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Univ. of Southern Maine's 101,000 s/f residence hall to receive LEED Gold

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The University of Southern Maine's new residence hall has received LEED Gold Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council for its environmentally responsible design. The new 296-bed, 101,000 s/f residence hall located at USM Gorham was designed by Harriman, and constructed by JCN Construction.

It is the first residence hall in Maine to receive LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Certification. USM has three other LEED Certified buildings, including the Abromson Community Education Center, which was the first project in the state to receive Gold Certification; the John Mitchell Center, which was the first university project in the state to receive LEED certification; and the Child Care Center with a LEED Silver Certification.

The certification is based on strict environmental criteria related to site development and the careful use of energy, water, and materials to minimize the building's impact on the environment.

Some of the LEED features incorporated into the USM residence hall are:

- * Energy-efficient plumbing fixtures to conserve water.
- * Zero use of CFC-based refrigerants in HVAC systems.
- * Energy-efficient electrical metering to promote and monitor energy with 50% of the energy supplied to the building coming from renewable resources.
- * 10% of building materials are of post-recycled content and 20% of building materials and products are manufactured locally.
- * A permanent temperature and humidity monitoring system and use of paints and carpets that have a low or zero content of solvents harmful to the atmosphere.

The \$21 million project was financed through room fees, not state dollars.

The residence hall accommodates 296 students in suites and apartment-styled units and features study lounges and meeting rooms; recycling locations on each floor; and a game room and outside terrace for student gatherings. The hall also has a live-in faculty member who, with students, coordinates programs centered on environmental issues.

This is Harriman's fifth project to earn LEED certification -- the first was USM's John Mitchell Center in 2005, which was also the first University project in Maine to receive certification, and the first to be designed by a Maine architecture and engineering firm.

Other team members include Sebago Technics who provided landscape architectural design services; DeLuca Hoffman who provided civil engineering design services; and JCN Construction who served as the general contractor.