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HMFH Architects designs Van Meter Hall renovations at UMass Amherst

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HMFH Architects has been selected for the renovations to Van Meter Hall, a freshmen residence hall at the University of Mass. Amherst campus. The project will be completed for occupancy in September.

Van Meter Hall is a first year living and learning community focused on culture and the arts for students pursuing a career, program of study, or passion in music, art, dance, or theater. Chosen for its experience designing academic spaces that enhance collaboration and promote social contact through careful programming and inventive interior design, HMFH was charged with creating an atmosphere that would support the students' creative endeavors. The proposed design highlights renovating student lounges, social and recreation areas, dance and practice rooms, study spaces and media rooms on the building's first and second floors.

"HMFH provides the University of Massachusetts with a perspective that balances both critical improvements to our facilities and the need to make them as inviting and engaging for students as possible," said Cleve Carrens, UMass capital projects manager. "Their approach recognizes the specific attributes that visual and performing art students need in order to display and share their projects, and will certainly enhance the creative programming we have worked hard to cultivate in Van Meter Hall."

The team has designed a program that will incorporate a variety of upgrades to the 400-bed residence hall, including new finishes throughout the building, and new ceilings, lighting, casework, and furniture for all of Van Meter's common areas. Built-in and movable furniture reflecting dynamic color schemes will increase flexibility for different social gatherings and study groups. In addition, HMFH has integrated an innovative multi-dimensional component for students to share their artwork in an interactive display that will support the building's specialized programming.

"We are excited for the opportunity, through this renovation project, to support and promote the artistic explorations of the students living in Van Meter Hall," said Laura Wernick, AIA, REFP, LEED AP, senior principal at HMFH Architects. "The University of Massachusetts Amherst campus is the midst of significant growth and change in its student life offerings and we see this project as an integral part of that effort."

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