

# Teaming up to improve youth facility and lives

Union League Club One, Chicago, Illinois



The Union League Boys & Girls Clubs recently completed the first major upgrade in 90 years on its historic Club One facility in Chicago's Pilsen Neighborhood. This multi-phased renovation and expansion was a team effort between client, architect and contractor. Guided by Antunovich Associates' design, Tandem Construction's crew is the first in the U.S. to install Rockfon<sup>®</sup> Impact<sup>™</sup> ceiling panels to finish ceilings within Club One's diverse spaces.

## Products in use

- Rockfon<sup>®</sup> Infinity<sup>™</sup> Z
- Rockfon<sup>®</sup> Impact<sup>™</sup>
- Chicago Metallic<sup>®</sup> ceiling suspension systems

In June 2013, the Union League Boys and Girls Clubs celebrated the grand re-opening of Club One, marking the completion of its \$4.2 million, 19-month construction and renovation project that nearly doubled the facility's original size.

Rockfon's ceiling systems met the modern performance and aesthetic requirements of Club One's diverse needs and rooms. The most challenging applications were in the gymnasiums. For these areas, Rockfon products were provided to create a durable ceiling system that maintains a clean appearance, offers exceptional acoustic performance and withstands regular impact from errant balls and other daily athletic activities.

The new and expanded Club One is expected to help increase membership by up to 25 percent, serving 800 new members. Average daily attendance at Club One is expected to double.

For nearly 100 years, the building on West 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Pilsen has been synonymous with the Union League Club's positive community involvement and outreach. Constructed in the 1880s, it began with a very different purpose as home to The Chopin Club saloon. Early in its history, the site became notorious for multiple murders that occurred in and near the property, and a source of deep concern for Chicago's Lower West Side community.

The Union League Club purchased the structure in 1919 and transformed it into a source of community pride. By 1920, it converted a community hall within the building and established a Boys Club to help provide structured activities for underprivileged youth. As time passed, the Union League Club's mission grew to serve increasing numbers of boys and girls who were in-need and at-risk.

In 2011, the Union League Boys & Girls Clubs celebrated the next phase in their living legacy with the ground-breaking for a four-story, 17,000-square-foot annex. This addition was constructed adjacent to the main structure and completed in July 2012. The second phase of Club One's major facility upgrade required a total renovation of the existing 18,000-square-foot facility. Walls between the original and new buildings were opened to connect all four floors.

Club One's combined space now offers gymnasiums, weight rooms, locker rooms, classrooms, a library, a technology center, a dance room, a craft room, a new science laboratory, expanded kitchen amenities, as well as modernized infrastructure, universal design enhancements and updated finishes. The entire facility also is now fully accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Rockfon's team provided multiple ceiling suspension systems, panels and perimeter trim for Club One's new and renovated classrooms, offices, lobbies, corridors and activities areas.

## Building with purpose

The Jahn family has been active community and business leaders in Chicago for more than a century. Club One's new science laboratory is where Carolyn Jahn, Ph.D., an associate professor of cell and molecular biology at Northwestern University Medical Center, will continue to serve as a volunteer teacher. Along with supporting the growth and development of the Union League Boys & Girls Club, several Jahn family members led the success of Chicago Metallic's 120-year history.

To meet the demanding requirements of the Club One's gymnasiums, Rockfon recommended the Rockfon Impact ceiling panel. These stone wool acoustic ceiling panels are in use throughout Europe, but had not been introduced to the U.S.

Rockfon is a subsidiary of Denmark-based ROCKWOOL International A/S, the world's largest producer of stone wool products. In October 2013, the company acquired Chicago

Metallic. Together, they provide comprehensive range of quality stone wool acoustic ceiling panels, specialty metal panels and suspension systems. For Club One, they supplied multiple ceiling suspension systems, panels and perimeter trim to accommodate the varying purposes of Club One's new and renovated classrooms, offices, lobbies, corridors and activities areas.

"When we were collaborating on this project a year ago, we didn't know we would become co-workers. Doing good work together with some of the best products and smartest people was a wonderful introduction," says Mark Kemerling, Rockfon's acoustic tile and new product manager for North America. "This system utilizes larger module ceiling panels with a wider faced suspension system. This combination of panels helped create a very durable ceiling, which is acoustically tuned enough to allow the space to double as an auditorium."

Guided by Antunovich Associates' design, The Union League Boys & Girls Clubs recently completed the first major upgrade in 90 years and doubled the size of its historic Club One facility in Chicago's Pilsen Neighborhood.



## Soundly sustainable

Building upon more than 50 years of success in Europe, Rockfon products use stone wool as raw material to create beautiful, comfortable, safe and healthy indoor environments, while making a constructive contribution toward a sustainable future.

Contributing to building's environmental goals, Rockfon Impact ceiling panels contain up to 39 percent recycled content. Rockfon's extensive portfolio of stone wool acoustic ceiling solutions has earned UL Environment's GREENGUARD Gold Certification for low-emitting products.

*"Maximizing indoor environmental quality, while reducing concerns about microorganism contamination and Sick Building Syndrome, are important issues in any building, but even more so when the facility's main occupants are children," comments Kemerling. "As many of the rooms are dedicated to learning and listening, acoustic performance also is key."*

Rockfon Impact panels achieve Noise Reduction Coefficients of 0.85 and have a high light reflectance with an LR of 0.86. Optimizing natural light may contribute to lowering electronic light loads and reducing cooling costs. The benefits of quiet, daylit interiors are recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council as valued attributes of healthy buildings.

As with all of Rockfon's stone wool ceiling panels, these panels are also 50 to 75 percent lighter than other ceiling panels for easier installation. Providing low maintenance and long-term durability, Rockfon products supplied in North America are supported with a 10-year product and 30-year system limited warranty.

Rockfon Impact panels feature a lightly textured, painted white surface with a reinforced glass scrim to enhance the panels' impact resistance. For Club One, the panels integrate with Chicago Metallic's suspension systems and Rockfon Infinity Z Razor Edge Perimeter Trim to give its ceiling the appearance of being zero-depth.



## Strong introduction, smooth installation

"The Rockfon system was exactly what was needed for the Union League's gymnasium. Without [their team], we wouldn't have even known about it," shares Antunovich Associates' project architect, Clark Christensen. "[They] went above and beyond to provide the best solution."

Tandem's project superintendent, Brian Curtin, adds, "Installing the very first high-impact grid in the U.S. has been a great experience and a neat thing to be a part of."

Christensen continues, "In the renovated gym, the ceiling system didn't diminish the overall height in a way that made it feel cramped. It left enough room for the electrical and sprinkler infrastructure, so we didn't have to muck about above the existing

ceiling. You also can tell it has better acoustics to reduce the sound of the kids running around. It's a robust system with a high missile-impact rating so we know it can stand up to balls hitting it. When necessary, the panels can be replaced easily. With standard chipboard panels, not only is it going to suffer and show its damage, the repair is more intricate. It's more likely not to be done well or not to be done until there's a critical mass."

Curtin predicts, "We will see more and more of these ceilings suspending in gymnasiums throughout the country. It [is] exciting to see this ceiling complete and withstanding the abuse from soccer balls and all the other activities that take place in the gym. The components and procedures of this type of ceiling are similar to the typical acoustical grid ceilings we see in the States."



## Beyond the bottom-line

"Typically these projects are design-bid-build and many times when initial estimates aren't in-line with budgets, they become design-bid-redesign-rebid-build," observes Tony Andrews, Tandem's vice president of construction. "Instead, we worked closely with the architects from the very beginning to collaborate on design and ensure the Union League gained the building they wanted, while remaining sensitive to their budget. This unique approach is not only more efficient, but also helps keep costs under control throughout the construction process."

Tandem also is credited with creating a dynamic project plan and construction timeline that minimized disruption to Club programming. Andrews elaborates, "It simply wasn't an option to shut down a facility that is so vital to the children in the area. We phased the project so that Club activities could continue in the original facility as the new addition was built and then move over to the new facility as the original building was renovated."

"All parties were open in presenting time and money saving ideas to the others without being concerned about personal advantage. The goal was clear that getting the children back in a safer and modern facility was the main focus, not individual profit."

Antunovich Associates' principal Jeff Zelisko agrees that trust among all parties and having an 'open book and open door policy' was critical to working closely as a team. "When unforeseen issues did come up, as they tend to do in a complicated project such as this, we were all able to come together and discuss how they could be handled in ways that would reduce or eliminate any extra costs."

Christensen summarizes, "This project was about helping others, about rolling up our sleeves and contributing to a worthwhile client. It was really a team effort and a prime example of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts."

Andrews echoes, "We always take great pride in our projects, but the fact that this facility is so important to the Pilsen community has really meant something to our whole team. We're proud to have been a partner with the Union League Boys & Girls Club on this

initiative and to have worked closely with the architect... to construct a new space that will serve thousands of young people for many years to come."

Club One's impact on the community is substantial, according to Chioros. "Ninety-seven percent of our high school senior members graduate from high school; there have been zero criminal convictions and 0% teen pregnancies among our members. ...We are so grateful to our donors, our staff, our volunteers and everyone who contributed to making this renovation possible, allowing the opportunity to serve more club members on a daily basis. Between the new annex and the renovated original structure, we [have] a fully functional, accessible and ADA-compliant building to continue our service of being a beacon of light and a place of refuge for the youth of Pilsen where we've been changing lives and building futures for thousands of young people for more than nine decades."

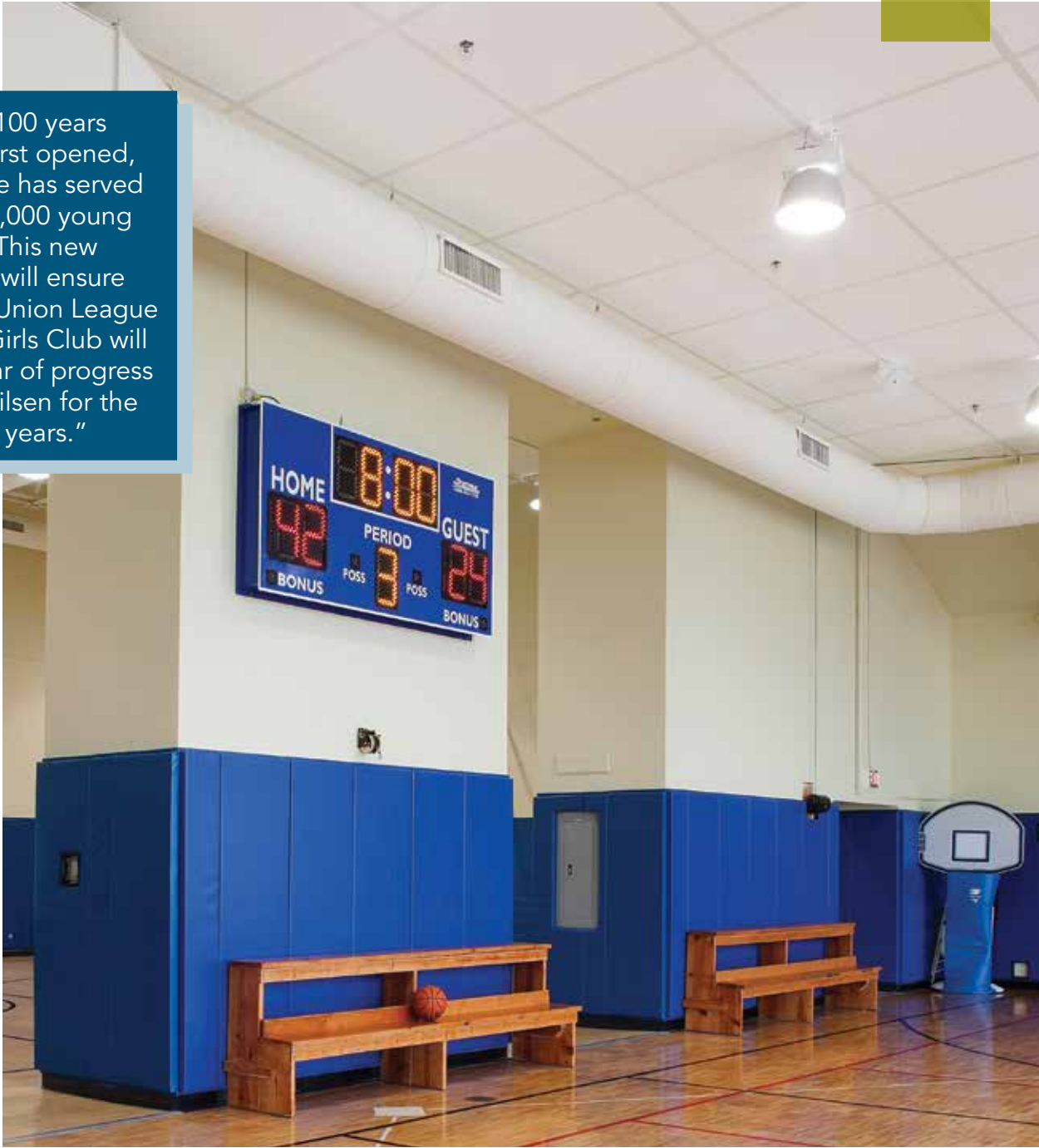
Mayor Rahm Emanuel also offered his praise: "Nearly 100 years since it first opened, Club One has served over 100,000 young people. This new addition will ensure that the Union League Boys & Girls Club will be a pillar of progress here in Pilsen for the next 100 years."

"Today, the Union League Boys & Girls Clubs offer a full program of academic, athletic and arts and sciences programs to help kids develop new skills, inspire ideas and confidence leading to productive and successful futures," concludes Michael Sullivan, president of the Union League Boys & Girls Clubs."





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