



# The MSU Classic: Spartan Golf Comes into its Own at the New Lasch Family Golf Center

By **Mary Kremposky McArdle**, Associate Editor

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER LARK

At Michigan State University, turf is an art and a science. The University's expertise is displayed in all its golf-filled glory along both sides of Harrison Road south of the main campus. Forest Akers Golf Courses line the roadway, creating a golfer's paradise of well-groomed fairways. Forest Akers East and Forest Akers West are even recognized as two of the best public golf courses in Michigan, according to [golf.msu.edu](http://golf.msu.edu). In 2015, Golf Range Magazine ranked Forest Akers in the top 50 public golf courses in the United States.

MSU women's golf has won 11 Big Ten Championships – the second most in conference history – including five under current head coach Stacy Slobodnik-Stoll.

The women's team has earned a bid to the NCAA Regionals in 17 of the last 18 seasons. The men's golf program has also been steadily on the rise under head coach Casey Lubahn, earning a berth to the NCAA Regionals this past season and winning the Big Ten Match Play Championship in February 2015, according to [msuspartans.com](http://msuspartans.com). The success of MSU Golf inspired the Richard Lasch family to donate funds for the construction of a showcase facility for MSU's champions of the fairway.

MSU enlisted the expertise of TMP Architecture, Inc., Bloomfield Hills, and Frank Rewold and Son, Inc., Rochester, and together the project team delivered a building in line with MSU's highly ranked

course and its championship teams, forming a winning trifecta of turf, team and training facility. "Michigan State is a very good steward of its sites, and this being a golf course, landscaping is king," said TMP Senior Vice President and Chief Design Officer David W. Larson, AIA. "The building had to relate to the site in a way that is organic and of the site. That is why, for part of the building, we selected natural limestone, a material cropping directly out of the site."

The building's form and natural materials blend perfectly with the tree-dotted turf of MSU's Akers West Golf Course: the 15,000-square-foot building curves around the outdoor Fox Family Putting Green. The building's slatted

The building's natural wood and limestone blend perfectly with the tree-dotted turf of MSU's Akers West Golf Course. The wood soffit's sculpted planes subtly hint at the shape of the head of a golf club.

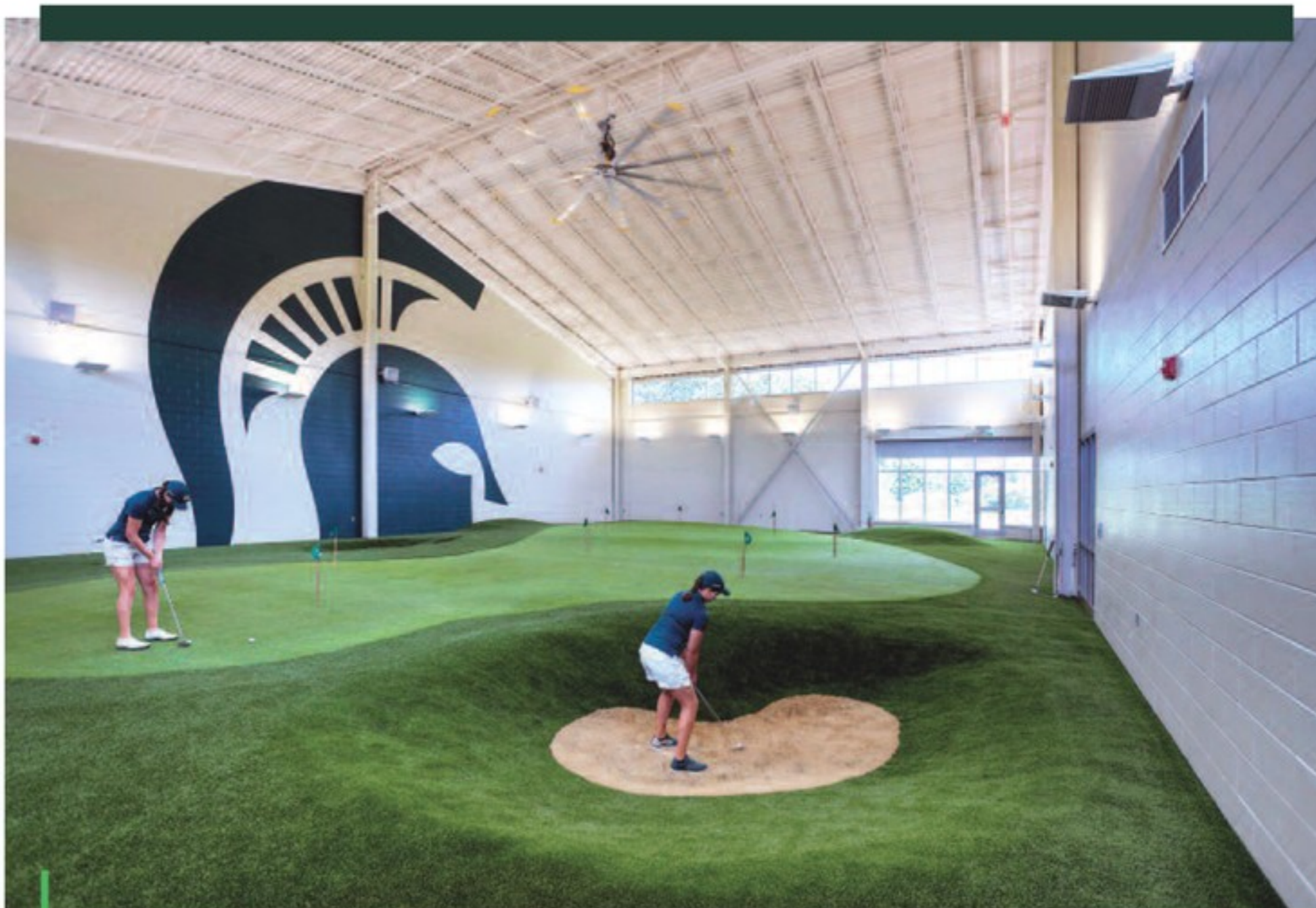
wood soffits and cut limestone sills, along with the beautiful random ashlar limestone of the main entry, are in harmony with the site and the pastoral outdoor sport of golf. As a finishing touch, the incandescent glow of a well-lit Spartan logo beams out of the front entry's glass-wrapped vestibule and spreads its light across the surrounding greenery.

In replacing the now demolished former building, TMP and Frank Rewold and Son have hit the equivalent of a double-eagle (three under par), creating a beautiful building with almost triple the space and a higher level of finishes, all at a controlled cost. As construction manager, Frank Rewold and Son kept the budget in check and adhered to a rigorous schedule calibrated to avoid interfering with the upcoming golf season.

**Quality Team, Championship Building**

A solid team effort produced this championship building. "We worked with quality people from the design team to the infrastructure planning group at Michigan State," said Rewold Project Manager Adam Gut. "Everyone worked together to meet the project goals and challenges. We never walked away from a meeting without accomplishing something. We had good subcontractors that were a blend of companies from mid-Michigan and Southeast Michigan. We used some folks that we were not very familiar with, but we would love to form lasting relationships with them because they were professional and just all-around good people."

Thanks to this team effort, the \$6 million dollar Lasch Family Golf Center now houses offices for two head coaches and two assistant coaches and a welcoming, natural light-filled lounge, as well as a new fitness room and locker rooms. A simulation room, located across from a student study lounge, is equipped with a golf simulator that allows student-athletes to sharpen their skills by playing on any golf course in the world via an interactive wall-size screen. "The facility also has the technology to record and analyze a player's swing," added Larson.



The indoor practice area is formed of built-up, crushed stones, contoured to MSU's specifications and covered in turf. MSU Alumna Brian Storm donated the services of his Canton, Georgia-based firm, Sports Field, Inc. to create the course.

An advertisement for Frank Rewold and Son Inc. The background is a photograph of a modern building with large glass windows and a concrete walkway. Overlaid on the image is the company name "FRANK REWOLD AND SON INC." in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below the name, it says "CONSTRUCTION MANAGER | GENERAL CONTRACTOR" in a smaller font. At the bottom of the ad are three social media icons: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Brian Storm, MSU alumna, class of 1977, donated the services of his Canton, Georgia-based firm, FIELDS, to his alma mater. According to Storm, FIELDS expanded the outdoor Fox Family Putting Green, added sand traps and allowed for the addition of a skills area around the green. The firm is well-known nationally, having worked on the playing fields of 12 different National Football League teams around the country. Overall, FIELDS has worked on over 30 different fields for the NFL, as well as many for the MLB, MiLB and collegiate baseball teams. Currently, the company is working on the Detroit Lions practice field in Allen Park.

FIELDS also crafted the Lasch Family Golf Center's indoor practice green.



The well-lit outline of a Spartan logo beams out of the front entry's glass-wrapped vestibule.

"They brought in stone and contoured everything to Michigan State's specifications," said Gut. "They worked hard to make this area perfect."

Brian Storm, MSU alumna, class of 1977, donated the services of his Canton, Georgia-based firm, FIELDS, to his alma mater. According to Storm, FIELDS expanded the outdoor Fox Family Putting

Green, added sand traps and allowed for the addition of a skills area around the green. The firm is well-known nationally, having worked on the playing fields of 12 different National Football League teams around the country. Overall, FIELDS has worked on over 30 different fields, including those for major, minor and collegiate baseball teams. Currently, the company is working on the Detroit Lions practice field in Allen Park. Sports Field also crafted the Lasch Family Golf Center's indoor practice green. "They brought in stone and contoured everything to Michigan State's specifications," said Gut. "They worked hard to make this area perfect."

The same can be and has been said of TMP and Frank Rewold and Son. As quoted on msuspartans.com, Lasch himself said, "To the architects, the builders and the landscapers, a real sincere thank you from me and my family to you. It's one thing to have your name on the side of a building, but to have your name on the side of a building like this and a facility like this that is going to help so many people challenge and achieve the greatness that they're pursuing at Michigan State is very rewarding."

According to msuspartans.com, Slobodnik-Stoll at the dedication ceremony, said, "I'm just so humbled and appreciative to each of you who has made an impact on our lives, and who will make an impact on our student-athletes for decades to come. It really is just an incredible facility."

#### Welcome to the Lasch Family Golf Center

Drive into the site from Harrison Road and TMP's well-designed front entry greets the eye. The arc of the building "turns" the entry to directly face visitors with its cloak of stone, wood and glass. "One of MSU's goals was to give the building more



**"Masonry Laid to Last by Master Craftsmen"**



**Leidal & Hart  
Mason Contractors**

12100 Globe Street • Livonia, MI 48150 • Phone: 734-522-2400 • Fax: 734-522-8650

Website: [www.leidalandhart.com](http://www.leidalandhart.com)

visibility,” said Larson. “The former facility could not be seen from the roadway, and there was no presence of Golf. Now as people drive in, they see this iconic building that says Golf.”

The building “speaks” Golf in subtle ways and with a contemporary accent. The front entry has an angled wood soffit sculpted in multiple planes meant to subtly hint at the shape of the head of a golf club, said Larson. The entry’s strong angles and generous glass set the tone for a contemporary building offset with rustic elements of stone and wood. “We spent a great deal of time developing what the appropriate image would be for the front entry,” said Larson. “The coaches came to the table with photographs of clubhouses from universities all over the country. They looked very much like the traditional clubhouse dominated by decorative wood.

“MSU, however, wanted a building that would not be a clone of an old clubhouse,” continued Larson. “They wanted a building that would combine the intimacy of a traditional clubhouse with the modern look of other MSU’s athletic buildings, such as the Skandalaris Football Center.” The Skandalaris facility is a contemporary building with a sleekly curved front entry of glass.

In line with this hybrid of contemporary and rustic, the exterior soffits are Rulon slatted wood, and the fascia is composite aluminum panels; limestone exterior cladding accents the expanses of curtain wall and storefront glass, said TMP Construction Administrator and Senior Associate Robert J. Farley, RA, CCS.

Transparency is a hallmark of the building. The glass entry vestibule, the almost floor-to-ceiling windows in the center of the building, and the clerestory windows in the indoor practice area that anchors the end of the facility draw natural light into the facility. The building, including the four coach offices near the front entry, offers views of the outdoor putting green. “One of the things that make this building unique is that it is very transparent,” said Larson. “It makes you aware of the surrounding golf course. The design allows students to easily walk in and out of this building at different points to practice either inside or outside.”

Light and views flow into the interior, along with the limestone and wood. Limestone visually flows into the interior to become the interior vestibule wall, as well as a type of stone hearth in the center of the lounge. The slatted wood flows into the lounge and clads the entire

practice area, students are focused on golf itself rather than being aware of the actual building,” said Larson. “We transitioned to a less expensive material in these types of spaces.”

Achieving a natural look at a reasonable cost drove material selection. On the



The exterior wood soffits visually flow into the lounge interior ceiling, creating an interior as organic, grounded and connected with the natural site as the exterior.

ceiling. “The entire building is very organic and grounded and has this connection with nature,” said TMP Director of Interior Design Laura Casai, IIDA, LEED AP.

**Beauty and the Budget**

TMP and Frank Rewold and Son delivered a beautiful building on a tight budget. “The stone is expensive and the glass is expensive, so we had to analyze the proportions and quantities of those materials,” said Larson. “Part of the task is to get those proportions correct.”

For budgetary control, the indoor practice area is formed of two-tone, ground-faced CMU in lieu of limestone,” said Farley. The limestone and wood is reserved for places, such as the lounge, where people tend to focus more closely on the actual space. “In the indoor

exterior, TMP opted for concrete pavers in lieu of stone for the outdoor patios used as gathering spaces. On the interior, “most of the flooring in the lounge and much of the interior is a porcelain tile reminiscent of stone,” said Casai. “The selection goes back to our responsibility to take budget into account. I could pick a natural stone and it would be phenomenally expensive. Then I could also select a porcelain tile that is significantly more affordable and one that would still achieve the same aesthetic.”

Frank Rewold and Son joined the project in early to mid-design schematics. “Our input was valuable from a pricing standpoint,” said Gut. In early design, one of Frank Rewold and Son’s main contributions was helping to steer the project team away from a more elaborate radial design calling for a higher volume



From the skylights to the carpeting and wood lockers stamped with the Spartan logo, the locker rooms lend a country club ambiance to this student-athlete space.

building. “We had some early concepts that were radial and had a little more square footage,” said Larson. “Rewold was part of a good team effort, and ultimately we came up with an approach that hit the budget better and that didn’t compromise the design.” In fact, the actual design resulted in a more intimate building more closely enmeshed with the landscape.

#### Hitting the Mark, Schedule-Wise

Frank Rewold and Son’s scheduling strategies delivered the project in time for the start of the golf season. As one strategy, the structural package was design-assist, steel being a long lead item that benefitted from being awarded earlier. “We made steel an early sub award and an early submittal,” said Rewold Site Supervisor Bill Hiding. Added Larson, “It allowed the steel supplier to get the steel into its production schedule earlier than if they had waited for us to be completely done with the drawings. We went through these details to give the steel supplier enough confidence to produce the steel. This approach saved precious weeks, because the supplier didn’t have to wait for us to formally issue the plans.”

Frank Rewold and Son launched the project in May 2015, spending the first two weeks demolishing the Rearick Center to make way for the new facility partially sited in the footprint of its

predecessor. In the extensive site utility phase, Frank Rewold and Son not only installed a new storm system and brought a new water main into the building, but also encountered an intricate grid of existing infrastructure, some known, some unknown and some in unexpected places. “The existing pipe was transite, an asbestos pipe that became an abatement issue,” said Hiding. “There was also an existing water main just for irrigation that actually runs right through the building foundations in a sleeve.”

New utilities included the insertion of a new electrical line that had to be coordinated with the excavation of a large bioswale. “The bioswale couldn’t be dug until we had installed the new electrical line, because the direct feed into the building was running right through that area,” said Hiding. “We had to run the building on a generator for a while.”

Work for the entire project was closely sequenced and in some cases almost simultaneous to keep on schedule. “Site work and grading right at the building took a couple of weeks, and because of the schedule, we immediately started with the cast-in-place concrete foundations,” said Hiding. “It was impressive, because at one point, all of the earthwork trucks were coming in and out of the site and the concrete trucks were beginning to enter that same, small footprint.”

This tight sequencing was par throughout the construction of this “steel-

framed building with a 90-mil, single-ply EDPM roof on much of the building and a standing seam metal roof on the indoor practice area,” said Farley. According to Hiding, “The masons were in the indoor practice green, along with the steel trades and the subs digging trenches for the underground plumbing. A lot of things were happening in a compacted area.”

#### Tree and Turf Protection

Frank Rewold and Son also had to carefully protect tree and turf throughout the course of the project. MSU has a well-developed “green thumb” rooted in its establishment as the nation’s first land grant university in 1855. MSU’s programs in agricultural science, landscaping, turf management and horticulture rank as the best in Michigan and in the upper echelons of academia nationally. “MSU’s turf management program is nationally recognized,” said Gut. “We were working with the MSU departments and staff that actually generate the technologies and write the specifications on turf management. They are the authority.”

Given MSU’s passion and expertise, not one rootlet, branch or patch of turf on the Lasch Family Golf Center site could be disturbed. In this tree-centric project, Hiding and other members of Frank Rewold and Son’s staff had to attend a seminar on tree protection. “I was glad to attend the seminar, because it was very informative,” said Hiding. “MSU is very

protective of their trees. All of their trees are precious, and a group of students has actually catalogued every tree on campus." Farley adds, "MSU has a whole specification section on tree protection, outlining fines if you damage or kill a tree."

During the project, the construction team had to direction bore vs. open trench near a tree located in close proximity to the building site. Frank Rewold and Son brought the same level of care to the outdoor putting green. "We basically stayed off of the green, and when we had to work close to it for utility work, we also used directional boring underneath the green in some cases," said Hidinger. "MSU's groundskeeper was as serious about that green as the arborist is about the trees."

MSU's attentive departmental staff aided the schedule by answering questions and addressing concerns promptly. "Having all those MSU departments – and all the heads of those departments – involved was a great help," said Hidinger. "They were always available."

Mother Nature, the ultimate master gardener and turf manager, also influenced the project. "It had to be one of the wettest springs I have ever seen," said Hidinger. "The rains turned the site of the indoor practice facility into a swimming pool. It was actually four to five feet below-grade at one point during construction, so we had to dewater the area."

Building the angular steel and the different planes of the front entry's wood soffit also took an extra measure of care. Regarding the steel angles, "we had to make some minor modifications in the field to make it all work," said Hidinger. The care taken to build the multiple planes of the wood soffit matches the deliberation of a golfer in selecting the perfect club for each game situation. The design itself was meant to embody this concept. "Golf club selection during the game is so important," said Larson, "and for the golfer, it is all about the club head's angles. So the front entry became a subtle symbol of that."

The entire project left no room for error in the measurement and fit of materials. "The metal column covers had to fit just

right," said Hidinger. "Those curtain walls have to have a certain amount of space for expansion, but we didn't want the caulking to be too big. It was a difficult layout, but it all came out well in the end. We had to really hold to the initial dimensions for the column covers, the glass and the limestone sills."

Frank Rewold and Son had to synchronize its work in the indoor practice area with Sports Field, including completing finishes before the placement of stone followed by the door installation and pouring of adjacent concrete after stone placement. The indoor practice area is formed of built-up, crushed stones, contoured to MSU's specifications and covered in turf. "The coaches and the contractor took great pains to shape the stone properly," said Hidinger. "After stone installation and before turf placement, they rolled golf balls on the practice field to make sure it was exactly how MSU wanted it." Casai adds, "MSU can actually re-grade and re-arrange the entire topography of the space."

Despite a tight schedule and a host of challenges, Hidinger says, "It was all worth it. It was probably the most fun and the most gratifying project I've worked on, especially given the final result."

**A Classy Interior**

MSU's golf teams moved into the facility in February 2016, and the grand opening was held in June 2016 after completion of landscaping restoration. The added space and quality design create a classy building capable of recruiting talented players. From the skylights to the carpeting and wood lockers stamped with the Spartan logo, the locker rooms lend a country club ambiance to this student-athlete space. "Each one of the golfers has their own customized plaque and personal photo above their locker," said Casai.

The lockers are designed with the golfer in mind: the perforated panels in the bottom cabinet promote ventilation; the main cabinetry is sized to accommodate each golfer's baggage; and each locker is equipped with power and data outlets.

The shower area has a spa-like feel, thanks to "the use of porcelain tile that emulated natural materials," said Casai. "The porcelain tile floor looks like wood,

**LienNow.com**  
 A Nationwide Notice and Mechanic's Lien Processing Service by MCPA



**The Michigan Construction Protection Agency is a full service agency specializing in the processing and recordation of Construction Liens and Notices, Bond Notices and Bond Claims, State and Federal Bond Notices and Bond Claims and Notices of Commencement for the construction industry throughout the USA.**

 **(800) LienNow**  
 (543-6669)  
**(248) 586-0100**  
**liennow.com**





**RAYMOND EXCAVATING COMPANY**  
 Established in 1954  
 Sewer and Water Main Construction  
 Private, Commercial  
 Industrial Site Development  
 Road Building, Trucking, Earthwork




**LIFTING CRANES**  
 12 ton to 240 ton available  
 24 hour service available  
 800 Gratiot Blvd.  
 Marysville, MI 48040  
 810-364-6881 • Fax 810-364-2930  
 www.raymondexcavating.com



## CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHT

the porcelain tile walls resemble stone, and the countertops are an engineered stone product. We also worked very hard to have glass doors featuring the Spartan logo for the showers. At the grand opening, I remember overhearing a few students in the locker room saying, 'This is so cool.' If the students think it is cool, then I have done my job."

The spacious lounge offers students and visitors a view all the way through the building and easy access to the outdoor putting green or to the rest of the interior spaces. A limestone-clad wall, dubbed the hearth and embedded with television and video screens, is a focal point of the lounge. Like much of the interior, the lounge has a well-designed aesthetic that also takes into account cost and durability. For example, the wood-simulating porcelain tile floor is attractive, cost-effective and durable. "Durability is important because students will be walking through the space with golf cleats on," said Casai.

The multi-purpose lounge tables can be used for studying, relaxing or even as small

buffets. TMP placed a kitchen directly adjacent to the lounge to turn it into a suitable space for team gatherings and other events. "The lounge has a combination of different types of furniture to support these diverse activities," said Casai.

Thanks to TMP and Frank Rewold and Son, MSU's championship golf teams now have a championship building for practice, for gatherings or just for relaxing after another hard-won tournament. ♡

*The following firms participated in MSU's Richard Lasch Family Golf Center project:*

#### *Design Firms*

- MEP Engineering – Peter Basso Associates, Inc., Troy
- Structural Engineering – Penhale & Yates, Inc., Southfield
- Civil Engineering – Beckett & Raeder, Inc., Ann Arbor
- Landscape Design – Beckett & Raeder, Inc., Ann Arbor

#### **Trade Contractors**

- Clean-up – Boling Janitorial Service, Inc., Lansing

- Roofing Membrane – Bornor Restoration, Inc., Lansing
- Electrical – Centennial Electric LLC, Grand Ledge
- Drywall & Light Gauge – Commercial Contracting Corporation, Auburn Hills
- Painting & Vinyl – Detail Painting, Grant
- Fencing – DeWitt Fence & Security co., Lansing
- Signage – Display MIX, Romeo
- Hard Tile – East Side Tile & Marble, Inc., Harrison Township
- Flagpole – Flagpoles Etc., Inc., Holly
- Resilient Floor & Carpet – Ideal Floor Covering, Inc., Rochester
- Millwork – Klein Cabinets and Interiors, Westphalia
- Glass & Glazing – Lansing Glass Company, Lansing
- Masonry – Leidal & Hart Contractor, Livonia
- Roofing – Liberty Sheet Metal, Inc., Shelby Township
- Plumbing – Mills Mechanical LLC, Ortonville
- Concrete Flatwork – Moore Trospen Construction Co., Holt
- HVAC – Myers Plumbing & Heating, Inc., Lansing
- Lockers – OakWood Sports, Inc., Berkley
- Foundations – Poured Brick Walls, Inc., Brighton
- Caulking & Sealants – Premier Caulking, Grand Rapids
- Testing – Professional Service Industries (PSI), Chicago, IL
- Paving – Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Lansing
- Fire Protection – Shambaugh & Son, L.P., Southfield
- Mechanical Controls – Siemens Industry, Inc., Plymouth Township
- Hollow Metal Doors & Hardware – Tanner Supply Co., Inc., Toledo, OH
- Earthwork – TCI Inc. of Michigan, Eaton Rapids
- Landscaping & Irrigation – Terrafirma, Inc., Ypsilanti
- Structural Steel – Valley Steel Co., Saginaw
- Indoor Practice Area Course – Sports Field, Inc., Canton, GA.



### ***Construction Bonding Specialists, LLC.***

We work with new and experienced contractors to find the most satisfactory bond solutions. As a distinct surety bond only agency with decades of bonding experience we work to discover bond solutions for all types of bond cases from standard to challenging.

PHONE 248-349-6227

FAX 248-348-6762

[www.bondingspecialist.com](http://www.bondingspecialist.com)

***Proud "Grand Slam"  
sponsor of CAM Tiger  
Opening Day Tailgate***

*The architect and construction manager provided the list of participating firms.*