

Aluminum panels injected with air make EarthCam's new campus glow

By John Stoughton • July 13, 2018

For nearly 20 years, [EarthCam](#) has documented projects by many of the world's top design firms: Zaha Hadid Architects, Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG), Foster + Partners, Gehry Partners, LLP, The Ateliers Jean Nouvel, Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Shigeru Ban, Snøhetta, and Weiss/Manfredi. The company, founded in 1996, is a global leader in providing webcam content, technology, and services. An expansion of their current headquarters, located on a 10-acre campus in northern New Jersey, is the result of a recent collaboration between Steven Davis of Davis Brody Bond and Spacesmith. This expanded corporate headquarters joins 12 additional EarthCam offices worldwide.

The project, dubbed 'EarthCampus', involves an extensive renovation to an existing 26,000 square-foot cement block building housing technology and manufacturing divisions, along with the addition of a new entryway, connecting atrium, and office workplace.

Key features of the project include an uplit translucent aluminum facade. The architecturally stabilized aluminum foam panels were added to the existing office building, installed on a subframe that mechanically attached to the existing block wall. The lightweight panels, manufactured by Alusion, were produced by injecting air into a molten aluminum liquid that contained a fine dispersion of ceramic particles. These particles stabilize the bubbles formed by the air, resulting in a porous but strong surface. The sheets are manufactured in custom sizes, but also are commercially available in standard four-by-eight-foot sheets.

The textural aluminum panels frame an entryway pavilion housing a 25-foot-tall LED video wall that showcases live EarthCam feeds from around the world and leans over the interior of the room. This surface extends beyond a curtain wall enclosure where it is clad with flush metal panels, precisely tapering to a sharp edge.



Translucent aluminum foam panels at EarthCam's new headquarters (Joe Kitchen)



Translucent aluminum foam panels framing 25-foot-tall LED video wall at EarthCam's new headquarters

"We wanted the building's facade, one of the first things a visitor sees, to reflect our company values. At the top of the list are innovation and transparency," said Bill Sharp, senior vice president at EarthCam. "We apply these principles in our business practices, products, services and relationships with clients and employees. The entry is made of three stories of transparent glass where visitors can view from both inside and out a floor-to-ceiling video wall featuring our live streaming camera feeds and construction time-lapse movies."

A steel-clad tunnel leads visitors to the new 11,000 square foot employee workplace where floor-to-ceiling windows and skylights offer ample daylighting. The workplace environment prioritizes a strong connection to nature and the art housed both within the building and throughout the campus grounds. Energy efficiency targets were achieved through the integration of sustainable equipment. Reclaimed building components and new materials made from recycled content contributed to the LEED certification of the facility, highlighting EarthCam's commitment to corporate sustainability.