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Gund Partnership and Suffolk Construction celebrate opening of 100,000 s/f Service Credit Union

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On October 12, Service Credit Union celebrated the opening of their new headquarters. Governor John Lynch delivered the keynote speech at the dedication ceremony. Also speaking was Gordon Simmons, president/CEO of Service Credit Union, John Prokos, FAIA, managing principal of Gund Partnership, and John Fish, chairman/CEO of Suffolk Construction, among other project leaders and dignitaries.

Clad in glass curtain wall and locally sourced granite, the four story building creates a new landmark and unified headquarters for the growing credit union. It is located on Lafayette Rd./U.S. Rte. 1, a major corridor leading into downtown Portsmouth, and is the first project under the city's new Gateway District zoning ordinances. Gund Ptrsp. is the architect. Suffolk Const. is the construction manager.

The 100,000 s/f building will allow Service Credit Union to effectively serve its growing local and worldwide membership. The program features a full service, 24/7 member service call center, foreign exchange, member check imaging, processing and control, Finance, community rooms, conference rooms, departmental and executive offices. Three community rooms on the ground level will be offered for use by local city government, not-for-profit organizations and other community based associations to help with the growing need for meeting space in Portsmouth and nearby towns.

Reflecting Service Credit Union's commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility, green design strategies played a significant role in the design approach. The team is seeking LEED Gold certification. Geothermal heat exchange, high performance low emissivity glazing, envelope improvements, displacement ventilation, raised floor systems, CO2 monitoring, photovoltaic panels, daylight harvesting, and low-VOC materials are among the strategies that promote energy efficiency and improved environmental quality. Described by John Prokos, FAIA, "a geothermal heat pump system, which extracts ground heat to warm the building and transfers heat back into the ground to cool it, and is only one of two ways to take your building off the grid, will reduce overall energy usage by 37% when compared to a typical office building."

Providing all staff members access to natural light and views was a primary design goal. The building is organized around a central sky-lit atrium that connects all four floors with natural light and offers a dramatic area for communal interaction. Relating to nearby Pease Air Force Base, where Service Credit Union was founded, the path of planes in flight inspired the angle of skylights and floor lights guiding the geometry of the building.

A significant amenity for staff is the 17.1-acre site. Formerly a brownfield site, the landscape is now richly planted with walking trails and outdoor seating areas that encourage staff to take advantage of the open space. Native plantings connect the site with surrounding landscape and reduce

maintenance and water needs. Oehme, van Sweden & Associates of Washington, D.C. served as the landscape architect.

This new building expands Service Credit Union's footprint in the area. More than 50 years ago, the credit union began at Pease Air Force Base as the Portsmouth Air Force Base Federal Credit Union to serve military and civilian employees there. Now the largest credit union in N.H. at more than \$2 billion in assets and serving the citizens in nine of the ten counties in the state, four towns in Mass. and with members around the world, Service Credit Union has grown to serve more than 165,000 members, two-thirds of which are military who are assigned throughout the U.S.

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