

## Project: **The Overlook**, *Ramapo College of New Jersey, Mahwah, NJ*

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### **Concrete Facts**

- 99,000 SF Elevated Precast Superstructure
- 8 stories
- 13 months delivery/erection/finish

### **Products Used**

- Exterior Round Columns
- Interior Round Columns
- E-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- 8-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- G-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- 6-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- B-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- A-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- 13-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- 1-Line 12" Insulated Panels
- Stairs and Landings Stair
- Beams at Round Columns
- Interior Stair and Elevator Walls
- Interior L-1 Lintels

### **Owner**

Ramapo College of New Jersey  
The Overlook  
298-Bed Student Housing Facility  
Mahwah, NJ

### **General Contractor**

Century 21 Construction

### **Architectural/Engineering Firm**

Paulus Sokolowski and Sartor, Architecture P.C.

### **Precaster**

Fabcon Corporation  
Architectural Precast, LLC



**CONCRETE EVIDENCE:**

## Ramapo College of New Jersey Studies Precast

The Overlook residence hall at Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah, New Jersey looks more like a luxury apartment building than a housing facility for nearly 300 students of this highly rated liberal arts college. Eight stories of precast concrete and glass stand against the New Jersey sky, towering trees and huge ancient boulders deposited eons ago by the slow creep of glacial ice sheets. The building, an interlocking design of alternating flat and fluted precast panels with “punched” windows and a glass curtain wall is designed to complement the surrounding natural areas and take advantage of the picturesque hillside vantage point.

According to Richard Roberts, Associate Vice President and Contracting Officer, the college’s pre-construction task force considered other options during the planning of the facility. Precast was chosen over steel and block masonry for a number of reasons. “The designers felt precast could achieve an aesthetically pleasing design that would blend with our surroundings,” says Roberts. Besides considerable cost advantages, the superstructure was scheduled to be erected in mid-winter. The thought of laying block during New Jersey’s bitter, January cold was unsettling and construction delays would have meant costly alternative housing and transportation expenses for the incoming freshmen and returning upperclassmen. After meeting with the architect, examining precast panel samples and visiting a nearby precast structure, the benefits and the ability of precast to conform to the college’s needs won over the committee. The decision to use precast kept the project on schedule and on budget.

Normally, the beauty of precast is more evident on a building’s exterior. In the case of The Overlook, the designers and architects incorporated the surface of the precast components into the actual design and decor of the interior as well. The lobby is a modernist dream of contrasting surfaces—the mass and strength of exposed precast walls, columns and beams along side the transparency and frailty of a large glass exposure. Hollowcore planks are exposed in ceilings and massive precast beams are visible throughout. The precast concrete surface, with its natural striations and variety of random color and tone is evident everywhere. Hall rooms mix bold color carpet, painted walls and walls with exposed precast. And at the end of each hall is a glass and precast lounge area that provides a dramatic view of the Ramapo Mountains and Kameron Pond.

The precast experience with The Overlook dormitory was so successful at Ramapo College of New Jersey, that Roberts says another even larger student housing facility with a precast parking structure is planned for 2006 to accommodate the burgeoning enrollment of on-campus students.

