

Facts & Figures

Owner: Waubonsee Community College

Type of Project: A new science building on a community college campus

Size: 46,590 square feet

Cost: \$14.7 million

Construction Time: September 2004 - August 2006

The Need: A new science facility at the college to meet the needs of current and future students

The Challenge: Building in an occupied campus environment and staying within budget



Holabird&Root LLC
Architect

Turner Construction Company
Construction Manager

Applied Controls Inc.
Building Automation Systems

The Hoelter Companies, Inc.
Facilities Equipment

Marcel Electric, Inc.
Electrical Contractor

Turner

Sugar Grove, Illinois

Science Building — Waubonsee Community College

Waubonsee Community College kicked off a year-long 40th-anniversary celebration during an open house and grand opening ceremony for its new science building. The state-of-the-art facility was part of the college's master plan and was constructed in order to meet the needs of current and future students.

The 46,590-square-foot, two-story facility carefully blends in with the surrounding buildings on the campus, but still maintains its own identity. "The choice of exterior building materials and massing of the building were developed to be sympathetic to the existing campus buildings but take on a more contemporary look," said Dennis Vovos, project manager for Holabird&Root LLC, one of the project's architects. In addition, since a majority of students drive to school, an important part of the design was to develop a sense of arrival that allows the facility to act as a connector from the parking area to other campus buildings. In addition, the facility has an interior public corridor leading to a bridge that connects to Akerlow Hall, an existing campus building.

According to Waubonsee Community College, the building was uniquely designed to facilitate teaching and learning in the fields of biology, chemistry, earth science, geography and geology. Inside, the facility features four tiered, lecture-style classrooms with media-ready instructor stations and wireless access with laptops for student use. The building boasts a variety of laboratory space, including chemistry, earth science, microbiology, anatomy and physiology laboratories.

The facility's interior design is based on supporting active learning by providing spaces that are flexible and that also support hands-on learning. Teaching laboratories are provided with movable tables to allow for lecture or group activities. The large lecture halls are configured to allow students to interact with one another as well as with the instructor.

The building offers many custom educational features that increase student involvement in the classroom such as a weather station, a seismograph, a Fourier transform infrared spectrometer, a gas chromatograph, and an overhead camera system in the anatomy and physiology laboratories, which allows for more students to participate in detailed cadaver study. In addition, the building boasts a thermocycler to analyze deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and a fossil preparation lab with more than 100 specimens of minerals, rocks, fossils and shells, enabling students to analyze field samples.

According to Vovos, the project team was challenged to deliver a successful project within a very limited budget. "Close cooperation [among] the design team,

contractor and owner allowed for the project to be completed on time and within the established budget while maximizing value for the college," he said.

Another challenge, according to Jim Clair, project executive for Turner Construction Company, the project's construction manager, was building in an occupied campus environment. One example, according to Clair, involved the utility infrastructure, which required upgrades and expansion within the adjacent central plant. The process required flawless coordination and sequencing from the project team members to maintain power and HVAC to the existing campus buildings without interrupting classes, pedestrian traffic flow and campus operations.

Successfully completed in August 2006, the new building significantly increases classroom and laboratory space for Waubonsee Community College's science programs, which are in high demand. Furthermore, the state-of-the-art facility provides students with hands-on learning not previously available at the college. ■

— Stacey Nathanson



Photo courtesy of Ballogg Photography