



Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center

Dwana Smallwood, was once named “one of the greatest modern dancers” by Vogue Magazine. Dwana decided to open up a performing arts center in her home neighborhood of Bedford Stuyvesant, following a 4 year role as Director for the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls located in South Africa. Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center is a not-for-profit community fixture focused on teaching aspiring dancers while also serving as a community gathering space. EP Engineering partnered with Jordan Parnass Digital Architecture to provide full MEP engineering services for a gut renovation of Dwana’s new space at 2nd Floor at 857 Lexington Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. The renovation was approximately 3,700 square feet and the finished space consists of two large studio spaces that can be converted into a single performance space, lockers rooms, restrooms, staff lounge, offices and a receptions area.

Challenges:

- Design intent was to keep exposed ductwork to a minimum in the reception and core customer areas to allow for beautifully designed architectural lighting elements.
- Exposed ceiling in studio/performance space required special consideration for the ductwork which entered the ceiling of this space from the roof top units.
- Adjusting to the time restraints and multiple design changes while adhering to the design and construction schedule.

Achievements:

- Ran ductwork horizontally on the roof and penetrated the space in areas where ductwork could be hidden above dropped ceiling, and core areas supplied with non-descript wall grilles.
- Specified oval ductwork and kept the amount of horizontal ductwork to a minimum in the studio/performance space through close coordination with the architect.

Award:

AIANY 2017 Honor Award

Locations:

857 Lexington Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11221

Project Size:

3,700 SF

