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**Ace Hardware Corporation’s LEED Platinum headquarters**

**features Rockfon ceiling systems**

***Renovating an existing, architecturally significant corporate campus, Ace Hardware worked with CBRE Design Collective and Skender Construction to create a new headquarters for its 1,100 employees in Oak Brook, Illinois. One of the largest build-out projects in the area, this bright, modern, LEED Platinum, open office features Rockfon Artic acoustic stone wool ceilings for a professional, contemporary and uniform appearance throughout the entire interior.***

Chicago (March 2024) – Ace Hardware, the largest convenience hardware retailer and distributor in the world, has made its home in Oak Brook, Illinois for 50 of its 100 years in business. Seeking an updated corporate environment with flexibility, amenities and space to support continued growth, the company was able to remain in Oak Brook. For the first time, Ace’s more than 1,100 Oak Brook-based employees now share a single building, creating an even closer sense of community and collaboration.

Working with CBRE Design Collective and Skender Construction, Ace transformed the former McDonald’s 80-acre campus into a vibrant, modern, bright and productive workplace. Originally constructed in 1988, the Class A office building’s Brutalist-style was designed by Dirk Lohan, the grandson of renowned modern architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. In 2009, the U.S. Green Building Council certified the existing building at the highest level – LEED® O+M Platinum. After McDonald’s left in 2019, the building had been vacant until Ace Hardware’s move in October 2023.

“When you walk through the space, you can look up (and) down, and you’re recognizing these large atrium wells that bring in all this natural light. [Ace] is putting all their workstation up front, so employees can really take advantage of that natural light. All of their private offices (and) conference rooms are bordering the perimeter. Even people that are working in the workstations, they’re looking out the window and seeing an amazing view of all the greenery,” said Mallory Church, Skender Construction’s assistant project manager. “Just having that great nature feeling around you is going to make such a difference in every day’s work lifestyle and make them happy to come to work having that awesome view.”

To achieve the four-story, 250,000-square-foot office renovation’s modern aesthetics, performance requirements and LEED sustainability goals, CBRE Design Collective specified Rockfon Artic® acoustic stone wool ceiling panels. Reinke Supply Companies supplied 180,000 square feet of Rockfon’s smooth, white, 2-by-2-foot ceiling tiles to Anning-Johnson Company, which were installed in Rockfon Chicago Metallic® 4600 Ultraline™ 9/16-inch suspension system throughout the entire building.

Installation of Rockfon’s ceiling systems was coordinated with Skender Construction to leverage flexible phasing and work sequencing to streamline the six-month construction schedule, allowing for an on-time and on-budget project delivery.

Church continued, “Being able to say that you’ve worked on such an iconic building… the former McDonald’s campus to Ace occupying this new space, that something that everyone knows. It’s a big shining moment in everyone’s career to say they’ve worked on such a highly historic building in Oak Brook. The collaboration between all of our trade partners, the design team, the Ace team,

everyone has been great.”

One of the area’s largest suburban build-out projects in the last five years, the renovated interiors reflect Ace Hardware’s iconic brand and culture, while supporting their employees’ health and well-being. The open office floorplan includes 150 conference rooms, 12 cafes/pantries and numerous collaboration spaces.

With CBRE Design Collective’s intentional approach to Ace Hardware’s headquarters renovated interiors, Rockfon Artic acoustic stone wool ceiling panels creates a professional, contemporary and uniform appearance throughout a large office space. Enhancing the ceiling’s design, these panels have a square tegular narrow edge and are installed in Rockfon Chicago Metallic 4600 Ultraline 9/16-inch narrow-face, bolt slot, metal suspension system with an 1/8-inch reveal to minimize the visible grid. Clean, mitered intersections enhance the clean look and continuous line.

The stone wool material of Rockfon Artic’s Class A fire-rated ceiling panels is naturally non-combustible and hydrophobic. This means that it resists melting, burning or creating significant smoke; it does not absorb water; and it resists sagging even in 100 percent humidity. Stone wool also does not support the growth of mold, mildew or other microorganisms.

“We feel blessed to have found a space that not only offers us a runway for more growth, but also provides a spectacular environment to reinforce our culture and inspire our people. Our motivation has never been to be the biggest, but to be the best. This beautiful new property further enables the great Ace team to do just that,” stated John Venhuizen, Ace Hardware’s president and CEO.

Demonstrating the benefits of its inherent material properties, Rockfon Artic stone wool ceiling panels are UL® GREENGUARD® Gold Certified for Office and Educational Environments. Contributing to healthy indoor air quality, low-VOC products with this certification are recognized by LEED and other green building and occupant well-being programs. Further supporting design choice and material transparency, Rockfon Artic product documentation includes a UL Certified Environmental Product Declaration (EPD), a Health Product Declaration (HPD) and a Declare Label.

Many of the original building’s architectural elements were reused and repurposed for Ace Hardware, including a large center atrium and skylights. Daylight and biophilic views also are prioritized with floor-to-ceiling windows and access to outdoor terraces, patios, more than 2.5 miles of walking paths and two ponds. Many of the enclosed conference and collaboration rooms have interior-facing glass walls to take advantage of the available natural light and to maintain connection and transparency.

Maximizing efficiency of both natural and electrical lighting, Rockfon Artic’s smooth white surface has a high light reflectance. It reflects 85 percent of light as diffused illumination, which can help reduce eye strain. Rockfon Artic has standard sound absorption with a Noise Reduction Coefficient (NRC) of 0.75.

“I can’t think of a project that was this large where everything went so well. …We all had the same goal. We wanted to get this done on time. It was just great teamwork,” added Sean Miller, AIA; CBRE Design Collective’s project architect. “One of the huge design components that we took advantage of in the space was really trying to let the existing architecture shine, and let the interior architecture shine.”

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***Ace Hardware Corporation office renovation; Oak Brook, Illinois;*** [***https://www.acehardware.com/***](https://www.acehardware.com/)

Architect: CBRE Design Collective; Chicago, Illinois; <https://www.cbre.com/services/design-and-build/design>

Contractor: Skender Construction; Chicago; <https://www.skender.com/>

Ceiling system – installer: Anning-Johnson Company; Melrose Park, Illinois; <https://anningjohnson.com/>

Ceiling system – distributor: Reinke Supply Companies; Elgin, Illinois; <https://www.reinkesupply.com/>

Ceiling system – manufacturer: Rockfon; Chicago; <https://www.rockfon.com>

Photographer: Daniel Kelleghan Photography

***About Rockfon***

*Rockfon is part of ROCKWOOL Group and is offering advanced acoustic ceilings and wall solutions to create beautiful, comfortable spaces.*

*At ROCKWOOL Group, we are committed to enriching the lives of everyone who experiences our product solutions. Our expertise is perfectly suited to tackle many of today’s biggest sustainability and development challenges, from energy consumption and noise pollution to fire resilience, water scarcity and flooding. Our range of products reflects the diversity of the world’s needs, while supporting our stakeholders in reducing their own carbon footprint.*

*Stone wool is a versatile material and forms the basis of all our businesses. With approximately 12,000 passionate colleagues in 40 countries, we are one of the world leaders in stone wool solutions, from building insulation to acoustic ceilings, external cladding systems to horticultural solutions, engineered fibers for industrial use to insulation for the process industry, and marine and offshore.*

*For more information, please visit* [*https://www.rockfon.com*](https://www.rockfon.com)*.*

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