

Access is the Key

Superior Scaffold ensures that access is maintained during hospital facelift project



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Keeping the entrance open during construction was a paramount consideration when Philadelphia-based Superior Scaffold Services Inc. was hired for the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia project.

The hospital was given an exterior facelift by Bala Cynwyd, Pa.-based general contractor L.F. Driscoll Co. led by senior project manager Peggy Cowan. The project started in January 2004 and was completed in April.

Among challenges faced by Superior Scaffold was to keep the 23,000 inpatient admissions and one million outpatients safe from

the construction overhead and around the building.

Superior installed a 300-lb., 300-sq.-ft. sidewalk canopy with fire-rated plywood side walls. The southern end of the construction, called "the sleeve," is a glass wall supported with tubular truss and adjustable cables.

The northern end of the building had to be wrapped with scaffold that was 128 ft. high and fully planked at all levels. The challenge for Superior was that, while the scaffold was weather wrapped, it could not be attached to the building with ties.

To address the challenge,

Superior Scaffold used system scaffold and a design that mimics the Pratt Truss system used in bridges. The system was designed to withstand 60-mph winds without one tie to the vertical surface.

Superior foreman Steve Semmelmann also designed and built a system of hatches and pulleys so that the roof of the scaffold could be accessed to lower the new glass panels into position.

The work was completed without incident to the workforce or to the thousands of patients and hospital workers entering and exiting the building. ■