Specifier Q&A

This issue, Precast Solutions hears from Steve Saville, AIA, LEED AP, with Davis Carter Scott Design in Tysons, Va.

Photos courtesy of Davis Carter Scott Design

What is your background and area of expertise?

Following a decade of work in the field of residential and commercial construction, I began my architectural career some 23 years ago. I have worked for Davis Carter Scott (DCS) for the past 20 years and have now become a project director, the firm's highest functioning level of architectural project management. My areas of expertise cover a broad spectrum of project types including office, residential, hospitality and parking garages for a variety of public and private clients.

What types of projects does your company focus on?

DCS has five principal areas of practice: master planning, base building architecture, interior architecture, sustainability and branding. We undertake a wide range of projects within those disciplines. Over the last several years, much of our work has been focused on urban, mixed-use developments with a strong residential component including an increasing amount of affordable and senior housing. We are also very active in private K-12, office (both new construction and repositioning existing assets) and hospitality.

Steve Saville

What are a couple of notable projects in which you have specified the use of precast concrete?

My most recent notable projects that incorporated precast concrete would be Lumen and Latitude. Lumen is a 32-story, 398-unit high-rise residential building in Tysons, Va. that also included 12,000 square feet of retail use at the ground level. That particular project utilized the Slenderwall precast concrete system. Latitude is a 12-story, 265-unit residential building in Arlington, Va., with approximately 6,000 square feet of retail at the ground level. Standard 6-inch-thick precast panels were utilized for this project.

Why was precast chosen for those projects?

At our Lumen project, the Slenderwall system, which is comprised of a 2-inch-thick precast concrete exterior finish affixed to a 6-inch stud with insulation, was used to accelerate the construction schedule while minimizing the structural load of the building skin. The Latitude project used precast to achieve our design intent of a pure white facade that provided a durable and quality-controlled exterior material.

What benefits does precast concrete afford you?

Precast concrete provides us with the opportunity to deliver our clients a lasting and versatile exterior building material while offering unlimited finishes and textures. When combined with the tight tolerances afforded by an off-site manufactured product, precast concrete ensures a high-quality aesthetic with tremendous quality control.

How has the use of precast evolved?

We believe that while the stoic essence of precast concrete has remained constant through the years, the ability to test the boundaries of its use has evolved, presenting us with significant opportunities to further our design acumen. As we move into an age of increasing concern of security, particularly in our own Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, we believe precast concrete will be vital to our need to provide robust designs that meet our clients' needs. PS

The Lumen project (pictured right) and Latitude project (pictured above) both used precast concrete to speed up construction schedules while providing a high-quality facade.


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