

BY JESSICA BATES

This is the first in a series of case studies illustrating how different property types can benefit from the BOMA 360 designation.

WESTSIDE MEDICAL ARTS CENTER OPERATES WITH SURGICAL PRECISION

Visible signage, well-lit spaces, walkable corridors, knowledgeable staff—these are features typical office building workers may take for granted when they come to work each day. For a visitor to a medical office building, however, these things can make an enormous difference.

The BOMA 360-designated Westside Medical Arts Center in Plantation, Florida, houses more than half a dozen medical tenants, ranging from allergy and asthma specialists to surgical consultants to oncologists, in the three-story building managed by Holladay Properties. Many of the building's guests are elderly or in ill health, which means building staff needs to be exceptionally attuned to their needs. The Holladay Properties team makes patients' well-being the central focus of everything they do, as they balance the complex requirements of medical tenants. Jacqueline Fermin, director of Property Management for Holladay Properties, was pleased when the team's attention to detail and commitment to excellence were recognized with a BOMA 360 designation in 2015. "Medical office buildings aren't quite like other types of office buildings, and there are very few designation programs that evaluate them," Fermin explains. "Achieving the BOMA 360 designation demonstrated that we're taking care of our tenants across the board, in everything from life safety and security to sustainability."

Built in 2001, the building features a circular driveway, zero-grade curb and large, automatic glass doors to make entering and exiting the building as simple as possible, whether on foot or in a wheelchair. The interior of the building is designed in soothing tones of cream and emerald, with plenty of indoor plants for an additional calming effect. Comfortable seating

is provided around the building for waiting patients and other visitors. "Medical office building tenants and their guests require a little extra care, and we are happy to provide that," notes Fermin. "We think critically about what the patient's experience is from the moment they pull into the parking lot to when they arrive safely at their doctor's office."

Fermin says the BOMA 360 application process also was a learning experience for her team, giving them a glimpse into how similar buildings operated and what new goals they could work towards in each of the program's six categories of evaluation. Their determination is paying off. Since getting the designation, the building has reaped significant operational savings—energy bills are down more than 15 percent since installing LED lighting this year, a project prompted during the BOMA 360 application process. The building also has seen its occupancy level rise since earning the designation. Today, Westside Medical Arts Center is 100 percent occupied and rental rates are right in line with market demand.

Westside Medical Arts Center is a great example of the ways in which the six evaluative categories work together. For example, a particular focus on life safety and security is a big part of the service provided to tenants. "We are hyper-vigilant about safety," Fermin adds. "That translates into everything from regularly checking and maintaining our building systems to responding quickly to tenant requests to keeping a close eye out for any potential slip-and-fall risks." Building staff members review security tapes to spot any additional issues visitors may be having—no matter how small.

Tenant satisfaction scores, which are evaluated by consulting firm Kingsley Associates every year, reflect these efforts.

“We think critically about what the patient's experience is from the moment they pull into the parking lot to when they arrive safely at their doctor's office.”

— Jacqueline Fermin, Director of Property Management, Holladay Properties

At Westside Medical Arts Center, the overall tenant satisfaction score is 4.78 out of five—well above the Kingsley Index average of 4.13. Such high scores were no surprise to the property team, however. They've developed close relationships with their tenants, stopping in at least weekly for a quick check-in. "We position ourselves as a resource, not a nuisance," Fermin says. "Our tenants are so busy that they don't always have time to let us know if they need something, so it's important for us to make ourselves available." The team also started a recycling program to save both the owners and tenants money, as well as promote sustainability. Fermin believes environmentally friendly practices are another important part of taking care of building tenants.

But, the real secret to the building's success lies with the property team itself. "What I appreciate most about the BOMA 360 program is that it's not a beauty contest," explains Fermin. "It doesn't matter if your building is new or has Class A finishes—what matters is that your property team is working hard and doing an amazing job, and my team deserves to be rewarded for that." ■