

University of Illinois at Chicago UIC Forum

Chicago, Illinois

Owner

University of Illinois at Chicago

Client / Architect

HOK

Contractor

Power Construction

Completion Date

2008

Construction Cost

\$28.5 million

Total Area

75,000 sf

Award

AIA Illinois Honor Awards, 2013 Frank Lloyd Wright Honor Award Special Recognition

National Council of Structural Engineers Associations, 2010 Excellence in Structural Engineering Award



The jewel of the University of Illinois at Chicago's new South Campus Mixed Use Development program is the award-winning, 75,000-square-foot Forum. Located in a prominent area on UIC's campus, the Forum serves as a venue for both the University and the public, accommodating a variety of events within its flexible floor plan.

To accommodate all of the programs the University envisioned for the Forum, including meetings, trade shows, speaking engagements, concerts, banquets, receptions and commencements, the design team created a large, open, flexible space that can move and transform to a user's need. This directive was achieved by using several 36-foot-tall moveable partitions which are hung from two of four 124-foot-span trusses. The partitions allow the 23,800-square-foot open space event area to be reconfigured into three smaller 7,900-square-foot meeting spaces.

As a result of poor soil conditions, a caisson-supported structural slab at grade was used to eliminate soil differential settlement and minimize cracking. The caisson-supported structural slab made it possible to install telescoping bleacher seating in the building by limiting the occurrence of any significant vertical peaks and valleys that can cause bleachers to become inoperable.

An iconic feature of the Forum is its lightwell column, a 99-foot-tall, four-foot-diameter exposed steel column that supports the overhanging trellis-like roof that provides shade to the outdoor gathering space below. The column wall thickness is 1-1/4 inch at the bottom and tapers to 5/8 inch above the trellis roof connection. The lightwell column creates an eye-catching piece that announces the Forum's landmark presence to the campus and the surrounding area.

