

University of Vermont: A 360° Display of History



PROJECTGRAPHICS

University of Vermont Case Study

The University of Vermont decided to mark their 200th commencement with a grand celebration. Since it was also the first time in four decades that the ceremony would take place on its historic University Green, the university wanted to focus attention in that key area. They commissioned LandWorks, a landscape architecture firm based in Middlebury, Vermont, to design a temporary installation to draw in the ceremony participants and spectators and create a sense of delineated place in an outdoor setting.

LandWorks, on behalf of the university, partnered with Project Graphics to develop a visual context for the big event. First, LandWorks' design was developed using a colorful, hand-drawn depiction of University Row, the campus' landmark buildings. Then, the two firms collaborated to create three layers of graphic visuals to totally surround the celebration's participants. Five large-format banners were hung on Waterman Hall behind the stage as a backdrop, a series of mid-sized processional flags depicting the university's seal with each of their ten college's symbolic colors were carried in the procession and then flanked the stage, and finally 40 pole-mounted banners with the university's logo and colors encircled University Green.

The production of these elements, particularly the large-format pieces, required specialized equipment that Project Graphics owns and operates out of its Connecticut facility. The backdrop banners, each 13' tall by 6' wide, were printed on polyester-mesh fabric using a VUTEK UltraVu™ 5300 solvent-based printer.

This system allows for an unmatched vibrancy and clarity of color in larger formats with the mesh allowing passage of air and light. The college processional flags (2' 9" by 4') and the light-pole banners (2' by 5') were screenprinted onto Sunbrella awning material on a Svecia Horizon flatbed press



using high-pigment, plastisol inks that were heat-set into the fabric. These processes and materials not only offer super-saturated color, but they have a lifespan of 5 years. All the pieces were produced using digital files sent electronically from LandWorks. Each banner is warranted by Project Graphics.

According to LandWorks' Senior Designer Matt Heywood, the banners were so popular that UVM's Campus Planning Services extended its permit with the city of Burlington to keep the pole banners hoisted year-round. "The students, the faculty and the alumni loved the look of the installation," he said. "No one wanted the banners, especially the big ones, to come down. They helped to strengthen a sense of pride in the university."

Project Graphics has gone on to produce many products for the university, especially in renovated areas and new buildings. Most recently, Project Graphics partnered again with LandWorks to create a series of large format banners that hang in the Dudley H. Davis Student Center Atrium, part of a new facility that has already become a hub of activity on the Burlington Campus.

The colorful display was developed as a permanent installation to fill the four-story atrium space with colorful graphics created in fabrics that match the University colors. The banners are watermarked with the university logo and each one prominently displays a key word of UVM's Common Ground Charter – Justice, Respect, Openness, Integrity, Innovation and Responsibility. A color-fast DuPont nylon was selected for this application as the dyes in the fabric will not be faded by the sunlight from the large windows in the atrium. The banners were designed to respond to the proportions of the space, the dramatic curved

staircase and the large windowed wall that allows the visuals to be seen from inside and outside the building. At nearly 4' wide and ranging from about 7' to 16' in length, they are a dramatic and eye-catching element, even in such a lofty space. The colorful expression of aspirational sentiments on the banners fits perfectly within the context of the student center.

The light-pole banners, now a permanent feature of the campus, and the architectural installations will last for years to come. Students, faculty, staff and visitors are all impacted by the positive messages of cohesion and school spirit embodied in the graphics programs. As part of the campus environment, the visual displays have become living elements of the university experience and the memories the students will carry forward with them.



Photo by LandWorks

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