

LORD AECK SARGENT
Chesterfield Labs
Duke University
Durham, NC



Lord Aeck Sargent was chosen by Duke University to design and renovate 2.5 floors (approximately 82,000 square feet) of the The Chesterfield Building for the Duke University School of Medicine and the Pratt School of Engineering. The two schools wanted a shared space that would serve their common interest in entrepreneurship, encouraging researchers and entrepreneurs to follow their creative desires and bring about fresh ideas and advancements.

Originally built in 1948, Chesterfield was originally a cigarette factory for the Liggett & Myers Tobacco Company. Though the property had been abandoned for nearly two decades, LAS wanted to keep much of its historical elements intact. Original tiles, exposed concrete floors, brick and wood, as well as copious natural lighting, lend themselves to a modern warehouse aesthetic that is also warm, inviting and spacious. The finished space is perfect for collaboration and a welcome change to the more conventional, siloed and oftentimes cramped labs found on campus.

The project follows the growing trend of off-campus entrepreneurship endeavors for universities. Researchers from academic disciplines across Duke University use Chesterfield to collaborate, enhance their ideas and bring to market products to serve communities around the globe. Successful projects include cancer detection devices and technological innovations to be used in the military and third world areas.

The renovations completed by LAS include a collaboration-friendly lab and office and conference spaces, which are connected by a large, central atrium that creates cohesion and accessibility throughout the entire space.