

# Columbia Memorial Space Science Learning Center

Downey, California

**Owner**

City of Downey

**Architect**

Arquitectonica

**Completion Date**

May 2008

**Construction Cost**

\$6 million

**Total Area**

25,000 sf



Thornton Tomasetti provided structural engineering services for a new, 25,000 square-foot museum conceived as a two-story, metal clad, sculptural form, built in memory of the *Columbia* Space Shuttle Crew.

The steel braced-framed structural system is closely integrated with the architectural design to accommodate the variety of display areas and interactive exhibition spaces to educate students on the various aspects of aerospace including:

- The *Challenger* Learning Center that features a simulated space mission that tests the participant's decision making skills.
- A Space Science Discovery Zone which contains a variety of interactive exhibits that allows visitors to explore the principles of flight, living in space, the search for life beyond earth, and the origins of the universe.
- The Mars Robotics Lab that allows young visitors the opportunity to design and program their own robots to complete a remote exploration mission to Mars.

The Memorial Center also includes historical displays detailing the stories of men and women who have contributed to the development of the aviation and aerospace industry in Downey, California.