

Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service

CLIENT STORY

Baltimore, MD



For over 80 years, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has been resettling refugees and reuniting families—offering support to those fleeing persecution and helping them to flourish in their new homes. As the largest faith-based nonprofit dedicated to serving immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees in the U.S., they have supported more than 500,000 people in their pursuit of the American Dream.

Headquartered in Baltimore's vibrant downtown Inner Harbor, the LIRS offices are located within The Lutheran Center, a beautiful five-story building embodying multiple architectural styles. While the building's exterior reflects a contemporary urban silhouette, the LIRS interior workspace had become severely dated. This made it especially challenging when it came time to invite employees back to the office after the pandemic.

“Our office space had no thoughtful flow. It was dark and drab, and our furniture was already ten years old when it was donated to us in 1999,” said Kimberly Stokes, Director of Business Operations for LIRS. “The cubicles were so high that people felt isolated. Being in that space felt like a real energy-zapper.”

LIRS has markedly evolved since its inception, undergoing significant staff growth and becoming more innovative in its programs and services. The organization needed a workspace that reflected that revitalization and one that would be a welcoming environment for their employees to return to after a two-year absence.



"This project was unique in many ways, but our W.B. Mason representative made all the difference and was such a great collaborator. And, of the many companies we've worked with, Allsteel is simply superior with their products and warranty. Both companies were just a joy to work with."

KIMBERLY STOKES
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS



Working together with Allsteel and their dealer partner W.B. Mason, LIRS transformed their “traditional” office space full of cubicles and long-tabled conference rooms to a much more open, collaborative concept featuring “neighborhoods” designed to promote community and connection among employees.

Instituting a hybrid workplace, LIRS made sure the new space was set up with advanced technology solutions and soundproofing screens so that people could videoconference throughout with ease and without causing distraction. Height-adjustable desks encourage healthy movement and comfortably accommodate the various users who rotate through the space on any given day. Comfortable lounge chairs line the second-floor windows,

PROJECT DETAILS

Headquarters

Baltimore, MD
49,000 sq. ft.

Partnerships

W.B. Mason

PRODUCT SOLUTIONS

Seating

Evo™, Clarity®, Two-Thirds™,
Retreat™, Jetty:Mod™,
Rise™, Reflect®

Workspaces

Further™,
Park™ Planters

Tables

Altitude® A8, Belong®, Structure

Storage

Essentials™

Accessories

Zilenzio Focus Screens

providing an appealing place to perform individual work or to relax and recharge. And dual-purpose planters are located throughout, offering flexible space division and incorporating biophilia to bring the outdoors in.

“The redesign has brought a whole new vibe to our workplace,” said Stokes. “Thanks to the updated furniture, plants, and pops of color throughout and all the unique spaces we now have in the building, there’s so much more energy and interaction.”

The redesign of the LIRS space has dramatically increased opportunities for staff to interact with and support one another, surpassing all expectations for fostering connection. Rather than sitting in a cubicle all day, employees are now engaging together in the café and other shared open areas. That improved collaboration and sense of community have strengthened the organization’s ability to provide solutions for immigrants and refugees seeking safety and hope.

“We wanted to honor our staff for all their incredible work by creating a bright, friendly, and comfortable space that serves them well and connects them with our mission of welcome. We’ve had people tell us that this beautiful new space has revitalized our culture and inspired them to come back into the office. And that’s exactly what we were hoping to achieve.”

