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Shepley Bulfinch completes design of 37,000 s/f at North Shore Community College's McGee building

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Lynn, MA Shepley Bulfinch completed a campus expansion for North Shore Community College (NSCC). Fulfilling an important design goal for the college, the three-story, 37,000 s/f addition to the McGee building features a curved façade and plaza that enlivens its downtown location

Located at 300 Broad St., the new addition and entry plaza will create the southeast anchor to the municipal Market St. redevelopment plan. The two-wing McGee addition provides much needed classroom space, offices, and student services for the growing student body in this culturally-diverse, urban community. On the first floor, a centralized Student Success Center consolidates the offices of admissions, financial aid, academic assistance, and career services, providing a convenient “one-stop shop” of resources for students, many of whom are the first of their families to attend college. Visible from the plaza, the Student Success Center signals the ready availability of a full range of support staff and services, with open, flex seating and computer stations.

The second floor includes a new testing center, built-in study and collaboration areas and a large two-story informal seating area. The third floor encompasses an executive suite and a large conference room with long distance learning capabilities which will be used by the school and also shared with the community. The third floor also boasts a long study counter extending over the double-height entry hall and overlooking the plaza beyond. Ten new classrooms span all three floors.

The curved façade, which defines the new entry plaza, is lined with large windows set into light-colored concrete panels. The new design covers the old McGee entry façade and in so doing, creates an entirely new face to the city. The matching brick exterior recreates the image of the old building, while the transparent entry hall bids further exploration and provides ample space for extended family members to support students as they embark on their journey. The buildings are connected on all levels, allowing for movement between the two.

Color was an important design consideration for the interiors, and a sophisticated, neutral palette was chosen to complement the wash of natural light. Bright blue walls, visible from the plaza outside, beckon students into the new Student Success Center. Three bold tones of blue define

each floor and give classroom portals as well as stairways a pop of color.

Red accents on the exterior windows help define the elegant curve of the building and modern façade.

Shepley Bulfinch worked closely with NSCC to ensure the new facility effectively supports the college's urban education and workforce development program. Sited on a bustling corner within walking distance to downtown and across from the Lynn commuter rail station, the bold design integrates the campus with the surrounding community. The angled roofline provides visual interest, and the southwest corner of the building, clad in perforated metal, acts as a welcoming beacon to draw in the community.

"We are excited to welcome students and families into this inspiring new building to learn more about what North Shore Community College can offer," said Dr. Patricia Gentile, president of North Shore Community College. "The thoughtfully designed space allows NSCC to fulfill our commitment to meeting our students where they are in life and helping them get to wherever they want to go. As one of the oldest community colleges in Massachusetts, we feel strongly about our role as an active community partner and this facility will play an important role in our collaboration with the City of Lynn."