



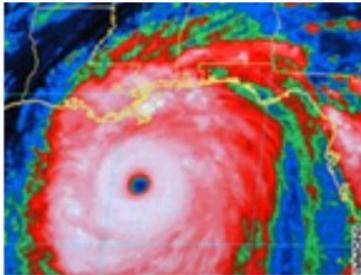
# Rebuilding Starts with a Strong Foundation and the Right Specifications for AV, Lighting & Power Controls

It takes a village to raise a child, but in the case of a hurricane ravaged section of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, it took the city of New Orleans & dedicated professionals to jump start the specifications for the rebuild of George Washington Carver High School.

*This paper was developed based on an interview with Robert Pourciau, Senior Design Consultant for JBA Consulting Engineers, a firm dedicated to commitment, passion, integrity, quality and experience. The firm blends traditional services with leading edge value driven services. Robert shares his insights on rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina.*

## THE PROJECT

In 2005 and in the wake of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the Recovery School District (RSD) in New



Orleans renewed its commitment and strategy to help struggling area schools rebuild. The RSD's goal (jointly funded by FEMA and state and local government) was to update and renovate the schools where possible and rebuild completely where necessary.



The George Washington Carver High School was one of the larger schools in New Orleans, and had been in

the direct line of the hurricane. The impact of the storm completely demolished the school and left over 1,300 kids and faculty without a local educational facility.

## THE CHALLENGE

The painstaking process of the redesign began with the selection of key team members that would help completely rebuild the school and bring it to a technology level that it had never seen before.

To earmark financial resources, the RSD used an independent board and multiple people from different schools and other parts of Louisiana to review and evaluate the schools for funding. It was decided that the redesign projects would meet certain performance standards and specifications and that all the projects would be targeted to achieve LEED Silver.

To handle the acoustics, audio-visual, lighting and low voltage needs for the school, the city turned to JBA Consulting Engineers.

With a local presence in New Orleans, JBA was intent on providing the key services and specification expertise to ensure that the new high school provided top notch technology to support the school's educational and art programs while providing the faculty and the community with another venue for key events.

JBA's work included the design for the school's auditorium, large gymnasium and auxiliary gymnasium as well as providing designing systems for a number of other class and administration rooms.

Understanding the school's LEED objectives, JBA also included the necessary specifications for the school to meet the requirements for the acoustic credits under the LEED guideline and ANSI S12.60 Criteria for Classroom Acoustics. Considered the largest RSD project to date, the construction costs for the rebuild had been estimated at \$55 million dollars.

An interesting caveat and as part of the project's requirements, the state required the teaming of several disciplines. This created joint ventures between local and national firms for project design and project execution. For example, the architects chosen for the project were Trapolin Peer on a local level, and VMDO, a Virginian firm specializing in K-12 design.

As one of the primary multi-discipline engineering firms for the project, JBA approached their work with a tremendous local sensitivity. The firm provided specifications and design for the acoustics, audiovisual and low voltage systems including the telecommunications, security access, life safety & fire protection aspects of the project. MEP was handled by others.

## THE PRODUCT SOLUTIONS

For the project JBA needed to specify complex AV systems that required simplified user interfaces.

Equipment specified for the project included:

- Audio / Mixing board
- Sound Reinforcement (Meyer)
- Video Recording / Streaming
- Matrix Switcher Full DM
- Control System (Crestron)
- Theatrical Lighting / (ETC)

- Video Projection (DP)/
- Rear Projection Screen (Dalite)
- Intercom (Clear – Com)

The project also called for a dedicated Control Room and multiple racks for Front of House and Stage Manager. Key to the project was the specifications for all power and lighting controls for the low voltage systems. These were specified as LynTec's.

JBA's primary areas of focus included the Auditorium, Band Room, Choir Room, Dance Room, Main Gym and Auxiliary Gym. Functionality for the Auditorium and Main Gym included multi purposes as the auditorium is intended to also provide a community outpost for certain events and speakers. The seating capacity in the Auditorium tops out at 700; however the student body is much larger. To handle full blown general assembly, the main gym provides additional audio and dual screen projection and the ability to house 1,200 students. Controls for power and lighting were provided for the Auditorium and Main Gym while power controls were provided for the Auxiliary Gym.



The LynTec products that were including for specification throughout were the RPC Series. These products were chosen for their solid solution and for the company's great support. Robert Pourciau, Senior Design Consultant with JBA commented, "LynTec always performs their due diligence, and makes sure that the products are specified properly so there isn't much for the contractor to have think about – he just provides what's specified and the systems work beautifully."



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LynTec's network, power monitoring & control functionality was also incorporated into the specifications for the project and a key criteria as the city required access to all IP addressable systems in order to periodically review system monitoring.

Having this type of network operability and control capability is critical to any project, but particularly for projects located in this area. Pourciau offered some additional insight, "Once a project gets built through our local construction processes, the city of New Orleans will have a say in what kind of on-going monitoring and control is needed. Anything that has an Ethernet cable means that the city of New Orleans wants to be involved." Indeed, managing information is key to the rebuilding process and in New Orleans they certainly take this kind of accountability seriously.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Whenever it is finally approved for construction and built, the school will be two floors and have a completely new footprint and redesign from the previous facility.

For now, what everyone involved in the rebuilding of George Washington Carver High School is taking seriously is their commitment to helping these children and this community get back on its feet. On the grounds of the old high school, there are dozens and dozens of FEMA and other trailers used for classrooms as well as admin and other support "buildings".

At the moment, there are no hard lines for defining the school districts, but this will also be restored once projects like this high school rebuild are completed. Pourciau adds, "The spirit of New Orleans is alive and



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## ABOUT JBA

*Celebrating over 40 years of engineering experience, the Vegas based JBA expanded its presence to include a satellite office in New Orleans to meet the needs of a city that was intent on rebuilding itself.*

*The New Orleans branch of JBA is located in Metairie, LA and opened in 2008 as an extension of the corporate home office of the firm. Previously known as SDA Design Consulting and now under the JBA umbrella, the firm provides AV, Lighting and Technology services and support with a focus on low voltage and acoustics. With over 20 years of experience, founder partners, Robert Pourciau and Steve Fisher see the partnership as a win win for both companies.*

*JBA's Trusted Advisors™ deliver services that include:*

- Acoustics and Noise Control
- Audiovisual Design
- Electrical Engineering
- Telecommunications
- Fire Protection and Life Safety
- Mechanical/Plumbing Engineering
- Security and Surveillance
- Sustainable Design (LEED)
- Infrastructure
- Technology Center Planning Service

*Robert Pourciau has over 20 years of audiovisual and acoustics experience. He has been responsible for the design of advanced technical systems in many market segments & is involved from a project's conceptual development through system commissioning to assure a project's overall success. Contact Robert at [rpourciau@jbace.com](mailto:rpourciau@jbace.com).*

## ABOUT LYNTEC

*LynTec brings to market electrical protection and circuit switching capabilities in the same enclosures. In doing so, the company has always found ways to save space, lower system installation costs and build trusted relationships with audio system and lighting designers. Its expansion into electrical and lighting controls, and now its growth into expanded lighting control, energy monitoring, built in power conditioning, and mobile applications continues to position the company as a leading resource for the AV and lighting industries and an integral partner for sustainable energy practices. For more information visit [www.lyntec.com](http://www.lyntec.com).*

well, but we're all working hard to restore a greater sense of normalcy. Every time we open up a new building we are helping to put New Orleans back to what it was – a city rich both in its culture and its community.

We're happy to lend our expertise with the AV, power and lighting solutions that we specified but even more so, we are just proud to be part of the larger effort to restore a great city."

## LATEST UPDATE FOR 2013

This project has had many starts and stops, and was on ground for a 2014 completion when it was unfortunately cancelled by the state. It is the hope of all the firms involved and the local community that this will be reconsidered in the new budget year.

Indeed it takes a village....and a passed budget.

## ABOUT CHRISTOPHER MAIONE - Christopher Maione is a recognized leader and expert in the AV industry with over

28 years of audiovisual expertise. His forward thinking and progressive approach to business led him to found and become the managing partner of one of the world's leading AV consulting firms earning the company accolades as a leader in AV solutions and technologies. In his new company, Christopher Maione Associates, Maione employs the same stringent procedures and protocols that enabled his previous company to achieve global success and a reputation for the highest quality of work. Maione now focuses his attention on AV System Integrators, Manufacturers and Fortune 500 clients to help them identify strategic ways of handling their clients, products, & projects. Maione has a talent for forecasting trends and identifying emerging technologies that substantially impact the AV industry. Based on his own business model, he encourages colleagues to strive for excellence and consistently challenges the AV industry to improve its practices, grow its services, and develop better products in an effort to set a higher standard and respond to the changing needs of clients. Well versed in all aspects of AV, IT, Integrated Technologies, Industry Standards, Green AV and best practices and protocols, Maione is an Adjunct InfoComm Faculty Member and CTS-D/CTS-I provider and serves on a variety of key industry standard committees. In doing so, he continues to set industry benchmarks for quality & compliance. For more info please contact [info@chrismaione.com](mailto:info@chrismaione.com).



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