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JCJ and Moody Nolan's UConn. rec center wins NIRSA award

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HARTFORD, CT According to JCJ Architecture, The Student Recreation Center at the University of Connecticut (UConn.) has been recognized as an Outstanding Facility of Merit in the 2021 NIRSA Awards.

In 2015, UConn. selected the team of JCJ Architecture and Moody Nolan to undertake design for a new student recreation center. In support of its institutional mission to embrace diversity and cultivate leadership, integrity, and engaged citizenship, the new rec center has transformed the institution's ability to offer comprehensive programs and services that foster inclusion, personal growth, and wellness for all members of the campus community. Occupying a site at the epicenter of the 105-acre Storrs campus, this new 191,000 s/f facility replaces the existing 25,000 s/f rec center opened in August 2019.

"This project gave us the opportunity to work closely with the students, faculty and staff at UConn. and to create an exciting facility that meets the needs of this dynamic institution," said James LaPosta, Jr., FAIA, LEED AP, chief architectural officer at JCJ. "We are thrilled to have the team's work recognized by NIRSA because of their focus on promoting the very best in design and innovative programs for collegiate recreation."

The new facility includes a 20,000 s/f fitness center; activity spaces for cardiovascular and strength training; racquetball courts; a four-court volleyball/basketball gymnasium and a two-court MAC gym; a running track; a 7,000 s/f aquatics center; fitness studios; climbing center with bouldering wall and 58' climbing wall; outdoor adventure center; and flexible space for events and activities for the students and the greater UConn. community. Knowing that student needs are constantly evolving, the space was specifically designed to be adaptable to new programs.

Based on empirical and anecdotal evidence, the rec center has achieved the program's goal of creating a welcoming, accessible and inclusive environment and an exciting and highly functional campus destination.

The NIRSA Outstanding Facilities Awards annually recognize innovative design of new, renovated, or expanded collegiate recreational facilities. The awards honor facilities that demonstrate

excellence in a number of critical areas, including architectural design, functionality, and how well the facility meets its intended purpose. Winning facilities exemplify the institution's commitment to providing the higher education experience desired and valued by students. Winning facilities are considered a standard by which other collegiate recreational facilities should be measured and from which others can benefit.

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