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RDK Engineers celebrates opening of state-funded Net Zero Energy Building

November 23, 2011 - Green Buildings

RDK Engineers (RDK) joined over 100 spectators in celebrating the grand opening of North Shore Community College's new Health Professions and Student Services Building, the first state-funded Net Zero Energy Building (ZNEB).

RDK provided MEP engineering services for the three-story, 58,700 s/f building. DiMella Shaffer served as the architect and Walsh Brothers as the contractor. Ten years in the making, the building consolidates the college's allied health professions programs - including nursing, animal sciences, physical therapy, respiratory therapy, and medical assistance disciplines - under one roof.

A building is classified as a ZNEB if the amount of energy produced onsite is equal to or greater than the amount of energy consumed on a yearly basis. In addition to being the first state-funded ZNEB, the Health Professions and Student Services building is the second largest facility of its type in the nation, second only to a Department of Energy building in Colorado. Sustainable features include a green roof; rainwater collection systems; photovoltaic panels on the roof and walkway canopies; a geothermal heating and cooling system; ground source heat pumps; rain gardens; and high-efficiency mechanical and electrical systems. The building is targeting LEED Gold Certification, with annual energy savings estimated at \$100,000 per year.

Speakers at the grand opening included representative John Tierney; Mass. Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs secretary Richard Sullivan; and DCAM commissioner Carole Cornelison. A letter from senator John Kerry, praising the sustainable merits of the new building, was read to the crowd.

"North Shore Community College's dedication to sustainability and green technology is represented by this new facility," said project manager and RDK principal Chris Hildreth. "RDK Engineers is committed to energy-efficient design practices, and it was great to work on a building that will both serve students and be a model for future sustainable facilities."

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