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## **North Branch Construction receives ABC NH/VT award for Dartmouth College Morton Hall dormitory renovation**

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Shown (from left) are: Chris Johnson, Patrick O'Hern, Jim Schwartzkopf, Mark Lee, and Sharon Ames

Bedford, NH North Branch Construction was recognized at the Associated Builders and Contractors NH/VT Chapter Annual Excellence in Construction Awards ceremony held at the Manchester Country Club.

The firm was honored to receive a Merit Award for the fire reconstruction of the Morton Hall dormitory on the campus of Dartmouth College in the 'Institutional/Public \$5-10M' category. Dartmouth College's Patrick O'Hern and Chris Johnson, along with project architects Sharon Ames and Mark Lee of Harriman Associates, joined North Branch Construction's project manager Jim Schwartzkopf on stage as Schwartzkopf accepted the award.

The fire at Dartmouth College's Morton Hall took place during the solicitation process for proposals from construction managers to perform minor renovations-in-kind and systems upgrades to several dormitories in the East Wheelock Dorm Cluster over a period of three summers.

The original systems upgrades and minor renovation scope of work was revised at once to include demolition of the destroyed portions of the building. North Branch Construction was hired immediately upon completion of the initial demolition, and within 24 hours had a temporary heating system in place to begin drying out the building as well as to keep warm the main water, steam, and sprinkler lines that ran below Morton Hall and were still providing service to other dormitories. The initial demolition brought to light that the building was beyond repair to perform the originally-planned 30% renovation-in-kind and systems upgrades. The entire building would have to be gutted and brought up to code. The College decided at this time that they wanted to take this opportunity to incorporate a new layout within the dormitory to allow for more social spaces and beds for students.

This new layout required a total redesign by Harriman Associates for the renovation of the entire building, including the removal of all existing mechanical and electrical systems and walls. This series of scope revisions and redesign turned what was originally estimated as a \$1.5 million project

into over \$6 million in work. Despite the Morton Hall renovation ending as a completely different project than when it first began, North Branch Construction was still able to complete the project on time for students to move into the dormitory mid-August, before the start of the 2017-2018 academic year

North Branch Construction and their team of subcontractors accomplished over \$6 million of work in just five months, working extended hours and accommodating an ongoing and increasingly complex total project redesign and reconfiguration, while encountering significant unforeseen conditions, on a fast-track basis, in a building destroyed by fire, in a very tight downtown campus location. North Branch Construction's subcontractors and vendors were instrumental in keeping the project on schedule and finishing it on time. These subcontractors include EnviroVantage, Hampshire Fire Protection, Longchamps Electric, Multi-Weld Services, Stanley Elevator Co., National Drywall, Northeast Flooring Solutions, Giguere Electric, Vermont Heating & Ventilation, Marchand Painting, and RG Gosselin Concrete.

The ABC Excellence in Construction Award winners are determined by an independent panel of judges based on execution of design, craftsmanship, attention to detail, safety, and other considerations.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540