

The Bradley Projects

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Nashville, TN



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The Boyd House

Working closely with Fisk University, The Bradley Projects, serving as Architect of Record, and Certified Construction Services as General Contractor, worked to restore the campus's historic Boyd House. As a historically Black university (HBCU), Fisk continually utilizes campus buildings and spaces to their full potential while simultaneously taking great care to preserve the history and culture of the institution.

The Boyd House exemplifies this approach; the building was originally the home of the Boyd Family, a prominent African-American family in Nashville. The Boyd Family made numerous contributions to the city, including the establishment of R.H. Boyd Publishing Corporation in 1896 and Nashville-based Citizens Savings Bank and Trust – the country's oldest continually operating Black-owned bank. The Boyd House later served as the university president's house, then an office space for on-campus faculty.

For a historic structure such as the Boyd House, Fisk University decided to invest in remodeling the building, establishing it as one of the premier buildings on campus. In approaching the project, the university aimed to protect and restore the significant historical aspects of this structure while bringing the building up to current code, adapting it for administrative use, and establishing the space as a community asset for generations to come.

Buildings of the same time and caliber typically have layers of older infrastructure and techniques, most outdated, inefficient, and often considered dangerous by today's standards, creating a unique challenge for the project team. When approaching a project with years of history, the team takes on an extensive inside-out approach; the internal mechanical, electrical, and plumbing components are crucial to the rehabilitation of the building, as are the exterior windows, doors, and materials. By creating a solid infrastructure for the building, the teams at BPI and CCS could implement their signature vertically integrated strategies to deliver the finished product seamlessly.

In reaching the university's goal of transforming the Boyd House into a fresh and vibrant workspace while maintaining the character of the building, the team exposed some of the internal original brick walls, rehabilitated the main staircase, and stayed true to the original exterior historical photos of the structure. The design team carefully kept more modern elements, like the elevator and some mechanical equipment, in the back of the property to avoid competing with the predominant historical elevations. Creating the right scale placement of the new elevator was critical for this project. The new open stairway in the primary entry foyer, where the team exposed the original brick, was an additional heavily detailed element that was skillfully constructed to create a cohesive element that fit well into the fabric of the building.

Even finer details of the project played a part in preserving the building's significance; the team restored the historic brick exterior and front porch to match the original conditions, installed all new exterior wood siding and trim to match while opening the floorplan to create

bright, naturally lit new interior spaces. A white interior palette with rich, natural-colored hardwood floors, crisp white historic windows, and a detailed open main hardwood floor and trim staircase were utilized in the project, adding necessary touches of modern influence where appropriate. Scott DeLano, co-founder and owner of CCS, regularly exercised his knowledge as a recipient of a master's degree in history, further immersing the team in a passion and appreciation for the historical project through expertise and positivity.

A building rich in history for the community and a significant historical structure in North Nashville, the Boyd House's renovation transforms a previously under-utilized space into a new hub of activity on the Fisk University campus. As Fisk continues to grow, the office space makes the most of the historical structure while bringing the building back to life fully restored. The foresight of the university's board and staff, combined with the before and after images of this building, speaks directly to the heart, soul, passion, and wisdom of Fisk University as an institution.

Status: Built

Location: Nashville, TN, US

Firm Role: Architect of Record

Additional Credits: Certified Construction Services - General Contractor

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