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Suffolk University's Modern Theatre residence hall receives LEED Silver

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Suffolk University's Modern Theatre residence hall project has earned a LEED Silver Rating in acknowledgment of its sustainable design, construction and operation.

The designation comes as the Boston Preservation Alliance prepares to honor the Modern Theatre residence hall development with a Preservation Achievement Award on Oct. 5. The annual Preservation Achievement Awards honor outstanding accomplishment in historic preservation and compatible new construction. The Preservation Alliance called the Modern Theatre project "a true standout" among a strong group of nominees in the category of Integration of Preservation and New Construction.

The Modern Theatre building combines a student residence hall, theater and gallery in a building that incorporates the sustainability philosophy that has earned Suffolk University a place in the Princeton Review's Guide to 311 Green Colleges. The new building in the historic Washington Street Theater District is fronted by the fully restored historic facade of the original Modern Theatre movie house.

"We are an institution that is committed to sustainable practices," said Acting President and Provost Barry Brown. "Our students, faculty and alumni want that commitment, and in our view universities have a crucial role in setting examples for social and environmental responsibility. Preservation is another aspect of sustainability, so we are proud of our achievement in restoring a theater to downtown while once again receiving a LEED designation for a new Suffolk University building."

The University employs water conservation fixtures, energy-efficient lighting and HVAC equipment, and recycled content in both new construction and in retrofitting existing campus buildings. The 10 West Residence Hall, which opened in 2008, received LEED Gold certification.

The LEED designation and the Preservation Achievement Award are the latest recognitions for the Modern Theatre building, which also has earned the following:

- Paul E Tsongas Award from Preservation Massachusetts
- American Institute of Architects New England Design Award, to be presented Oct. 15

"It is gratifying to receive recognition for the Modern Theatre, but the University's greatest satisfaction in this project comes from our collaboration with the city of Boston and our Ladder District neighbors as we restored the third jewel in the historic Washington Street Theater District,"

said John Nucci, the University's vice president for External Affairs.

LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - is a rating system designed by the U.S. Green Building Council to encourage and facilitate the development of more sustainable buildings. All Suffolk University building projects incorporate environmentally sound construction processes and sustainable principles in their design in accordance with its framework.

LEED highlights

The following are among the Modern Theatre elements considered in earning LEED designation:

- Water efficiency through low-flow plumbing
- Energy efficiency resulting in cost savings of 20 percent
- Site selection: near community infrastructure and public transportation
- Alternative transportation: bicycle storage on site
- Recycling in construction: More than 81 percent of on-site generated construction waste was diverted from landfill. Recycled materials were used to manufacture 17.9 percent of the building materials.
- Low-emitting materials for carpeting, paints and coatings, adhesives and sealants, wood and furnishings contribute to indoor air quality
- Green cleaning program
- Public education program

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