

## Project: **Cornell Residence Halls**, Ithaca, NY

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### **Concrete Facts**

Bethe Dorm is the third phase

- 182,500 sq. ft. Total Precast Structure
- 4-story residence hall

### **Products Used**

- 99,800 sq. ft. precast hollowcore
- 56,500 sq. ft. exterior wall panels
- 26,200 sq. ft. interior walls
- Precast stairs and landings

### **Owner**

Cornell University,  
Ithaca, NY

### **General Contractor**

Welliver McGuire, Inc.  
Montour Falls, NY

### **Architectural Firm**

Ewing Cole  
Philadelphia, PA

### **Precaster**

Oldcastle Precast Building Systems Division  
Morrisville, PA



**CONCRETE EVIDENCE:**

## A New School of Thought— Precast Concrete

Cornell University's main campus, situated in the scenic Finger Lakes Region of upstate New York, covers nearly 745 acres with more than 260 major buildings. Its student population of just over 20,000 nearly doubles the population of its host city, Ithaca during the Fall and Spring semesters.

So where do all those students live? A majority of them reside in modern total precast residence halls, according to David Newman, Director of Construction Management at Cornell University. "We are in phase three of a four phase construction plan for the campus that includes five new residence halls that will have approximately 1,600 beds," says Newman. According to Newman, this is not typical dormitory style housing. Instead, the university has taken a different approach, one that includes single rooms and suites plus a large space to accommodate all the residents at a "house meal" served once a month.

"Our general contractor, Welliver McGuire, Inc. looked at other construction methods, but precast allowed us to save time on our schedule and therefore money on construction costs. The Bethe House, a 182,500 square foot, four story structure in phase three of the plan, combines precast wall panels and precast plank." Brick is then applied to the wall panels as a finish to blend with the Gothic architecture and historic nature of the campus. "We liked the load-bearing wall panels," adds Newman, "it provided an interior wall surface that was durable, did not require extensive finishing—and saved us money. "Phase four, which will include two more residence halls, also has precast in the plan.

With its four phase construction plan, Cornell University has accomplished an unusual task. It has met the needs of students and administrators at the same time—thanks to the design flexibility and the time and labor saving properties of quality precast building components.

