



CASE STUDY:  
**Marie Reed  
Community  
Learning Center**  
Washington DC

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With views toward the Washington Monument, the Marie Reed Community Learning Center is a four-story complex that houses a public elementary school, recreation center, a health clinic, children's hospital, a women and infants care clinic and a head start infant day care. The Center was envisioned and constructed in 1977 in the heart of Washington, D.C.'s Adams Morgan neighborhood and thanks to the community's commitment, the building was recently renovated and now stands as a refreshed beacon of the neighborhood.

"The Center was originally constructed in the Brutalist architectural style. It was inward-facing and the facades were clad with brick and concrete. There were few windows and the primary facade was set well back from 18th Street NW," explains Quinn Evans, the architecture firm responsible for the renewal design. "Several objectives informed the improved façade design including space for new cascading front stairs, introducing an open and inviting presence, and celebrating the Center's presence as an important community resource."

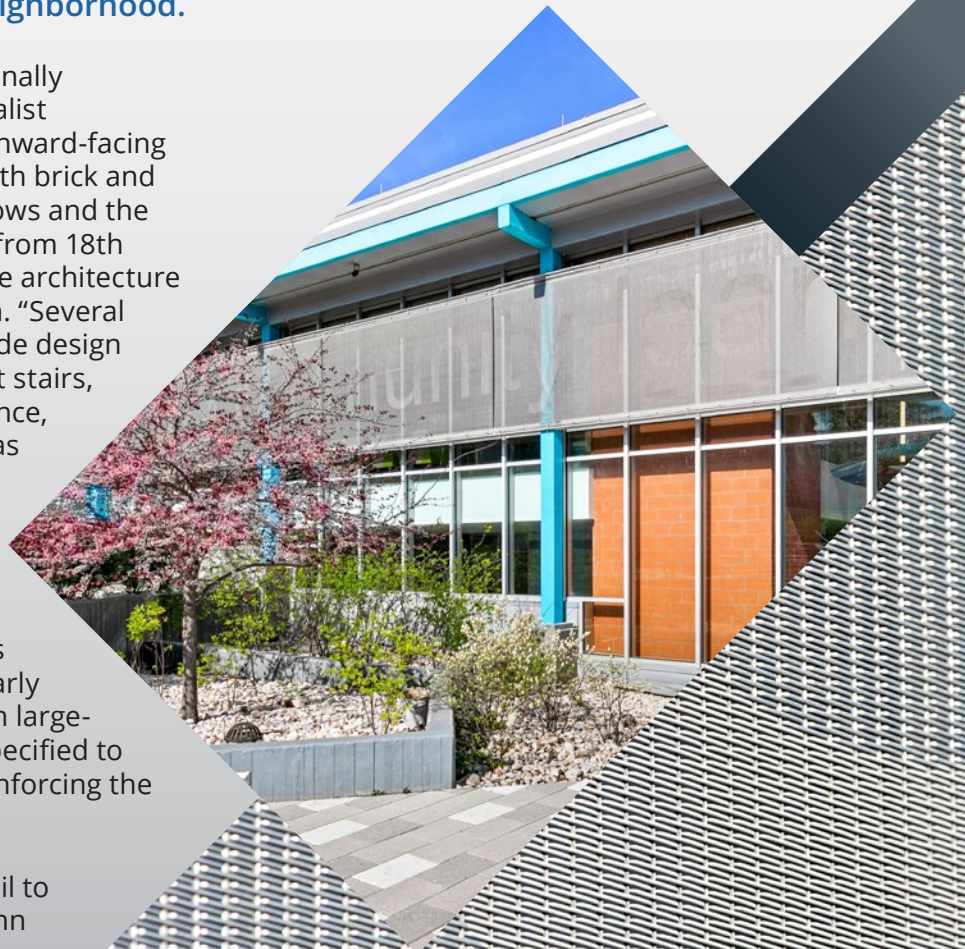
A glass curtainwall provides the transparency and civic presence along the street that the community desired. However, this curtainwall faces west, enduring brutal afternoon and early evening sun. A metal fabric system with large-scale etched graphics from GKD was specified to mitigate the solar impact while also reinforcing the organization's name and purpose.

"GKD's metal fabric scrim provides a veil to shield the glass curtainwall," notes Quinn Evans. "It reduces the building's heat

load and eliminates glare. Further, the metal fabric scrim along with the super graphics and dynamic LED lighting accomplishes the street presence the team wanted to establish. We utilized approximately 1,150 square feet of GKD's Omega 1510 product, with an open area of 35 percent. The material appropriately provides both transparency and a backdrop for the new building's super-graphic."

"GKD provided turnkey solutions, including engineering, fabrication, in-house etching and installation," says Jeff Abbott, GKD-USA customer service manager. "Together we spent considerable time carefully sizing the etched letters in conjunction with panel breaks. The shop drawings were well coordinated and by working closely with the design team and handling many of the details, installation of the mesh was a smooth process."

The metal fabric is a bold material that fits with the brutalist language of the original architecture. It's only up close that one realizes that it is a light transparent material that also offers texture. Quinn Evans, the students, the school faculty and larger Adams Morgan Community are all pleased. The project has won several design awards, and the new scrim provides a memorable backdrop to the transformed entry plaza.





**PROJECT TEAM:**

**Quinn Evans Architects**  
Architect

**GKD-USA**  
Metal Fabric Manufacturer and Installer

