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Burt Hill designs Pell Marine Library at URI's GSO campus

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Boston architecture firm, Burt Hill designed the new 50,000 s/f, \$14 million, LEED certified Pell Marine Library facility at the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography (GSO). The Pell Marine Library, an oceanographic information and technology center is also the home to Robert Ballard, who discovered the wrecks of the RMS Titanic. Ballard, who has recently become an exploration celebrity, hopes the newly designed Pell Marine Library will allow him to establish a satellite downlink center that would handle information from research expeditions, national marine sanctuaries, and the International Ocean Drilling Program.

Burt Hill's Boston office was hired to renovate the existing Pell Library, but also to design a new multifunction facility to accommodate the GSO's changing programmatic needs. The Boston team was contracted for its architecture, engineering, interior design, landscape architecture and sustainable design expertise. The new facility will integrate library and educational functions, administration, research, and social activity into a center that provides a new campus focal point.

The Gilbane Building Co. broke ground on the project in April and construction is expected to be completed in spring 2009.

The Pell Marine Library has been an essential facility to faculty, staff, graduate students and of course Ballard, and Burt Hill has been tasked with creating a fresh, sustainable design that will facilitate increased interaction among members of the Narragansett Bay campus community, and to provide state-of-the-art resources necessary to carry out the research and educational mission of GSO. The Pell Marine Library will set a new benchmark for oceanography technology, where URI scientists and students can participate in ocean-going research expeditions without leaving campus.

The facility will have the following attributes:

- Occupancy sensors and lighting controls to reduce energy use
- Stormwater infiltration system
- Landscape with drought tolerant
- Native plantings including no-mow grass species.

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