

De La Salle Institute

Faith Guides De La Salle Institute Through Water Woes



De La Salle Institute (DLS) is an independent Catholic high school located in Chicago's South Side. Founded in 1889, its mission is to provide a high-quality Catholic college preparatory education by instilling the core Lasallian values of faith, service, community, and social justice. From first-class educators to students going to the colleges of their dreams to being located in the heart of Chicago, De La Salle Institute is designed for all the ways you learn.

THE PROBLEM: Water

In May 2021, there was electricity in the air as students and faculty left DLS campus for the weekend. There was one week left of the school year. Unbeknownst to DLS staff, a water valve burst that Friday night and was left undiscovered until Sunday evening. The water had 40 hours to snake its way from the locker room to the court area. The water travelled under doors, thresholds and flooring leaving warped boards in its wake. The floor resembled a rollercoaster.

THE SOLUTION: Selecting the Right Partner

DLS acted quickly to assess and remedy the situation. Their goal was to have the gym floor ready for the 2021-2022 basketball season. Heaters and dehumidifiers were immediately set in-place to start drying the floor components that had become water saturated.

When it came time to select a partner for the floor installation, DLS turned to Stalker Sports Floors (SSF). SSF had successfully handled the repair and renovation of the floor at DLS's sister campus and their work had been received with high praise.





Planning.

At the initial meeting, DLS and Stalker spent an entire afternoon reviewing the project. “It was the most professional meeting. Before getting the project underway, Stalker made sure that we were comfortable with everything and understood the entire process,” said Fr. Paul Novak, President of DLS.

After discussing the facility space and needs, DLS and SSF decided to install an Aacer ScissorLoc V-Hex sport floor system featuring patented VERT resilience. This system provides excellent shock absorption, resilience and subfloor ventilation.

A two-man crew arrived the first day to start installing ScissorLoc V-Hex. “Seeing the efficiency, quality of work and camaraderie between these two men...I knew we had selected the right partner,” said Fr. Paul.

Design Concept.

The graphics on the previous gym floor were basic game lines and the school’s crest. There was no cohesive theme. Facing a big, blank canvas, DLS saw the opportunity to use this space to create something memorable that would convey their mission and their deep connection to the community.

DLS and SSF met in-person and virtually many times before finalizing the art. Through guided conversations, proofs and samples were reviewed and the pros and cons of materials and processes were discussed. SSF, with valued experience of transferring ideas to large formats, was able to take DLS’s vision and graphic elements and create a mesmerizing design that communicated their message. “The process was seamless, flawless and contained dialog from both sides,” said David Terry, Director of Marketing & Social Media, DLS.



The Message.

DLS has very strong ties and is a pillar in the Chicago community. As the third oldest Catholic school in Chicago, it was important to DLS to have the design speak to both the school and the community.

The final artwork met all of DLS's objectives and conveyed the importance of faith, school and community:

The Signum Fidei was designed to appear at the top of the court. Signum Fidei is Latin for 'sign of faith'. Being a light to guide others – within and outside of the school – is a principle that the school practices.



The school's Meteor logo was placed in the middle of the court. This symbolizes the owners and home players.



The Chicago community is at the core of DLS. It was very important to DLS to express the history and heritage of the school and how it intertwines with the Chicago community. The Chicago skyline seemed to be the perfect way. The skyline, located at the base, anchors the project and signifies the bond between the two entities.

The blue band at the bottom represents Lake Michigan. De La Salle bookends the two end courts.



THE REACTION: Love

After getting over its "too pretty to walk on" attitude, the student athletes are loving everything about the floor. Coaches and athletes have commented that there are no dead spots, it's easier on the knees and the floor has desired flex. All of these are features of Aacer's ScissorLoc V-Hex system.

Excitement over the artwork doesn't stop with faculty and students, as the parents and community are equally excited. A local reporter dubbed it a destination court.

DLS aced their goal of designing a floor that would honor their heritage and founding fathers. All Saints Day was the first day that the floor was to be used. Prior to the volleyball playoff, DLS had a school wide mass and offered a prayer of blessing over the floor, sports teams and students.



Signum fidei.