



## PROJECT REPORT

## JMU Music Building

**CLIENT:** James Madison University  
**LOCATION:** Harrisonburg, Virginia  
**ARCHITECT:** Marcellus, Wright, Cox & Smith  
**CONTRACT:** \$6 million  
**COMPLETED:** March 1990

**Special Features:** This 60,000-square-foot building is one of the newer buildings constructed on the upper “quad” at JMU. Because of its proximity to many of the older Madison campus buildings, this project needed to retain the original design of “bluestone” walls and terra-cotta roofing. Due to the absence of a local quarry, this project was the first building constructed at JMU that did not use native “bluestone” limestone. Instead, limestone was trucked in from New York and local craftspeople were used for the final cut and placement.

The design for this building placed high emphasis on acoustics and sound proofing. Structural concrete frame

and floors, solid masonry interior walls, and real plaster stucco were all chosen to meet the special acoustic needs. Custom acoustic clouds were built from wood and insulation and hung at specific angles. All classrooms featured insulated floating wood floors over concrete. In addition, vibration isolation was used in many areas. The building includes music classrooms, individual practice rooms, staff offices, a music library, and a large practice room that accommodates a 90-piece band.

**The Nielsen Partnership:** According to Project Manager Dick Holsinger, “It is always difficult to predict the way a music building will ‘perform’ and owner use is the best test of both design and construction. Paying attention to the small details was the key—no re-work was required. Nielsen is proud of this facility—both in quality of the design and construction—and it is especially gratifying for us to see James Madison University’s outstanding accomplishments in music.”