

Lord, Aeck & Sargent in Dahlonega, Georgia

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Single-pane floor-to-ceiling lobby windows were replaced with more energy-efficient glazing as part of the remodel of [Gaillard Hall](#) designed by [Lord, Aeck & Sargent](#). Photo: © 2012 Jonathan Hillyer

Atlanta-based [Lord, Aeck & Sargent](#) (LAS) recently completed a renovation of [Gaillard Hall](#), a 1950s military barracks building on the campus of North Georgia College & State University in Dahlonega, Georgia. The architects worked to preserve as much of the International-style building's character as possible, while meeting the modern needs of a college dormitory.

So, while changes to the exterior were fairly minimal, the concrete-and-brick building's interior underwent extensive remodeling and modernization. One result of the reconfiguration is that the building now includes accommodation for 166, compared with the original bed count of 280.

The firm chose to largely preserve the building's dramatic split-level lobby, which helps to mediate the building's interaction with a significant site slope.



Inside the split-level lobby of [Gaillard Hall](#). Photo: © 2012 Jonathan Hillyer

Another preservation decision made by the LAS team was to keep the building's existing glazed-terra-cotta hallway walls. This was accomplished in part by converting one in three double-occupancy dorm rooms into a bathroom that serves the two adjoining spaces, along with a separate mechanical room. This allowed the updated configuration to work with the existing doorway placements. Each semi-suite has its own entry and the middle door provide hallway access to the mechanical room.

The building's original common bathroom facilities, located at the end of each corridor, were combined with an adjacent room to provide study and leisure spaces for the building's occupants.

According to Mac McConnell, North Georgia's vice president for business and finance:

"The challenge for LAS was to take a 1950s era dormitory and retrofit it into a modern living environment with all of the amenities of a 21st century residence hall. The floor-to-ceiling height was extremely limited, so the building didn't easily lend itself to transformation. LAS had to find creative ways to fit modern building systems (air conditioning, life safety, electrical, plumbing and data) into a structure that really wasn't designed for that and more importantly, to make it an elegant solution."

Other improvements include selective repointing and cleaning of the building's red brick walls, replacement of single-pane windows with more energy-efficient glazing in the lobby and semi-suites, addition of a new water-source heat pump system, and the installation of a new roof.

The dormitory was originally designed by Atlanta architect Richard L. Aeck, whose son Tony Aeck is now chairman of Lord, Aeck & Sargent. According to the father's hand-written notes, Gaillard Hall was built in two stages with completion dates in 1954 and 1961, for a construction cost of \$580,148.22.

With this \$5.6-million remodel, the college expects to get at least an additional 40 years of use out of the building.

Project Team

- **Owner:** North Georgia College & State University Real Estate Foundation
- **Developer:** Ambling University Development Group (Valdosta, Ga.)
- **Architect:** [Lord, Aeck & Sargent](#) (Atlanta office)
- **Program Manager:** Jones Lang LaSalle (Atlanta office)
- **General Contractor:** Choate Construction (Atlanta)
- **Landscape Architect:** Eberly & Associates (Atlanta)
- **Mep/Fp Engineer:** Andrews, Hammock & Powell, Inc. (Macon, Ga.)
- **Structural Engineer:** KSi/Structural Engineers (Atlanta)
- **Low-Voltage Engineers:** J&A Engineering (Marietta, Ga.)
- **Civil Engineer:** Haines Gipson & Associates (Lawrenceville, Ga.)

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