



The Children's Center at Caltech's Outdoor Science Laboratory

Location: Pasadena, California
 Designer: (M)Arch. branded architectures
 Website: www.marchstudio.com

The Children's Center at Caltech's Outdoor Science Laboratory is essentially a space about ideas. Guided by the executive director's clear vision, the project team was comprised of architects, marketing professionals, educators, board members, Caltech faculty and scientists. The intent was to create a prototype or model for a children's laboratory that will inspire other science-based curriculums.

The Outdoor Science Laboratory is designed primarily for children two to five years old. The director wanted to create a separate dedicated space that would expand the capabilities and opportunities for the children to explore their scientific and creative potential. (M)Arch. wanted to create a building that would reflect the identity and culture of Caltech, support its mission, and contribute to the community

Three primary design strategies were developed to meet the agreed-upon project objectives. The first, "Campus within a Campus," focused on the important context of the project. The second design strategy, "Laboratory as Catalyst," focused on the role of the Outdoor Science Lab in supporting the school's mission. The third design strategy was "Integrate and Connect."

The Outdoor Science Laboratory cost roughly \$180,000. The architects worked with the director and the board members for over four years to help provide materials and inspiration for fund raising.



Los Angeles Universal Preschool Headquarters

Location: Los Angeles, California
 Designer: HOK
 Website: www.hok.com

Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), a nonprofit organization, seeks to make high-quality voluntary preschool available to every four-year-old child in Los Angeles County, regardless of their family's income.

LAUP's direction for the new facility on Alameda Street is to display a successful, organized, efficient business presence within the space and reduce the hierarchical boundaries found at their office. The interior design was conceived as "a playground for adults."

The 17,000-square-foot space is a combination of playful design with contemporary influences with an emphasis on frugality, natural sustainable materials and timeless color schemes, and the strength and warmth of wood. All materials used were durable and of high quality, but not expensive. Instead, the designers strove to assemble an honesty in their representation. As such, the use of metal is simple, unadorned, and true to the base material. The space also reinforces the organization's brand. The color theme of the space relate to the organization's brand and graphics, namely the use of orange and green and the oval shape of a leaf, indicated on the company's logo.

The project adhered to a frugal budget. Occupied since late 2005, it was achieved with an architectural budget of \$54 per square and a furniture budget of \$22 per square foot.

