



People committed simply found a way to get things done *Neither ice or snow; rain or flooding kept a team of local contractors from completing the new Colorbiotics headquarters on time, on budget*

On August 4th, Colorbiotics, an operating division of Becker Underwood, moved production and administrative operations into a brand new building on Dayton Avenue. The \$13 million, 140,000 square foot facility was built from the ground up in less than 12 months - an amazing accomplishment given the many challenges facing the team of local contractors and suppliers selected to complete the project.

Kent Rotert, marketing manager for Colorbiotics, who also managed the building project, helped select Story Construction as the general contractor. Rotert was impressed with the firm's "design-build" concept; an approach, according to Rotert, that set the tone for the overall speed and completion of the project. "What should have taken months to develop a preliminary design and cost was finished in four weeks," Rotert says. "Story Construction was the mastermind behind this building process. Their experience and knowledge made this project meet its timeline and their people made this project enjoyable."

Joining Story Construction was Nikkel & Associates who completed all of the electrical work and ACI who handled the mechanical components. The overall design, developed by Story Construction, includes a unique 120 ft x 25 ft pit in the middle of the building that contains all of the main production equipment.

The electrical designed by Nikkel & Associates is based on a 6000 amp service. The majority of the infrastructure is installed directly underneath the building to free up wall space for pipes. The building has enough wire to span over 800 football fields and contains over 12 miles of conduit. "Colorbiotics and Becker Underwood have partnered with Nikkel for years to handle all our wiring needs," Rotert says, "and we are again, very proud of the work they did for us on this building."

Rotert and team of contractors met religiously throughout the construction phase to discuss progress, identify challenges, and prepare contingency plans to keep the project on schedule. Among the greatest of challenges came from Mother Nature, beginning with a winter that produced snowfall in excess of 80 percent above the Iowa average; followed by a spring of relentless rains and flooding.

"Words like dedication and commitment are so often overused," Rotert says, "but there simply is no other way to describe the actions of all those who were involved with this project. Despite record snowfall and ice that just wouldn't melt, followed by a spring of relentless rain and 500-year flooding, this assembly of contractors found a way to get it done. Everyone involved exceeded our expectations."

According to Rotert, making colorant used for landscaping mulch requires a production facility that consists of a complicated assembly of pipes and pumps to move the many liquids and powders in the right proportion at the right time.

"ACI Mechanical was a master at pipe routing and getting the most efficient process for pumps," Rotert says. "They had a complete understanding of how our production process works and developed a system that will certainly enhance our productivity. It was a pleasure working with such skilled, knowledgeable and reliable people. They just got it."

"I just can't say enough about all those who were involved with the process. Given our 12-month timeframe and the horrendous weather conditions, this was an incredible accomplishment that took great planning, resilience and flexibility. All these men and women have individual names, but for us at Colorbiotics, they all share a common title - that of dedicated, skilled craftspeople. We couldn't be happier with our new home." Rotert says.