



**MEDIA CONTACT:** Paul Marotta, 215-351-1265  
pmarotta@whyy.org

**IMAGES: PLEASE NOTE, PRINT QUALITY IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE DIRECTLY FROM PAUL MAROTTA**

## **WHYY ANNOUNCES GROUNDBREAKING FOR NEW HIGH TECH LEARNING LAB AT WHYY**

**New and Unique Facility Designed with the Future of New Media And Access for The Delaware Valley Regional Community in Mind**

**[PHILADELPHIA, PA, May 27, 2009]** WHYY today announced the groundbreaking and the start of construction of its new high tech facility, **The Learning Lab at WHYY**, located on Seventh Street behind the 150 North Sixth Street facility. Occupancy is scheduled for May 2010.

**The Learning Lab at WHYY** will be a unique facility, designed to teach the regional community to express itself through digital technology, helping individuals learn to tell their own stories and the stories of their communities through digital video, audio, and new media. In partnership with WHYY's many community partners, The Learning Lab will be integrated with and expand WHYY's pre-existing 60,000 square foot Technology Center.

The new building's main features will include the 4,100 square foot Lincoln Financial Digital Media Education Studio, two media classrooms, a student-based digital control room, meeting space, and a reception/display area showcasing the latest works of learning lab students. The Learning Lab will be part media laboratory, part classroom, part performance and production space, and most importantly, a center for connectivity across the spectrum of media platforms, giving all citizens from all walks of life the ability to connect more fully with their own communities.

Prior to construction, WHYY has launched several Learning Lab pilot projects, including an after-school documentary workshop for teens, teacher training in how to create videos with students, and digital storytelling for senior citizens. In FY09, Learning Lab projects reached hundreds of youth and adults across the region.

"This is an important moment for WHYY and the community as we break ground on The Learning Lab at WHYY," said WHYY President and CEO Bill Marrazzo. "The Learning Lab will complement and leverage the many dimensions of WHYY's community media services by providing a vital off air environment to teach, coach, and inspire children, teens, adults and other community partners to become participants in the media creation process as a way to enhance their own community needs. A more informed and connected Delaware Valley is at the heart of the development of the Learning Lab, and we are grateful to all our partners for the support throughout this entire process, including Dorrance H. Hamilton, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Lincoln Financial Foundation, DRPA and many others"

"WHYY plays a critical role in the lives of the residents of the Delaware Valley and the construction of the Learning Lab both extends that reach and enables WHYY to more deeply connect with them in their daily lives," said WHYY Board Chair Gerard H. Sweeney. "I know I speak on behalf of the entire WHYY Board of Directors when I say that not only have our funders been exceedingly generous in their support of the Learning Lab, but their support has been visionary as we developed with them this new direction forward toward a shared and better connected future."

"When Bill Marrazzo first told me of the exciting plans for the WHYY Learning Lab, I saw a wonderful opportunity to expand digital technology in the Delaware Valley, for children and youth, of course, but also for adults and seniors who want to become more informed and connected with the use of the Internet," said Dorrance H. Hamilton. "Only in breaching the digital divide can everyone begin to equally participate in the economic mainstream. WHYY is once again taking innovative steps to improve the quality of life of all Delaware Valley residents through enhanced education and communication."

"Lincoln Financial Group is proud to continue its partnership with WHYY in a project as important as the Learning Lab," said Susan Segal, Lincoln Financial Foundation's Philadelphia program officer. "Community dialogue and education are more important today than ever, and we hope that the Lincoln Financial Digital Education Studio at the Learning Lab will be an important catalyst to regional discourse, community building, and academic excellence."

"WHYY continues to be an innovator and vital connector within Philadelphia's civic community," said PA State Representative Dwight Evans. "The Learning Lab will be a beacon of hope for those citizens who are navigating a turbulent economic landscape."

"The Learning Lab will be an invaluable asset to WHYY and the community it serves, which will benefit from this state-of-the-art all digital learning facility," said PA State Senator Larry Farnese. "It serves as yet another milestone in the evolution of public broadcasting and its mission to provide free educational programming and opportunities for lifelong learning."

"The Learning Lab at WHYY was designed to both complement the existing WHYY Technology Center, which is so evocative of its technology-rich environment inside, and to highlight the Learning Lab's special mission to support learning in the surrounding community," said David Zaiser, A/A, Partner, KSS Architects. "Inside, digital displays will show videos produced by the Learning Lab, while the translucent white panel exterior form will create an identity for the Learning Lab distinct from the rest of Technology Center."

"Aegis Property Group has been involved with WHYY since the Technology Center project. We've been working with WHYY for many years to help them realize this expansion of their mission to provide educational services to the community," said Timothy M. Calligan, partner. "The WHYY Learning Lab will have a great impact, and we're honored to be providing project management services for such a unique and important project."

#### **ABOUT THE LEARNING LAB AT WHY Y**

**The Learning Lab at WHY Y** will be a multi-use high tech facility consisting of a variety of unique and versatile spaces, including:

- **Lincoln Financial Digital Education Studio** – a flexible performance and presentation area which can support a variety of functional arrangements, including lectures, town hall style meetings, panel discussions, talk shows, small scale musical and theatrical performances and

with flexibility enough to allow for its use as an interactive learning and teaching environment, as well as social functions. (4,100 total SF)

- **Digital Kitchen** – A technology-rich space for Learning Lab staff, partner or member organizations, and learners to brainstorm and develop new digital video productions based on the needs of their communities. (600 total SF)
- **Portal** – Reception and display space for presentation of content produced by the Learning Lab and to display and celebrate new digital video technologies and equipment. (1,000 total SF)
- **Community Rooms** – Two technology-rich classrooms for 16 students supporting hands-on, student driven production education. (1,800 total SF)
- **Support and Administrative Space** – staff office and storage space located to enhance interaction and to support Learning Lab functions. (600 total SF)

In addition, WHYY is partnering with Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program to create a mural on the retaining wall side. Creative input will come from donors and members. Artist and design concept will be announced shortly.

Construction partners throughout the project include the following teams and companies (detailed information follows):

- AEGIS PROPERTY GROUP, Project Management
- HUNTER ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION GROUP, Construction Manager
- KSS ARCHITECTS, Architect
- PENNONI ASSOCIATES, Civil/Landscape Engineer
- KEAST & HOOD, Structural Engineers
- BRUCE E. BROOKS, Consulting Engineers, Mechanical/Electrical
- ACENTECH, Acoustical Consultant
- LIGHTING DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, Architectural and Studio Lighting
- RJC DESIGNS, Technology Design and Integration

The total cost to construct and maintain The Learning Lab at WHYY is \$12million. Funding comes from: Dorrance H. Hamilton; Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Lincoln Financial Foundation; Delaware River Port Authority; The ARAMARK Charitable Fund at the Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program; Arcadia Foundation; Bank of America Foundation; Priscilla Brown; and Kyra McGrath.

Additional funding opportunities remain and funders will be recognized through a system of exterior pavers located at the front entrance to the building. For more information, please contact WHYY's Maggi Leyden at (215) 351-3305.

### **The Learning Lab at WHYY Construction Partners**

#### **KSS ARCHITECTS, Architect**

<http://www.kssarchitects.com/>

KSS Architects LLP is a full-service architecture, planning, and interior design firm with offices in Philadelphia and Princeton, N.J. Since their founding in 1983, they have built an impressive

portfolio of work for clients who are leaders in their fields, including education, land development, commercial real estate, and corporate environments.

They are committed to high quality design and state-of-the-art technical solutions. They structure the firm to streamline decision making while utilizing the expertise of 49 team members, 14 of whom are LEED Accredited Professionals. One of their five partners leads each project, but consults regularly with the other partners and team members to allow everyone to contribute his or her specialized knowledge and to find the ideal solution for any design, technical, or management problem.

The firm's designs have received multiple national and regional awards and are frequently published in the media. KSS has been twice named AIA New Jersey's Firm of the Year, and many team members have won individual design and service honors.

### **AEGIS PROPERTY GROUP, Project Management**

<http://www.aegispq.com/>

For almost three decades, AEGIS PROPERTY GROUP has earned a highly-regarded reputation for successfully assembling and directing the necessary resources to complete large, complex real estate projects. Under the watchful guidance of the industry's most experienced professionals, their comprehensive planning process translates a client's goals and objectives into clear, concise project parameters for design, scope, quality, cost and schedule—with impeccable results.

With a masterfully integrated mix of transaction management and development management services, AEGIS has completed over \$2 billion of significant office, industrial and institutional transactions and projects for major corporations and institutions throughout the region, including; Amtrak, Delaware River Port Authority, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Dunwoody Village CCRC, Mann Center for Performing Arts, NJ Economic Development Authority, Villanova University, Fulton County Medical Center, Towers Perrin, WHYY, Inc..

### **HUNTER ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION GROUP, Construction Manager**

<http://www.hunterrobertscg.com/>

Hunter Roberts delivers a broad range of construction management services proven by a founding executive team whose collective experience is unsurpassed industry wide. The firm believes that Hunter Roberts service capabilities are only as valuable as the quality of the relationships that animate them. This is why they have capitalized on the opportunity of building Hunter Roberts as a streamlined organization whose culture encourages frequent, as well as, face-to-face interaction between clients and the Hunter Roberts team at every level. Hunter Roberts services include the following: Preconstruction, Construction Management, Program Management, General Contracting Value Engineering, Life Cycle Studies, Consulting.

### **PENNONI ASSOCIATES, Civil/Landscape Engineer**

<http://www.pennoni.com/>

Pennoni Associates Inc., established in 1966, is a multi-disciplinary consulting engineering firm which provides personalized services and solutions to meet the needs of their diverse clients. Pennoni employs approximately 800 professional, technical, and administrative personnel in 20 offices throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, New England, Maryland, and New York. Services are provided to local, state, and federal governments, private, commercial, industrial, and construction clients as well as to other professional firms.

Pennoni Associates' Technologies include the following disciplines: Environmental,

Geotechnical, Inspection & Testing, Landscape Architecture, MEP Engineering, Municipal, Planning, Site Design, Structural, Surveying, Transportation, Water & Wastewater

The firm keeps abreast of rapidly changing technology that impacts their practice and applies this knowledge to assist clients in meeting their specific project requirements.

**KEAST & HOOD, Structural Engineers**

<http://www.keasthood.com/>

Keast & Hood Co. is a structural engineering firm founded in 1953. Over the course of its history, the firm has earned a reputation for committed client service and high-quality, technically-astute engineering. In addition to structural design for new buildings, the firm is a nationally recognized leader in building diagnostics and the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic structures.

Keast & Hood has offices in Philadelphia, PA, and Washington, DC. The firm serves architects, owners, institutions, and governmental agencies with a current staff of 32, 17 of whom are registered engineers and is registered in 22 states. Clients include early collaboration with groundbreaking architects such as Kahn; Venturi, Scott Brown; and Mitchell/Giurgola. The firm is presently teamed with leading architects from across the United States as well as with some of the country's premier historic preservation institutions. Keast & Hood has been recognized with more than 50 local and national awards. Their experience includes widely varied traditional and new structural materials and systems with projects ranging in size from small to over \$100 million.

**BRUCE E. BROOKS, Consulting Engineers, Mechanical/Electrical**

<http://www.brucebrooks.com/>

Bruce E. Brooks & Associates, Consulting Engineers, was founded in 1980 and provides mechanical and electrical consulting services to a wide range of institutional, corporate and professional clients. The three principals, Bruce Brooks, Brad Randall and John Hodos, along with Tami Knopp (Associate), Danette Ernst (Associate), George Swisher (Associate and Lead Electrical Engineer) and Charles Argue (Associate and Lead Mechanical Engineer) direct a staff of approximately twenty-plus dedicated and talented engineers and support personnel.

The firm's services include conditions assessment, feasibility investigation, life cycle analysis, master planning, building daylight and energy modeling, system design, administration of construction, and commissioning. The firm concentrates in three major project types:

**Architecturally Significant Projects:** Since its founding, the firm has been committed to the belief that good architecture and good engineering have to be an integrated function, from the initial visualization of the project, to its commissioning and placement into service. The firm is known for its careful and sensitive incorporation of building systems in both historic and new structures of architectural significance.

**Sustainable Architecture:** Environmental responsibility has always been one of the guiding principles of the firm's design work. It holds as its philosophy that many of the measures that make a building sustainable are simple, cost effective and should be an integral part of good design. More exotic measures require rigorous analysis before they warrant an Owner's investment. Five of the firm's senior personnel are LEED accredited professionals.

**ACENTECH, Acoustical Consultant**

<http://www.acentech.com/>

Acentech is a multi-disciplinary consulting firm comprised of acoustical consultants, audiovisual consultants, noise and vibration consultants, IT consultants and more. With offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Treviso, Pennsylvania and Westlake Village, California, their professional staff of more than fifty consultants has expertise in all areas of acoustics, audiovisual system design and more. As the direct descendant of the highly regarded Bolt Beranek and Newman (BBN) acoustics consulting group, Acentech is the oldest and largest organization of its type; an unequaled resource to engineers, architects, and designers world-wide.

Acentech's areas of expertise are: Architectural Acoustics, Audiovisual and Sound, System Design, Noise and Vibration Control, Environmental and Industrial Acoustics, Information Technology Planning, Building Dynamics, Quiet Product Design.

For their work in acoustics, the group was honored by the American Institute of Architects "for having almost single-handedly invented an entire profession by creating an awareness of acoustical considerations in design and by integrating solutions based on scientific principles with architectural and artistic concepts."

The firm builds project teams by selecting individual consultants within acoustical, audio visual and noise and vibration, and other disciplines whose expertise and experience will give special consideration to the particular challenges of each project. Many of Acentech's consultants are recognized authorities in their technical specialties.

Acentech celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2008.

#### **LIGHTING DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, Architectural and Studio Lighting**

<http://lightingdesigncollaborative.com/>

#### **RJC DESIGNS, Technology Design and Integration**

<http://www.rjcdesigns.com/>

With more than 20 years of experience, RJC Designs Inc., a technology consulting firm, has an extensive background in communications, audio/video, broadcast, multimedia, and various other technology disciplines. By understanding the needs, providing innovative solutions with attention to detail and technical competence, RJC has enabled their clients to successfully achieve their desired goals. RJC Designs has provided development and technology plans, detailed designs, and project management services for educational institutions and industry.