

Kirkwood Community College



Education/Learning; Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Workplace Issues:

- Increased Retention/Reduced Turnover
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Cultural Change
- New Ways of Learning

Application:

- Study Carrel

Products:

- Resolve System
- Caper Chairs

Programs:

- Customer's Own Image (COI)
- Project Management

Year completed: 2001



Kirkwood Community College is booming. Enrollment stands at 15,000, making it the third largest college in Iowa, trailing only Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. Its main campus is in Cedar Rapids, and ten satellite centers are located throughout the state.

Competition among community colleges is great, says Lois Nanke, vice president for Administration at Kirkwood. With satellite centers and distance learning programs, students have access to a number of community colleges. Attracting students and keeping them at Kirkwood is essential to the ongoing vitality of the school.

Campus facilities often make an immediate impression on potential and current students. And a recent renovation at Kirkwood is doing just that. The Cyber Café, a 962 square-foot space, communicates the college's forward-thinking, technology-savvy image.

The Cyber Café is part social and part collaborative learning. The objective was to create a comfortable space, centrally located on campus, and one that could support both collaboration and privacy. "We wanted to create a funky space that would be a relaxing, invigorating, and enjoyable to work in," says Nanke. Its close proximity to the campus cafeteria would reinforce the casual atmosphere Kirkwood planners hoped the Cyber Café would create.

When Emily Kellenberger, interior designer with Neumann Monson Architects in Iowa City, heard the word "funky" she thought instantly of Resolve. "I knew it would provide the look they needed," she says.

The poles and canopies also helped to take advantage of the building's architecture, which includes a full wall of windows and a second-story balcony overlooking the Cyber Café. "The Resolve canopies would look like tree tops from above but also provide privacy to those students working in the Resolve stations—both from above and from adjacent work areas," Kellenberger explains. "So I pushed the idea of funky with Resolve, and the Kirkwood folks were blown away by the colors and the style. We didn't offer any





other furniture solution except Resolve.”

The Cyber Café has become the place on campus to hang out, says Nanke. The space is open enough to work and play together, to surf the Web or collaborate on projects. But it's also secluded enough to put in solitary study time. Surrounding the 21 Resolve workstations are two lounge areas and two team areas with tables and chairs. Caper seating in a variety of colors is used throughout the café.

The Resolve system can affect the entire feeling of a space, says Kellenberger. “Kirkwood is a client standardized on Hon and Allsteel. But I knew that what they hoped for with the Cyber Café would be realized using Resolve product. The building itself, with a wall of windows and a balcony space, has been transformed into a campus showpiece.” And the Kirkwood team agrees. Plans are now underway for a renovation to the Wellness Center on campus, which would integrate Resolve products into the design.

And the only complaint about the Cyber Café? “Students wish it could be bigger,” says Nanke.

