

■ **PRODUCT** *Spotlight*

Southern Cypress

Southern cypress goes to work

WHEN LIVE OAK BANK set out to build an employee-friendly headquarters in Wilmington, N.C., the goal was a beautiful complex that would reflect its natural environment. Cypress fit the bill, both inside and out.

Architect Laura Miller, principal at LS3P Architects, Wilmington, explained that the design for the 36,000-sq. ft. complex was driven by her client's desire for a seamless transition from interior to exterior spaces.

"The owner wanted the building to

be as natural as possible—as if it had grown from the land and been there for years," she said. "To add balance, we wanted to feature a soft material that would contrast with the vast expanses of glass. We knew early on that the exterior skin would be wood."



LIVE OAK BANK'S new headquarters in Wilmington, N.C., highlights the beauty of locally sourced cypress on both the exterior and interior. (Photos courtesy Mark Herboth Photography LLC)

Another important goal was to remain true to the bank's North Carolina roots. To that end, Turn Bull Lumber, Elizabethtown, N.C., supplied the cypress lumber to Specialty Wood, a distribution yard and moulding shop in Wilmington.

"It was an honor to provide cypress for such an impressive local project," said Pem Jenkins, who owns Turn Bull Lumber. "The bank complex is a beautiful addition to Wilmington, and the extensive use of cypress really enhances the space."

On the exterior, cypress was used as siding and soffits. "The natural aging process of cypress was appealing," Miller said. "We decided to finish the wood with a clear sealant—no stain—to showcase its natural color. We are looking forward to watching the cypress weather to a light gray as time goes on."

Inside the complex, cypress was used for ceilings in the conference room, lounge, gym, and corridors. Custom cypress millwork was also used on individual workstations and cabinets. In all, the visually striking

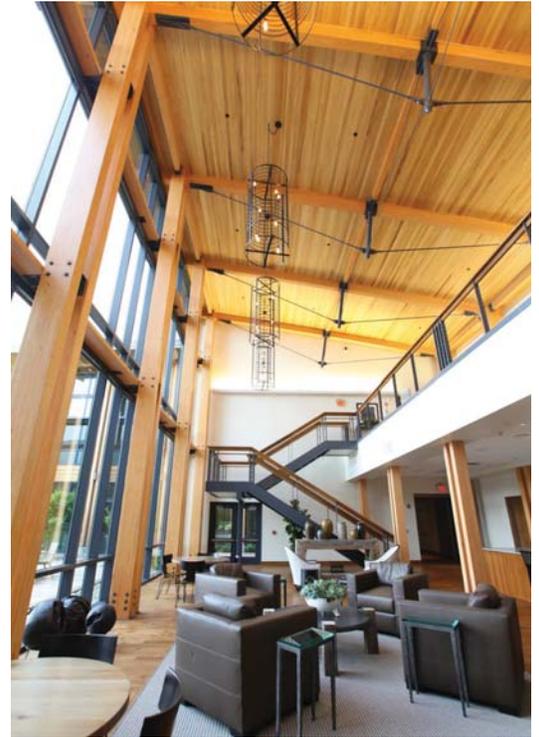
structure features 50,000 bd. ft. of cypress.

"Cypress was the perfect solution, not only due to its local availability, but also its natural durability and beautiful aesthetic qualities," said Miller. "Ultimately, we were able to use traditional building materials in a modern way, while optimizing views and daylighting. The result is spectacular."

Lee Williams, vice chairman of Live Oak Bancshares and Live Oak Banking, couldn't be more pleased with the final result.

"We want our employees to work hard and deliver great service, but also feel comfortable like they do at home," he said. "Our building is a reflection of those principles. We really enjoy the cypress on the headquarters building, and plan on using it on future buildings at the site."

— For more information on building with cypress, visit the Southern Cypress Manufacturers Association's website at www.cypressinfo.org.



CYPRESS imparts a warm, traditional feeling to the ceiling and beams of this visually striking modern structure.



CYPRESS PLYWOOD was used to construct open-air work stations in the bank's new headquarters. It was also used on ceilings and beams.