



Clinic Design

PROJECT PROFILE

PROJECT:

Bergen Passaic Ambulatory
Surgery Center
Clifton, New Jersey

DESIGNER:

Teri Vargas

DEALER/INSTALLER

Best Carpet of America

FLOORING PATTERN

Estate Plus Pacific Birch

FROM SOUP TO NUTS

Designer Teri Vargas and Dr. Shams Qureshi



In the process, Vargas found herself acting as a virtual general contractor, right down to designing furniture and fixtures and having them fabricated. The 18,000-square-foot two-story center has two operating rooms, several doctor's offices and exam rooms, and facilities for all of the necessary administrative functions.

Her inspiration for the less clinical color schemes was based on similar medical facilities in Europe.

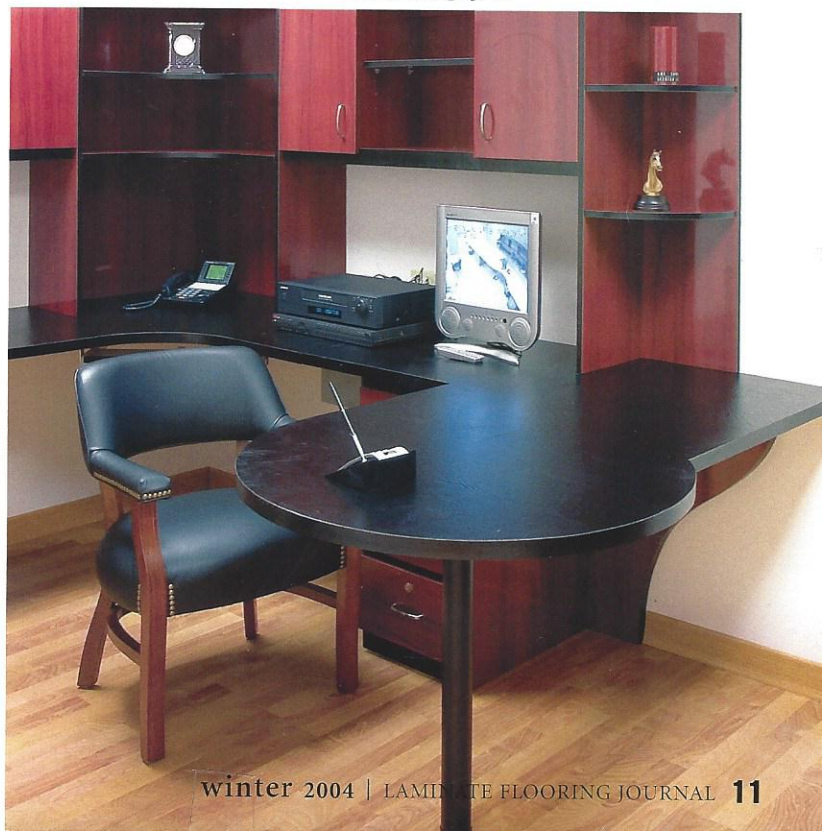
"I wanted to make this 'the surgery center of surgery centers,' to make it feel more homey, like the birthing centers you find popping up around the country. I used a lot of peachy colors, soft sea foam greens, and sand-colored wallpaper. For the woods and wood-looking materials, I used a lot of red oak patterns with

continued on page 12

When you talk to Teri Vargas, you'd better be prepared. The energy that drives her passion for her work just might knock you off of your feet.

Vargas is single-handedly responsible for the design of the brand new Bergen Passaic Ambulatory Surgery Center in Clifton, New Jersey run by pain-management specialist Dr. Shams Qureshi. It's a radical departure from your usual pain management clinics, abandoning the oppressively sterile and all-too-common white-and-chrome environment for a more pleasing, soothing décor of warm, rich tones and materials.

"I've been a residential interior designer for years," Vargas explains, "but in the last two years I've gotten more into commercial work. This was the first complete ambulatory surgery center I've ever done. For the last eight years I've been in the medical field as a business administrator for a few physical rehab offices. I was chosen to oversee this project because of that experience, and my background in interior design. I was involved in the banking and financial aspects, zoning variances with the town, state licensure, and furniture and interior design. I guess you could say I did the whole thing from soup to nuts!"



Best Carpets A 'TEAM PLAYER'

Moving at the speed of Teri Vargas requires a flexible flooring dealer. For the Bergen Passaic Ambulatory

Surgery Center, Vargas had the support of Mike Ahmad owner of Best Carpet of America.

"Mike is very knowledgeable, very well-informed, and went out of his way for whatever I needed," says Vargas. He always listened to my thoughts and pointed me in the right direction. I know I'm not an easy person to work with. I have an idea, an image in my head – sometimes it's well thought through, but sometimes it's a little 'out there' – and he's always there to help. He puts up with me, which makes him an excellent team player."

Ahmad says he runs Best Carpets, in business since the summer of 1996 in Lodi, New Jersey, as a "hands-on" president.

"We're very selective about the commercial work we do. We'd rather deal

directly with the owners of a building than the contractors, many of whom aren't yet comfortable with laminate flooring in commercial applications. We show them other commercial Wilsonart installations we've done to convince them that it really is the best flooring."

Ahmad says Best Carpets carries all major laminate flooring brands, but he and his staff prefer to sell and install Wilsonart Flooring.

"We like the fact that it's high-pressure laminate, and that it's made in the U.S.A. It's a sound product, and we get very few callbacks on it. In the high season we have three installation crews doing nothing but laminate flooring all day long, and they prefer to work with Wilsonart because it goes in without a hitch every time. We take pride in our work and what we sell; Wilsonart Flooring makes our jobs easier." ■



a coloring more toward cherry – more reddish and rustic looking. The technology cabinetry is all wood and wood laminates; there's no chrome whatsoever.

"Patients are saying that they really appreciate this relaxed, soothing atmosphere. This is truly a new generation surgery center."

In creating this environment, Vargas relied heavily on laminates and flooring from Wilsonart.

"I specialized in interior design for residential kitchens and baths for seven years, and it so happened that I worked on many doctors' homes and condos. I always went with Wilsonart Laminates for this work because I liked the colors, and they have such an extensive range that it was always easy to match to wall coverings and flooring."

Vargas chose Wilsonart Flooring – Estate Plus in Pacific Birch – because she wanted a rich wood look throughout the building. Real wood was out of the question because of the cost, and because it wouldn't hold up well to the commercial traffic and cleaning required. The only areas in the center that aren't Wilsonart Flooring are the operating rooms, which are required by the state of New Jersey to have seamless vinyl sheeting, and the restrooms, which are ceramic tile. Even the elevators are floored with Wilsonart.

"When Wilsonart first came out with laminate flooring I thought, 'Great!' I like

its texture and finishes better than other products out there, and I knew they would get the design and color right, like they always do with their laminates."

Vargas used glossy Wilsonart Laminates throughout the facility for counters, dining and conference tables, and the cabinetry that houses medical technology. In some places solid wood edges were used, treated with stains designed to match certain Wilsonart colors. Even the exposed wood on the leather chairs was stained to a cherry color to match the cabinetry.

"The whole project is really breathtaking," says Vargas. "There were definitely some challenges, but the outcome is delightful, beautiful. The Wilsonart Flooring is very durable, and the colors are exceptional. They're always a delight to work with, because Wilsonart moves with the times."

"Dr. Qureshi was initially a little worried about the cost of the project, but now the project is complete he's fallen in love with it. Cost ceased to be an object."

The Bergen Passaic Ambulatory Surgery Center was a hit with other doctors as well.

"I've got contracts for six more surgery centers because doctors like how this one turned out," says Vargas. "I couldn't have done it without Wilsonart. Everything I wanted and envisioned, the colors were there for me. Wilsonart helped me realize my vision!"

