



# PROJECT PROFILE

## WALLTITE® Insulating Air Barrier System

improve the energy economics of your building

## WALLTITE® Insulating Air Barrier Helps Not-For-Profit Meet Codes, Stay On-Budget and be Environmentally Responsible

### Owner

SquashBusters (Land Donated by Northeastern University, Boston)

### Building

Multi-use squash and fitness center

### Architect

CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc.

### Problems

- Complex facade design
- Limited budget
- Need to meet Massachusetts state energy code air barrier requirements

### Solution

WALLTITE® insulating air barrier system

### Advantages

- Lower labor costs
- Conforms to irregular shapes
- Meets state energy codes
- Approved by Air Barrier Association of America
- Improves building energy efficiency, durability
- Superior insulation performance combined with near-perfect air-leakage control

What do you do when you have a complex design, a not-for-profit client and need to meet the demanding new Massachusetts state commercial energy code?

That was the challenge facing Sherif Anis of CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc., when he was designing SquashBusters, a 29,000 square-foot multi-use squash and fitness center on the Northeastern University campus in Boston, housing faculty and staff facilities, as well as an inner-city youth enrichment program of the same name.

“The design challenge was to fit eight 20 x 30 x 20-foot international squash courts in a row, with a big viewing area in behind. The preference in squash is to have no natural light in the court, so the only place we could fit them in was on the most public side of the building, giving us a big, blank wall overlooking a public park,” Anis says. “We had to animate that facade



without windows, which created a very detailed wall with a lot of penetrations.”

When Massachusetts became the first jurisdiction to mandate air barrier systems in non-residential construction, Anis struggled to find a way to meet the code and not exceed his budget, while staying true to his design.

“No matter how we detailed that facade using traditional built-up layers of construction, it was too time consuming and the contractor nailed us on labor charges every time.”

Anis turned to his father, Wagdy Anis, a founder of the Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA), for advice.

“My father is a champion of the air barrier concept, and actually had a hand in developing the code. When I told him what I was up against, he suggested I investigate the WALLTITE® Spray-Applied Polyurethane Foam (SPF) system from BASF,” he says.

“Once I got the pricing on it, I discovered it was less than traditional systems because it required less labor.”

The WALLTITE insulating air barrier system is spray-applied and fully-adhered, providing a seamless, monolithic air barrier that conforms to irregular shapes and allows easy detailing around penetrations. When properly applied by ABAA-approved applicators, it contributes to improved building durability, energy efficiency, and to occupant comfort, health and safety. Its closed-cell rigid formulation creates an effective air barrier, as well as providing the highest level of thermal insulation. Using WALLTITE technology on the SquashBusters facility provided the air barrier and insulation in one step, Anis reports, speeding construction and reducing labor costs substantially.

“The best part was the scheduling and ease of construction. It really simplified the process by eliminating the different trades that would have to come in. We had the sprayers and the paneling guys working at the same time. They went across the whole skin, one following the other.”

Anis says that the WALLTITE system became “the perfect answer” to the insulation and air barrier needs of the SquashBusters project, addressing not just the highly elaborate facade with its grids, channels and brackets, but anywhere rigid board insulation would normally be used.

“I don’t think we have any rigid board insulation on the building,” he says.

The new home of the SquashBusters organization opened its doors in September 2003, thanks in part to the accelerated construction schedule provided by WALLTITE technology. The new facility will serve over 250 students each year (112 middle-school students, 64 high-school students, and 100 or more summer campers), enable participants to be affiliated with SquashBusters for seven years instead of three, and introduce a summer camp and school to serve youth from both inside and outside of the Boston community.

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