

Best of 2008 Southern California

## American Career College, Ontario

Higher Education  
Award of Merit



### Project Team

Owner: American Career College,  
Ontario

General Contractor: Fullmer  
Construction, Ontario

Architect: LPA, Inc., Irvine

Landscape Architect: LPA, Inc., Irvine

Structural Engineer: Lee George  
Structural Engineers, Tustin

Civil Engineer: Walden & Associates,  
Irvine

Mechanical: Air Control Systems,  
Placentia

Plumbing: Johnson Plumbing &  
Heating, Inc., Atwood

While American Career College is the first of its kind, you may soon see more popping up across the nation.

Seen as a prototype for future American Career Colleges, this 60,000-sq-ft facility serves as a medical and dental vocational school. The college is intended to serve as a nine-month vocational school for adults who may not have the ability to pursue a secondary education. In order to make the adults' college experience more effective, the college was designed unlike other vocational schools.

Built in Ontario on a seven-acre site, the college is located next to a busy freeway, which meant the project team had some decisions to make when designing the campus.

For instance, the central social space on the campus – the quad – was internalized to provide a protected, quiet place for students to meet.

Because the \$12-million project had a

### Judge's Comment:

**"A unique and dynamic addition to the architectural vocabulary of the Inland Empire"**

restrictive budget, tilt-up concrete panels were used. The panels form the building's skin and structure.

Glazing was used to maximize natural daylight and fly ash concrete, exterior shaded

glazing and a drought tolerant landscape were also added for sustainable elements.

The project team also installed intelligent interior lighting and mechanical systems to reduce energy usage and to allow the building to perform better than Title 24 requirements.

The college contains medical labs, classrooms and administrative offices for 800 students. While the college is on a small site, the design team tried to create a sense of college pride by creating "out of classroom" places for students to engage in conversation. A digital study lounge and video screen arrays were also installed.

The design team also created signage on the building that effectively serves as a billboard, intended as a further recruiting tool. <<