**Project Summary / Program Statement:**
Relocating PBS 39 to the Steel Stacks campus (formerly the site of now defunct Bethlehem Steel) was an opportunity to contribute to the creation of an arts and entertainment core in downtown Bethlehem. Working within a relatively modest budget for a broadcast studio, the building needed to reflect the modern character of its program while embracing the history of its surroundings.

The new 2-story broadcast facility contains administrative functions and two television recording studios with their associated editing, sound, and control rooms. Part of the program was to permit the community to participate in studio events and visualize the mechanics of broadcasting. This was accomplished by creating a community meeting space on the front of the building and prominently displaying the broadcast Master Control Room and Tech Core as part of both the interior and exterior ambience. These typically “back-of-house” functions become part of the public realm which, in turn, embraces the level of change placed over the existing context by its new partner.

Using industrial materials such as precast concrete and expanded metal to skin the building indirectly implicates the history of the site. Insulated concrete panels reflect the harshness of its context, both then and now. In contrast, the charred cedar delineating the public front of the building adds a softer, more refined quality. Its detailed texture creates a bold gesture and a human tactile scale which has a jarring yet appealing effect akin to the feeling the design team experienced seeing the Steel Stacks for the first time.

The project is the cornerstone of a new arts district that will undoubtedly be a catalyst for additional revitalization and mixed use development. Located on one of the largest brownfield sites in the country, the project is LEED certified.
Site Plan

PBS 39 is a prominent component of Bethlehem’s revitalized arts district
Building Section

Sectional connections between floors activates the public lobby space
North facade

Metal mesh, precast concrete, and charred cedar reflect the site's industrial heritage
Charred cedar cladding detail
Charred cedar adjacent to precast concrete creates a delicate material juxtaposition
Reception desk (left) & Community Room (right)

Public spaces are cleanly detailed, open, and inviting
Public lobby looking east

Punched openings in the floor create a connection with the lobby above
The Tech Core

Typically a ‘back of house’ space, the Tech Core is displayed instead of hidden.
Second floor lobby looking east

Punched openings accentuate the volume of the lobby space
Master Control

Typically a ‘back of house’ space, Master Control connects with the public realm
View north toward Steel Stacks

Once destined for demolition, the Steel Stacks serve as the backdrop for the plaza.
North facade @ studios
Metal mesh backlit with color-changing LED lights
North facade looking southeast

PBS 39 is a catalyst for revitalization in the SteelStacks arts district