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Project of the Month: Kennedy Campus Center at Massachusetts College of Art awarded LEED Gold-CI Certification

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The renovation of the Kennedy Campus Center at Mass. College of Art and Design has recently been awarded LEED Gold-CI Certification by the United States Green Building Council. MDS/Miller Dyer Spears Inc. took on the challenge to transform the outdated 1960s brick-facade student center into an inviting hub of campus activity, and to open it to the public as well as multiple institutions in Boston's Longwood Medical Area. MDS worked for the Mass. State College Building Authority (MSCBA), in collaboration with the Mass. Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM).

MDS also recently achieved LEED Gold for renovation of the Worcester State University Administration Building, only the fifth LEED Gold Certification of a DCAM-owned building, and have followed that with successful certification of the Kennedy Campus Center.

The project scope included expanding the dining hall, a new café, art store, bookstore, student art gallery, student organization facilities, student development offices, career services, and health and counseling department. A phased construction plan was expertly implemented to allow uninterrupted operation of the dining hall, bookstore, and all student services during the course of the renovation.

The team worked carefully to maintain 50% of the existing interior elements, supplemented with recycled and regional materials including gypsum wall board, acoustical ceiling tiles, large-format porcelain tile & glass wall tile. The project used reclaimed, rapidly renewable and formaldehyde-free materials like sorghum straw panel board and recycled paper countertops.

These renovations increase building ventilation (at least 30% above the minimum required rate) and provide air monitoring, reduced lighting density and daylight-sensitive lighting controls in spaces for 90% of occupants. Potable water use was decreased by 39%, indoor pollutant control was improved, and the goal of zero CFC-based refrigerants in tenant HVAC and refrigeration systems was achieved. Commuter traffic emissions are also controlled by the project's easy accessibility to the MBTA green and orange lines, and new bike racks installed by the college.

These elements, along with collaboration with Walsh Brothers Construction on diverting 95% of construction waste from landfills and finding locally sourced materials, brought the project to a LEED Gold standard.

While not part of the LEED certified scope, the second phase servery renovation also adheres to LEED Gold standards. The servery was expanded to create a more open layout and better traffic flow. Food service stations were opened up to encourage interaction between patrons and staff. The new servery has been a hit not only with the MassArt community, but is frequented by students and staff from the Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Wentworth Institute of Technology, and employees from other institutions around the LMA.

The Campus Center expansion provides a strong connection between internal and external

environments, bringing light and energy into the dining hall and student development offices and through to the renovated basement, while revealing college activities and enticing the broader community into the building.

When asked about the collaborative experience, MDS' principal-in-charge Myron Miller said "The team of MassArt, MSCBA, Walsh Brothers and MDS were an ideal match. We were all determined to maximize the functionality, sustainability, and design impact of the Campus Center project, within the limits of public higher ed. budgets. The LEED Gold award represents a heartfelt satisfaction for all of us." The overall design aesthetic, a wonderful open and collaborative environment, is both green and beautiful.

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