

The DeKoven Center Enhances Comfort and Privacy With Scranton Products® Hiny Hiders® Retrofit While Maintaining the Building's Historical Integrity



Nestled along the bluffs of Lake Michigan in Racine, Wisconsin, The DeKoven Center boasts an 11-acre campus that showcases nationally recognized architectural gems, stunning gardens, and tranquil wooded areas, making it popular for weddings, retreats, and other community gatherings. Although the Center's historic charm is part of its appeal, its shower amenities needed to be reevaluated to meet modern standards.

With 12 restrooms to accommodate the 80-bed retreat center, facilities are shared among guests, limiting privacy. Lynn Biese-Carroll, Executive Director of the DeKoven Center, noticed that some guests didn't feel comfortable because the shower stalls were only closed off by shower curtains.

"We lost out on some opportunities because we didn't have more private, secured restrooms," she said. "Some groups would not book with us anymore out of personal safety and privacy concerns."





As a result, The DeKoven Center sought to modernize the facilities while keeping the integrity of the building intact and honoring its history. A unique challenge to achieving this was that each restroom at the Center is architecturally different. Some restrooms have two showers side by side, others have two on opposite sides of the room, and some have just one shower. The shower stalls also have different dimensions, requiring custom door design.

It was determined that Scranton Products Hiny Hiders were the right solution for the complex retrofit. According to Biese-Carroll, one of the standout features of the Hiny Hiders design options and commercial high-grade quality. "We were at a loss for how while maintaining the building's integrity," she said. "Scranton Products and took care of us."

The availability of various door styles allowed the facility to maintain its architectural integrity while providing a timeless and cohesive appearance. The shower doors that were installed match the overall 1860s style of the building as well as the individual style of each restroom. Because Hiny Hiders allowed The DeKoven Center to closely match the shower doors to the toilet stalls, those were not replaced, saving time and costs.

"The product line gave us all of the options that we needed in terms of different heights, accommodating our facility, and matching the existing door styles that were already in other parts of the bathroom. The door styles gave us enough options to fit a very modern design into an old building, making it look seamless and timeless," Biese-Carroll said.

The DeKoven Center hosts about 35 retreat groups, or 1,200-1,500 people per year, so durability and ease of cleaning were important factors when selecting a product for the shower doors. The Center takes pride in the cleanliness of its facilities and Hiny Hiders durable HDPE material contributes to the bright, comfortable look and feel of the showers so guests can feel at ease.

With each restroom having a different design, customization was a key factor in the success of this project. Hiny Hiders products not only accommodated different door styles but also allowed for variations in height, catering to the unique needs of each restroom. This adaptability was crucial in ensuring a modern and unified look across all bathrooms while preserving the individuality of each space.

Allen Ramm of The John Buhler Company Inc. served as the project's general contractor. With 30 years of construction experience, Ramm believes all projects are complex in their own way and was unphased by the challenge. He said, "When you get into a situation like that, you have to reinvent the wheel and find creative solutions on the fly. We made several workarounds to accommodate the different heights in every restroom." He also added that Hiny Hiders were straightforward to install.

The decision to replace open stalls with Hiny Hiders shower doors was a game-changer. Feedback from visitors has been overwhelmingly positive, as it has not only met but exceeded their expectations in terms of personal safety and privacy. Guests are delighted with the restroom improvements.

The retreat center's transformation demonstrates the importance of addressing privacy concerns in communal spaces and finding innovative solutions to meet evolving expectations within the hospitality industry. Hiny Hiders not only provided the necessary privacy but also offered a solution that harmonized with the historical architecture, ensuring a seamless blend of modern design and timeless integrity.

To learn more about Scranton Products Hiny Hiders, please visit www.scrantonproducts.com or call 800-445-5148.

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