

Project Spotlight

St. Joseph Academy Chapel: New Orleans, LA

Owner: St. Joseph Academy
Installer: CellFill LLC

Engineering Firm: Morphy & Makofsky
General Contractor: Gibbs Construction



Background Information

For decades, St. Joseph Academy and Convent functioned as an all-girls school, moving buildings a few times throughout its history. Since the convent closed, the last building it inhabited, located on North Galvez Street in New Orleans, has served a variety of functions. The building has also experienced extensive damage caused both by Hurricane Katrina and by a fire that took place shortly after that event. By 2017, this historic building was in dire need of restoration—a restoration that required intricate attention to detail, premium construction materials, and expert workmanship.

Project Details

One of the essential processes in completing this renovation involved stabilizing the structure with the installation of a new foundation. Not only did the historic property present unique construction challenges but snow, sleet, and cold temperatures added to its complexity. The design-construction team—including Morphy, Makofsky Engineering and Gibbs Construction—chose to install a permeable low-density cellular concrete (PLDCC) for the chapel foundation. They chose to use Aerix Industries' AQUAERiX 30-pcf PLDCC.

A three-person installation crew from CellFill, an Oklahoma-based contractor, completed the concrete foundation in just three days. During the first day of installation, the CellFill team completed the formwork. The team then placed the AQUAERiX PLDCC during the next two days, using one lift to install a total of 460 cubic yards at an average thickness of three feet.

Aerix Added Value

Aerix's AQUAERiX was chosen for this project because of its low density and its unique ability to counteract any potential buoyancy, which was of particular concern with this structure. With the use of AQUAERiX, Gibbs Construction was able to begin this complex renovation project with efficiency and excellence, continuing to rebuild its beautiful, vibrant community.

