

# INSTITUTIONAL



Metropolitan Main Lobby

Libraries everywhere are grappling with how to meet the needs of patrons who are both craving free, open public spaces and expecting technology to be part of the experience. According to the American Library Association, patron needs have become less about the materials available and more about experiences offered. The public wants spaces that further interests and stimulate exploration.

The Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) began operation in 1873. It is one of the most-used library systems in the country and was rated the No. 1 library system in the nation in 1999, 2005, 2008, and 2010. CML has been within the top four library systems in the nation every year since 1999 when the rankings were first published in American Libraries magazine. Patrons make more than 8 million visits to the library each year.

Much has changed since CML first began operations, and the main library has followed suit with three major re-openings since the original building dedication in 1907. The most recent re-opening completed in June 2016 involved a \$30 million renovation that addressed the library's changing role in society. An open concept complete with glass walls, a three-story grand atrium inside the main entrance, increased public spaces, low profile bookshelves for unobstructed views, a café, a gift shop, and a robust children's area, come together to form a tangible transformation from material storehouse to vibrant gathering place.

## Challenge

The design firm on the project, Gund Partnership, knew they would need to account for consistent foot traffic and demanding conditions found in a snowy, cold weather environment. Tile would be the best flooring option because of its durability over time in a space that would need to stand the test of time. Aesthetically, Gund Partnership conceptualized a contemporary, sand-swept stone look and was set on a made-in-the-USA product. Given the high-profile nature of this project, Gund Partnership chose to work with Creative Materials Corporation due to the need for specialization in tile selection and supply for large commercial projects.

### Location

Columbus, Ohio

### Project Type

Institutional

### Area Supplied

Grand Atrium & Adjoining Areas

### Product

Lava, Gray, 12" x 24" Rectified

### Design Firm

Schooley Caldwell and  
GUND Partnership

### Tile Installer

Continental Commercial Floors

**"The Creative Materials' project management team, coordinated with the factory partner to ensure the majority of the material needed could be produced in one run, meaning that the shade would stay consistent within that production run."**

*- Craig Lansley,  
Director of Client Services,  
Creative Materials Corporation*



Creative Materials' Boston office consulted with Gund Partnership on potential tile options and identified additional considerations that would be important in the product selection including:

- Movement in the tile to hide dirt in a highly foot-trafficked area
- Above average slip resistance to prevent slips and falls in a geography with snowy winter months
- A color body tile to minimize aesthetic imperfections should a tile be chipped
- Management of shade variation upon product production to prevent "checker-boarding" across the wide-open expanse in the main atrium
- Ability to achieve an aggressive price point given the use of public funds to finance the project

## Solution

A unique service offered when working with Creative Materials is access to an in-house sourcing department staffed by interior designers. The sourcing department's sole purpose is to know the world of tile inside and out. By utilizing Creative Materials' sourcing department, architects and designers are able to substantially reduce the amount of time spent sourcing tile, which allows them to focus that time on other areas of their projects in order to meet their clients' demanding deadlines.

For the CML project, the Creative Materials sourcing team was able to offer several solutions that would meet the price, design, and technical requirements of the project. Ultimately, the team recommended the Creative Materials Lava Collection which is manufactured in the United States. The Lava Collection was able to meet all of the requirements set forth by Gund as it featured:

- Subtle movement in a volcanic stone look
- Commercially-rated slip resistance
- Color Body manufacturing production
- Budget-friendly price points

In addition, the Creative Materials' project management team, coordinated with the factory partner to ensure the majority of the material needed could be produced in one run, meaning that the shade would stay consistent within that production run. Creative Materials coordinated with the installer to ensure that the material produced in the main production run was used in the main adjoining areas.

As it turned out, 1,200 SF couldn't be produced on the primary production run, so the Creative Materials' project management team stepped in to ensure that those tiles wouldn't get mixed in with the bulk run, and could instead be installed in the bathrooms where the shade variations wouldn't be noticeable. The Creative Materials team also managed to a staged delivery schedule and all materials arrived on time and correctly. Utilizing vast experience in the manufacturing and supply of tile to commercial projects, the Creative Materials team used a collaborative, team approach to seamlessly bring Gund Partnership's design vision to life.

"Open to All", an original inscription in the libraries' entryway from 1907, has taken on new meaning in the age of collaborative public spaces and urbanization. Creative Materials is proud to help in the creation of spaces such as these.

## Your project

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