and useful neighborhood resource. The message seems to be that if a small, fledgling non-profit community development corporation can assemble the necessary resources to bring such a pioneering "urban reuse" project to fruition, then the concept is replicable by other similar groups in other similar areas. The project is so new at this point that its least successful aspects are not yet evident. There is a problem with noise from the school's courtyard play yard "echoing" into the classrooms, but this problem will be solved when the adjacent property is developed as an alternate play area.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible.

OTHER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

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