

SAN JACINTO COLLEGE, ANDERSON-BALL CLASSROOM BUILDING

Pasadena, Texas | Completed 2021

Role of the firm: Specialty Engineering Services

Area: 122,000 ft² (11,334 m²)

Budget: US\$249,500

Architect: Kirksey Architecture

Client: San Jacinto College

On this project, Fast + Epp were pleased to provide specialty engineering for mass timber elements in an advisory role, supporting Walter P Moore. Located on the central campus of San Jacinto College in Houston, the Anderson-Ball Classroom Building is a remarkable new addition to the educational complex. The three-storey, 122,000 square foot structure is the largest mass timber instructional building on a college campus in the US and the recipient of the Excellence in Wood Design Award.

In addition to the 55 instructional classrooms, the building features a robotics lab, a lecture hall, faculty offices and various nooks and crannies where students can study and socialize. However, the centerpiece of the building is the two-storey lobby with impressive black spruce columns and double beams that span the ceiling, giving the space a grand and inviting feel.

The wooden framework creates a warm and inviting ambiance that traditional steel and concrete structures cannot match. The building's lobby boasts a glulam monumental stairwell and bridge across the lobby as well as CLT floor panels and feature walls. Additionally, there is a long walkway hung from the mass timber roof structure by a series of steel rods.

The Anderson-Ball Classroom Building is also a leader in sustainability. Its gray water collection system offsets the college's water usage, while roof-supported photovoltaics, electro-chromic glazing, and tubular daylighting work together to create a high-performing, energy-efficient facility. Sustainability efforts are also evident in the repurposing of elements from the 1950s-era classroom buildings that were replaced, which also contributes to the distinctive character of the complex.

