

Enlightened learning

United Lamp Supply and MaxLite help light the way to an efficient new future for St. Charles Borromeo Parish and School in Tacoma. by Susan Bloom

Formed as a Catholic parish in 1956 under the leadership of Father Edward McCallion, St. Charles Borromeo Parish and School in Tacoma, Wash., provides an enriched parochial education for 520 preschool through eighth-grade students in a nurturing and spiritual setting. At the same time, as a modern facility that promotes environmental responsibility, the school is dedicated to pursuing initiatives that save energy and reduce operating costs so as to set a positive example for students as well as ensure the school's successful future and long-term viability. As part of that pursuit, the school partnered with Tacoma-based United Lamp Supply and MaxLite in fall 2014 to undertake a beneficial LED upgrade that both improved the facility's lighting quality and boosted its bottom line.

"As a parish that also has a school—one that is subsidized by parishioners' donations—we have an obligation to run the tightest ship possible; we are always interested in keeping costs down," said Deacon Steven McGlone, whose responsibilities since joining St. Charles Borromeo three years ago include the oversight of such administrative functions as finance, HR, and facilities management.

"We had heard that LEDs could brighten our space while saving us a lot of money," he said. "We also heard that utility rebates might be available to offset as much as half of the cost of the products, so we reached out to United Lamp Supply to investigate this opportunity."

"St. Charles Borromeo Parish and School was a longtime customer of ours that had an interest in upgrading the lighting throughout its facilities with LEDs," noted Sales Manager Justin Moore.

After conducting a thorough audit of St. Charles's facilities, United Lamp Supply proceeded to upgrade three spaces with LEDs, including the exterior of the building and the parking lot area, which involved the use of 40W MaxLite LED floods, as well the gymnasium, which involved a different

and unique product from MaxLite.

With 30' ceilings housing energy-consuming 400W metal halide fixtures, "the lighting in the gym had become dingy and dull and the maintenance crew complained that they had to turn the lights on nearly an hour in advance of the gym's use so that they had time to warm up, which meant that the lights were left on longer than necessary each day," Moore explained. "Fluorescent T5 high-bay fixtures are often used to light these types of high-ceiling applications, but MaxLite's 150W LED round pendant high-bays with a narrow beam distribution are ideal for 25' and higher ceilings. They were able to deliver over 16,000 lumens while consuming 60% less energy than the previous metal halides—all while outlasting other technology options based on their long, 50,000-hour life."

A GREEN LIGHT ON THE FUTURE

Since the school's in-house maintenance team upgraded the 30 fixtures in the gym last Thanksgiving, the change has delivered many welcome benefits.

"The LED technology brightened the whole gym and delivered direct, clean light with no glare such that it looked

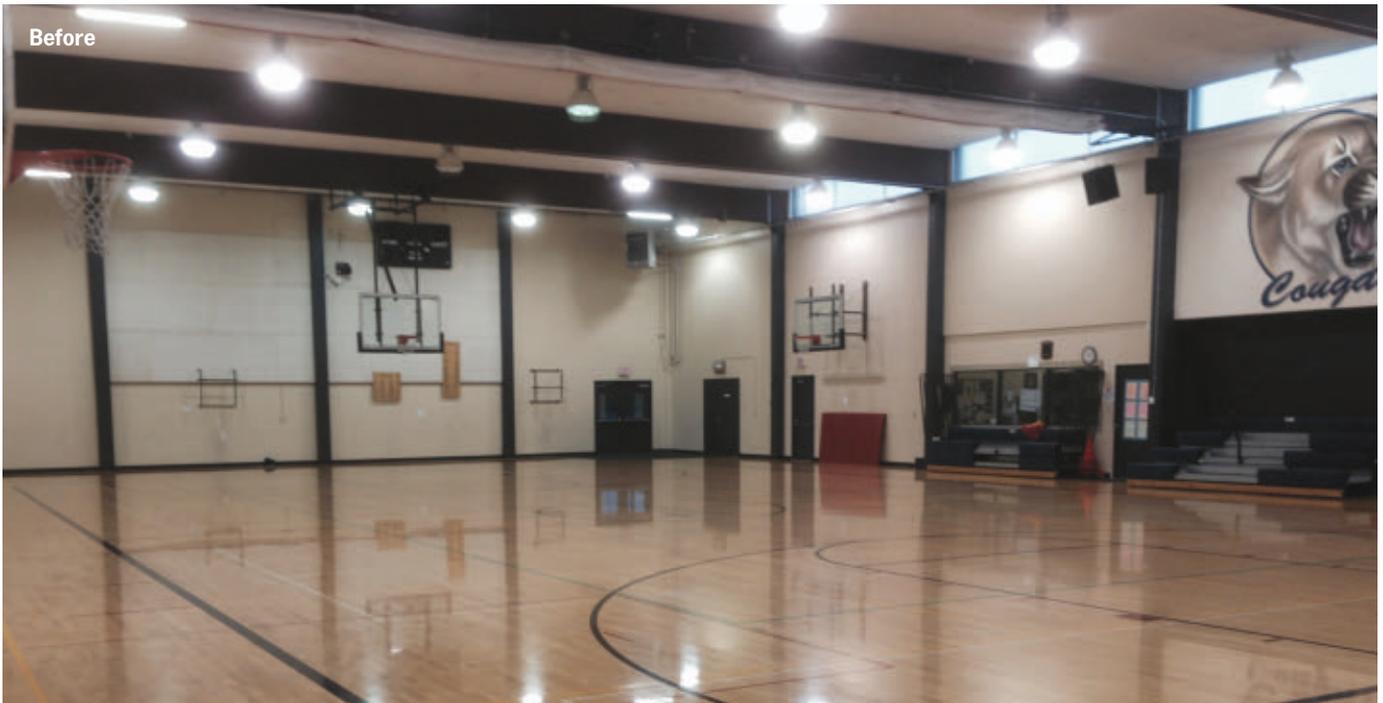
like the school had remodeled the gym and redone the floors," Moore said. "Everything sparkled as if it was in high definition and the contrast and details could be seen so much better. In addition, because of their shorter depth, the LEDs didn't hang down as far as the metal halide technology and delivered a better aesthetic overall."

"Everyone was thrilled with the new brightness level," agreed McGlone. "I was initially nervous about this project, wondering if we'd really achieve the energy and labor savings that had been projected, but it absolutely delivered what had been promised. Every month when we pay the utility bill, we're seeing savings of \$700 to \$800 from all of the fixtures we upgraded with LEDs compared to the same month the previous year, so it won't take us long to see this project pay itself back, particularly with the \$13,000 rebate the school was able to secure from our local utility Tacoma Power."

Of the upgrade support provided by Moore and United Lamp Supply, McGlone said, "We're very happy with their service. They were extremely helpful throughout the process—identifying the right products for our needs, taking all of our lighting measurements, and helping to verify performance and secure our rebate with Tacoma Power."

"We do a lot of LED retrofits because they simply make sense," Moore explained. "The maintenance-free aspect is there, the quality of light they provide is night and day vs. fluorescent or HID sources, and they're better for the environment. Hands down, they're a great proposition overall, especially if a utility rebate is available."

"Because parents are paying tuition here, we have an obligation to use the money wisely for our students, and it's



The school's gymnasium went from dingy to bright with the installation of MaxLite's 150W LED round pendant high-bays, which feature narrow beam distribution and deliver more than 16,000 lumens while consuming 60% less energy than the previous metal halides.

absolutely imperative that we run our operations efficiently," noted McGlone, who's currently considering the installation of LED technology in the school's 16 classrooms. "Our new LEDs are definitely impacting our bottom line, and we know that the savings will con-

tinue to accrue for the entire life of the products.

"Overall, the average public school has more lights than we do, so LEDs represent a great opportunity to reduce energy and save money," McGlone added. "We're happy with the project.

The LEDs were worth every penny of the investment." ■

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