

Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce

HIGHER EDUCATION



May 29, 2025



A shared lounge, cooking and dining space on each residential floor support community and affordability at UCLA Gayley Towers.

IMAGE BY BRICK VISUAL FOR MITHUN

INNOVATIONS IN AFFORDABLE URBAN CAMPUS HOUSING

Universities are leveraging co-housing models and shared food preparation to better address affordability and the complex needs of today's students.

Universities are facing progressive challenges in the effort to offer affordable access to higher education for new generations of students. Housing affordability stands out as a fundamental obstacle given dramatic increases in the cost of both on- and off-campus housing, leaving many students without options to pursue their educational goals.



BY BRENDAN
CONNOLLY
MITHUN

Escalating rental rates are particularly amplified in urban areas where housing stock is limited and in high demand.

Urban housing pressure is being felt locally at campuses like the University of Washington and Seattle University, and it's driving campus and urban planning across the nation.

UCLA is a prime example of the student housing affordability crisis, and also the potential for innovation. Median rents in the Westwood area of Los Angeles rose dramatically in the last decade, with the average rent for a three-bedroom unit currently \$8250 — 55% higher than it was three years



Nuevo West is a residential community serving UC San Diego graduate students and patients undergoing treatment at the adjacent university medical center.

PHOTO BY BRUCE DAMONTE

ago. Like many universities, UCLA has been forced to address this problem head-on with novel solutions. To fulfill their housing guarantee, UCLA has created more than 4,500 new student

beds in the last decade, a significant increase in overall campus housing capacity but still at price points that remain out of reach for many students. To meet the highest tier of economic need at UCLA and other similar institutions of higher educa-

tion, a new affordable campus housing solution and approach is needed.

A NEW APPROACH TO A GROWING NEED

With only 400 acres and

more than 47,000 undergraduate and graduate students, UCLA is the most dense University of California campus and one of the most urban universities in the country. Space on campus is limited for new expansion possibilities. So, increasingly, the

university, like many institutions, looks to its campus-edge urban fabric to meet needed housing capacities.

Gayley Towers, a new affordable co-housing project under construction across the street from campus, is one such project prototype. Gayley Towers will deliver 585 student beds in an experimental new cooperative housing model that is based on shared meals and vertically integrated student community clusters.

At its core purpose, this “first of” co-housing project was envisioned to bridge the gap for the highest-need students, creating rent structures as low as \$600/month to allow students access to quality and affordable housing that is commensurate in quality with all campus housing offerings.

NO DEAD ENDS

To do this, the project needed to be highly efficient in organization and utilization of its tight urban site. Gayley Towers is organized to optimize a mid-rise construction limit with eight stories organized around a ringed circulation system that encloses an open-air courtyard.

This approach not only yields the greatest number of beds, it also affords protection and respite for students from urban noise and activity. The courtyard oasis provides daylight access to units and a key opportunity to connect students with nature in an urban environment.

The continuous circulation path minimizes needed stairs and avoids dead ends, so that no students are isolated at the end of long, linear corridors. This connected circuit of movement ties back at each floor to a study commons and kitchen area — the key communal program block that unites students through gathering and food.

FOOD AS FOUNDATION

Food is fundamental to student success. According to recent reports by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, roughly 3.8 million or 23 percent of college students experienced food insecurity in 2020, a condition that has arguably worsened since then due to more recent economic strain. These issues are coupled with other elements of depression, anxiety and academic stress, requiring a careful approach to creating a sense of belonging and support for diverse students.

After significant outreach and exploration of program options, Gayley Towers

adopted a unique co-housing, shared food preparation strategy to create social cohesion and support. By gathering each floor of 75 students in a food-making tradition in a shared space, this model will help to overcome food insecurity by allowing students the choice to bypass traditional meal plans and bond with other students through food preparation and gathering. Each floor contains three distinct cooking stations, and each residential unit is designed with extra space to accommodate personal secure food storage.

NOURISHING BLENDED ECONOMIC, EMOTIONAL NEEDS

The union of housing affordability and shared food preparation is also at the center of another unique campus housing project at UC San Diego that explored co-housing in a different context. UC San Diego’s Nuevo West is a unique blended housing precinct that unites graduate and professional students with a non-profit housing assistance program called the La Jolla Family House that provides short- and medium-term housing for families in need who are caring for loved ones undergoing cancer treatments at neighboring UCSD medical facilities.

At the center of this blended user mix is a shared kitchen that serves as a community fulcrum for the program. Families experiencing trauma with their loved ones participate in food preparation with students and volunteer groups who converge to help prepare meals. This nexus of shared food creates community cohesion, enables healing for families and fosters empathy among medical and professional students who engage in real-time connections with the families and patients they serve.

The model for this community kitchen parallels the Gayley Tower idea, with multiple cooking platforms, flexible preparation space and securable food storage to enable comfort and security for all users while catalyzing community building.

Nuevo West creates a new gateway at the UC San Diego campus edge, and this symbolic and real blending of users with emotional and economic need is a fitting reflection of the complex roles that universities play in our world. As pressures mount across the nation to sustain institutions of higher learning against economic and political forces, innovative affordable housing



The open-air courtyard at Gayley Towers is designed for study or social gatherings, while improving daylight access to residential units.

IMAGE BY BRICK VISUAL FOR MITHUN

solutions like Nuevo West and Gayley Towers provide insight into new ways that campuses are addressing their futures.

By thinking vertically and combining diverse users, and centering the human experience around protected shared spaces and communion through food, these solutions transcend simple equations of bed count to create new relevance and impact on campus. Together, they highlight the exciting potential of more meaningful investment in residential space and resources to address affordability and well-being through adaptable and inclusive thinking on campus, and throughout our cities.

Brendan Connolly is a partner at Mithun and a champion of integrated, multidisciplinary design thinking for higher education, k-12 schools, environmental education and cultural projects.

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ON THE COVER

Common collaboration rooms throughout Western Washington University’s new Kaiser Borsari Hall feature exposed glulam columns and beams, and expansive campus and forest views.

PHOTO BY KEVIN SCOTT

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A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO CAMPUS BUILDING RENEWAL

How UW is Working with Miller Hull to tackle deferred maintenance with smarter planning.



BY ELIZABETH MOGGIO & MICHAEL HELMER

MILLER HULL

The University of Washington's Seattle campus, where over 200 academic and research buildings were evaluated as part of the Building Renewal Program.



IMAGES COURTESY OF MILLER HULL

Every institution has its ticking clocks. At the University of Washington, one of the loudest is the growing backlog of deferred renewal needs across more than 200 buildings on its Seattle campus. These aging facilities increasingly threaten UW's ability to support its core mission of education and research. In 2020, a comprehensive facility condition assessment confirmed the scope of the problem and the risk it poses.

UW is not alone. Across the country, higher education institutions are grappling with the challenge of maintaining aging infrastructure amid budget constraints and increasing expectations for performance, sustainability and resilience. But instead of reacting to problems as they arise, UW is reframing the issue with a proactive and data-informed Campus Renewal Program.

Working alongside the university, Miller Hull helped develop a strategic, long-range planning tool that maps a path forward — one that ties facilities decisions to academic priorities, financial realities and long-term campus goals. The approach offers a new model for capital planning in higher education: measurable, adaptable and mission-aligned.

FROM DATA TO DIRECTION

The Campus Renewal Program began with a large and unwieldy dataset: the results of UW's facility condition assessment, which identified the lifecycle and renewal needs of thousands of assets and calculated the Facility Condition Needs Index (FCNI) for buildings across campus. While the index gave a baseline view of deferred maintenance, we found that the data could only take us so far and that we needed additional inputs

to develop an actionable plan.

We layered in additional data: academic and research use, sustainability goals, building performance, cost data from recent capital projects and input from campus stakeholders. The result is an asset-based model that accounts not just for a building's condition but for its value to the institution.

To make this information accessible and actionable, our team developed a custom visualization and decision-making tool in Tableau — a widely used data visualization platform. This tool aggregates multiple datasets and proposes a plan of action for each building — repair, renovation, or removal — while modeling different funding and timeline scenarios. Every decision can be adjusted to reflect institutional priorities, available capital, surge space and decarbonization goals.

The tool outlines both 10-year and 25-year implementation strategies, with a longer-term goal: to significantly reduce UW's deferred renewal risk by 2050. It's a living plan — updated regularly,

and responsive to change.

A collaborative process

Key to the program's success was early and consistent engagement with stakeholders. Through a series of collaborative workshops, UW planners, facilities leaders and academic representatives worked together to identify priorities across the 25-year horizon. These sessions helped the team account for more than just data — they addressed the nuances of capital budgets, phasing constraints and shifting academic demands.

This stakeholder-driven process surfaced critical campus dynamics: where surge space would be needed to enable phased renovations, which projects had the most alignment with the university's research goals and how to anticipate which funding sources might change over time.

THE BUILDING RENEWAL TOOL

The Tableau-based visualization tool was developed not just to inform the initial plan but to empower ongoing decision making. The deliver-

ables include a user manual, allowing UW to update the tool internally as buildings age, new data becomes available, or institutional priorities shift.

This tool provides university leadership with the ability to:

- Visualize campus-wide data trends and hot spots
- Simulate and evaluate various funding and phasing strategies
- Align facilities investments with academic mission and sustainability targets
- Support multi-disciplinary decision-making with shared metrics.

The tool allows capital planning to become strategic, transparent and adaptive, rather than reactive.

PLANNING WITH PURPOSE

One of the most powerful outcomes of this effort has been a shift in institutional mindset. Instead of focusing exclusively on growth — new buildings, more square footage — the Campus Renewal Program encourages smarter planning with what already

exists. The question is no longer “what do we build next?” but “how do we take better care of what we have?”

In an era of limited resources, this pivot is critical. It enables UW to prioritize projects that deliver the greatest long-term impact, not just the ones with immediate visibility or political appeal. It also gives university leadership a common language — and common data — to make the case for reinvestment in existing infrastructure.

LESSONS FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS

The approach taken by UW and our team offers useful insights for other universities facing similar challenges. Among the most important lessons:

Start with the big picture. Deferred maintenance isn't just a facilities problem; it's a mission risk. Framing the issue in terms of long-term institutional goals helps elevate it as a strategic priority.

Don't stop at the quantitative data. While quantitative assessments like FCNI are essential, they don't capture

the full value or potential of a building. Qualitative input — academic mission, stakeholder knowledge, program value — is equally critical.

Engage early. Bringing in voices from across the institution — from facilities and operations to academic leaders and sustainability teams — ensures the plan is grounded in shared priorities.

Take an asset-based approach that results in the best outcome for each facility, regardless of current use and program. Academic needs change over time, and a poor building today could become a great building for someone else in the future.

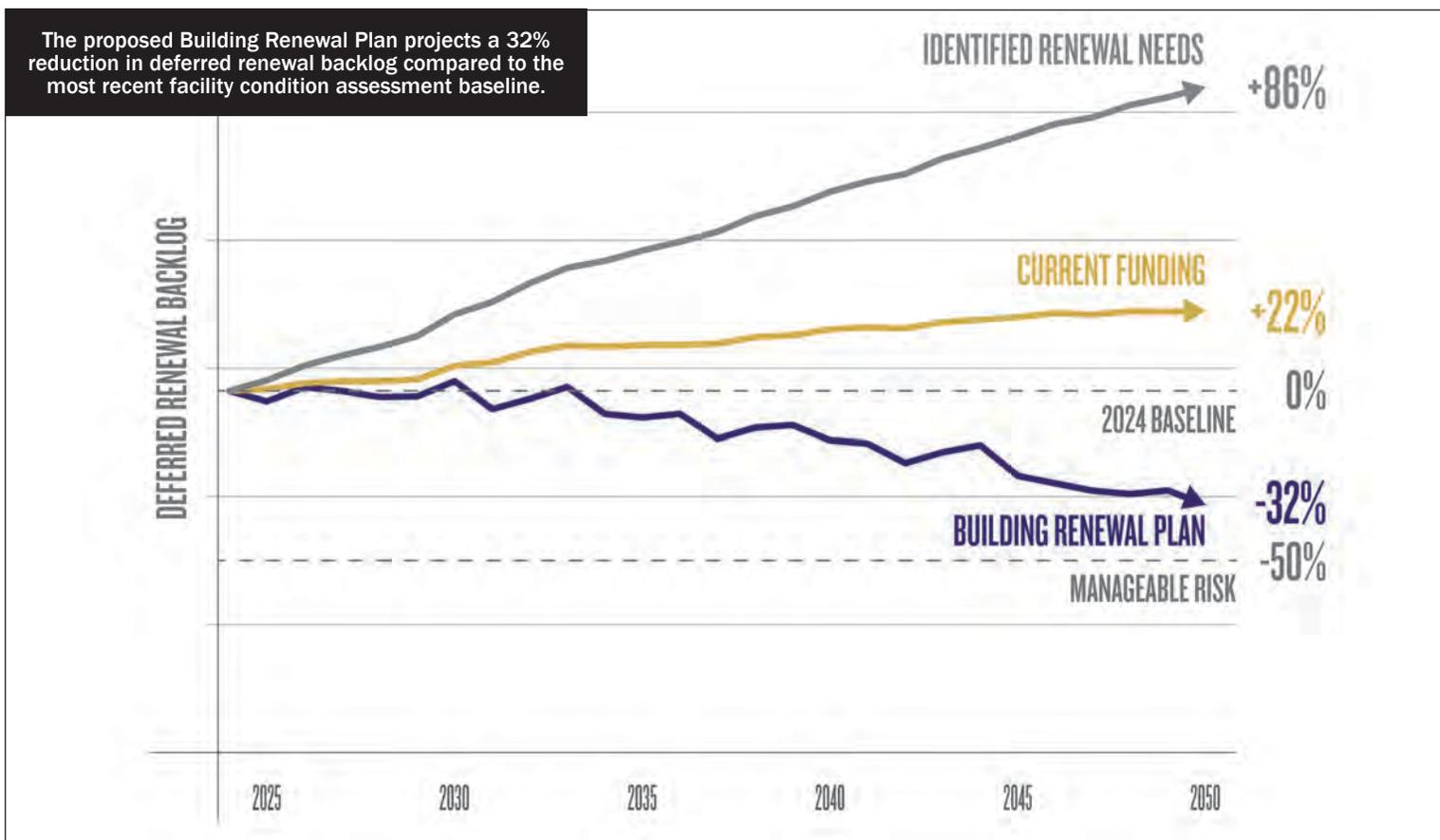
Visual tools matter. Interactive dashboards not only help planners make decisions but also help them communicate those decisions clearly across departments.

Be flexible. The model should be designed to evolve. Institutions change, funding shifts and facilities age in unexpected ways. A usable tool is one that adapts.

LOOKING AHEAD

As universities continue to face tightening budgets and rising expectations, smart

The proposed Building Renewal Plan projects a 32% reduction in deferred renewal backlog compared to the most recent facility condition assessment baseline.



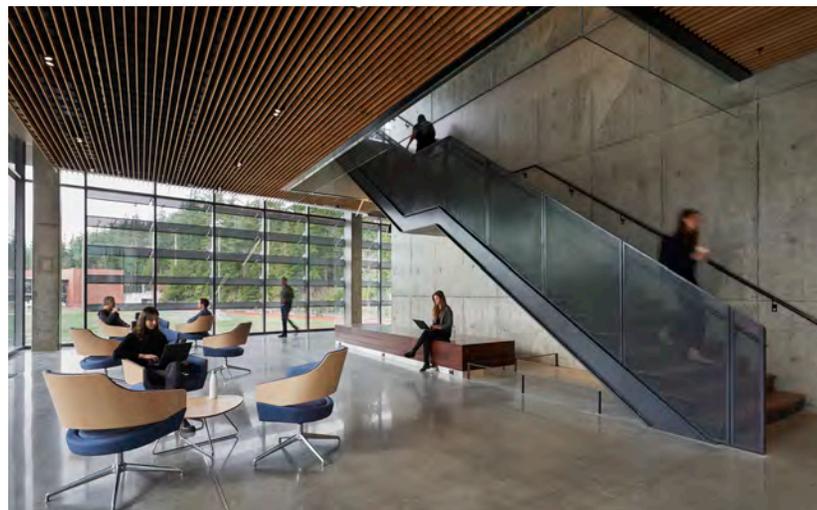
planning will be more important than ever. The University of Washington's Campus Renewal Program represents a shift away from reactionary capital planning and toward

something more intentional: a system that helps the university care for what it has, align facilities with mission and plan confidently for the future.

We believe this approach can serve as a roadmap not just for UW but for other institutions seeking to transform deferred maintenance from a liability into a long-

term opportunity. Elizabeth Moggio is a principal at the Miller Hull Partnership. Michael Helmer is a project architect at the Miller Hull Partnership.

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MAXIMIZING VALUE THROUGH PROGRESSIVE DESIGN-BUILD DELIVERY

A collaborative, value-driven approach is shaping WSU's 65,000-square-foot Schweitzer Engineering Hall, the future home of the Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture on the university's Pullman campus.



BY JOSHUA THOMSON & SARA HOWELL
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Washington State University's Schweitzer Engineering Hall will become the new cornerstone of a planned engineering and architecture district when doors open to students in 2026.

As the future gateway to the Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture on the Pullman campus, it's also a model for how progressive design-build delivery can maximize value for project owners while creating a shared sense of ownership for project teams across disciplines.

From the start, the team led by Lease Crutcher Lewis and ZGF Architects established a governance structure rooted in transparency and shared decision-making. Weekly "Big Room" meetings, held in person or virtually, allowed all project team stakeholders to address challenges early, iterate on the design, and stay closely aligned across disciplines.

While advancing the design, the entire project team also worked out of a single fully coordinated, fabrication-ready digital model updated in real time with the aim of eliminating rework and driving field efficiency.

Instead of using a traditional Request for Information system, or RFIs, where team members ask one another questions about specific aspects of a project, the wider group is using Lewis' Collaborative Design Resolution (CDR) tool, where comments are posted in a live work environment for everyone to contribute to, and where the project team resolves questions collectively.

NAVIGATING THE TERRAIN: FINANCIAL

Early in the design process, the team used Target Value Design principles and benchmarking to ensure that the



The building was carefully nested into a hillside to minimize costly excavation, and designed as a simple and highly efficient 144-by-144-foot 'perfect square' to maximize structural efficiency.

RENDERINGS BY ZGF ARCHITECTS

program fit within cost constraints.

The project team has embraced a strategy of prioritizing the construction of the shell and core, along with as much interior space as possible, while preserving unused contingency funds to complete unfinished shell areas. This approach relies on ongoing risk mitigation to maximize value as the project progresses.

The result is a phased delivery plan in which the ground floor (Level G) and Level 1 is fully built out, while the completion of Level 2 is tied to savings realized through careful contingency management.

At the outset, we committed to building out 50 percent of the interior space on Level 2. By the time we reached GMP, that number had grown to 59 percent. We've continued to fund more of the Level 2 buildout by mitigating risks and meeting key milestones as a way to meaningfully reinvest in the project. We've now committed to the full completion of the building and achieving 100 percent of the build-out on Level 2 for the 65,000-square-foot facility.

During the design process, we also identified a list of betterments — or desired program features beyond the core project requirements — that could be added as bud-

get and risk allowed. One such betterment, a coffee kiosk, was recently reincorporated into the plan and will be operated by a local vendor.

NAVIGATING THE TERRAIN: PHYSICAL

A few tailored approaches to the project's structural design have helped maximize value to the university.

The building's form, a simple and highly efficient 144-by-144-foot 'perfect square', maximizes structural efficiency by designing to standard bay sizes. (In structural design, a "bay" refers to the span between vertical columns and horizontal beams.) The team was able to limit costs for steel fabrication and realize schedule savings for steel erection.

To maintain visual consistency across the building's exterior, the team took a pragmatic approach to the design of the steel columns. While the lower levels required robust, load-bearing members, the upper floors need significantly less structural support. In response, separate and tapered steel columns are used on higher floors.

Another early design priority was determining how to nest the building into the hillside along South Spokane

Street while minimizing costly excavation into the basalt layer discovered beneath the site.

One of the advantages of the early big-room collaboration model was being able to partner closely with the geotechnical and civil engineering teams to develop a strategy that turned site constraints into design opportunities.

The project's largest classroom will be tiered to follow the natural slope of the hill, allowing the rear of the room to sit higher without requiring additional excavation. Similarly, an adjacent mechanical room was positioned at a higher elevation to align with the terrain and to avoid having to dig into solid rock.

This approach not only reduced site work costs but also freed up budget that can be reinvested into betterments like higher-value architectural finishes, most notably in shared spaces like the central "living room."

IMBUING THE DESIGN WITH JOY

Early in the Project Confirmation Phase — the period for ensuring that a building is sized appropriately for the target cost and its programming and design requirements — we felt a strong desire to fit as much into the building's program

as possible within the available budget. The focus was on efficiency and maximizing every square foot. However, as the team worked through early plan diagrams, it became clear that something essential was missing from the program: joy.

When it came time to think about design, the team began asking deeper questions: What would the building feel like when someone walked in? What would create a meaningful and welcoming experience? This sparked a series of conversations about how to go beyond simply fitting in desired program components and instead creating an environment that evoked inspiration, energy and a sense of belonging.

To define what would make the space joyful, the team identified several key characteristics after surveying key project stakeholders: front-door experience, volume, light, visibility, wayfinding, coffee (!), materiality and furniture (accessible seating with integrated power sources). There was also a desire to add smaller pockets of open collaboration space throughout the building to appeal to different working and learning styles.

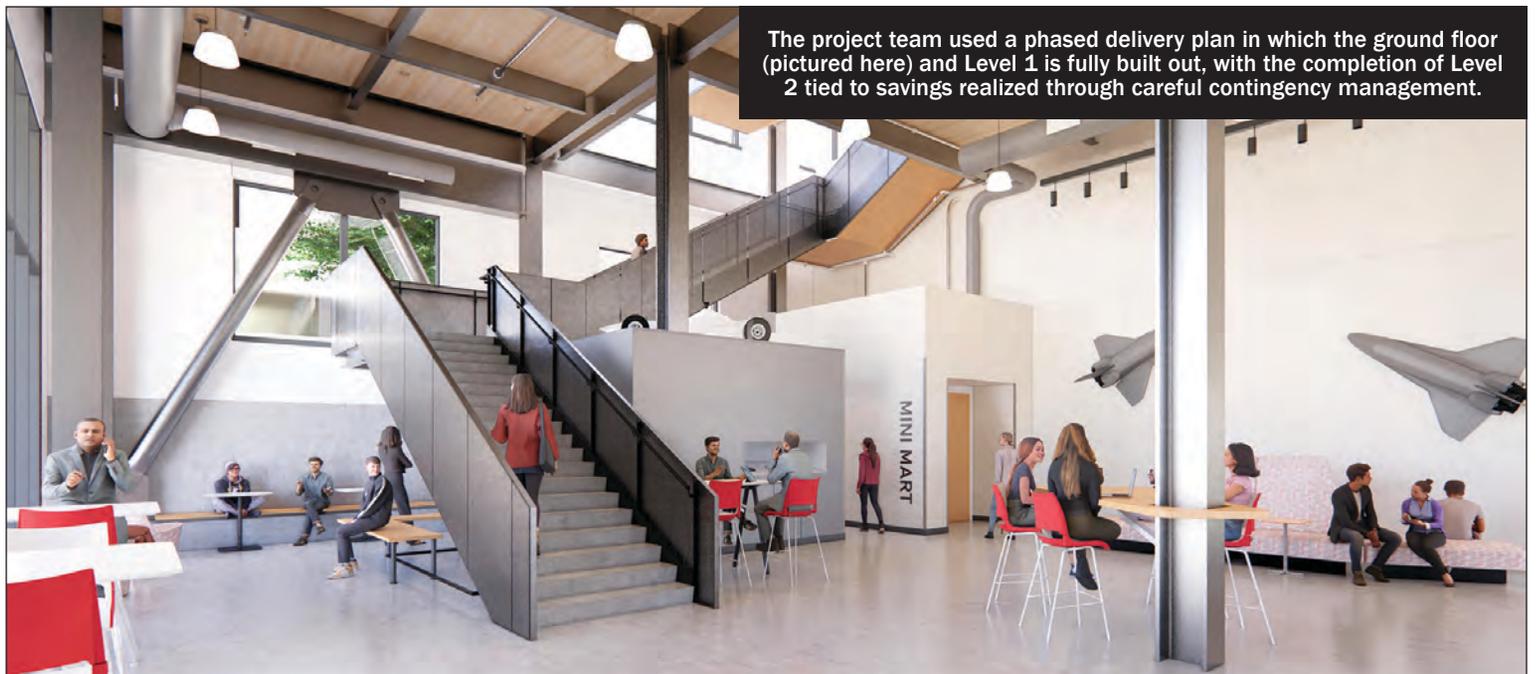
A major outcome of these conversations is a new central collaboration area planned near the entrances. This space has grown sig-

nificantly in scale and importance and was nicknamed the “heart” or “living room” of the building. It’s envisioned as an open, flexible zone where students could gather, work together and connect.

As part of this approach, the team prioritized creating visual and spatial connections linking the different program elements, as well as openness and intuitive way-finding. Examples include corridors that visually guide users where they need to go, like a learning center whose door is visible even from the far side of the space.

Furniture was seen as a critical tool for shaping space and circulation. Freestanding furnishings will help define zones without needing walls, while whiteboards will provide surfaces for spontaneous collaboration. This layering of flexibility and choice will empower user groups to shape their environment.

The steep grade along South Spokane Street also informed ZGF’s response to one of the most important project goals: creating a welcoming front door. The design team created two welcoming entry points: one on Southeast Spokane Street for students and the engineering community, and



The project team used a phased delivery plan in which the ground floor (pictured here) and Level 1 is fully built out, with the completion of Level 2 tied to savings realized through careful contingency management.

another entry mid-block along Northeast College Avenue for the broader university communities.

These entries are designed not only to invite people in, but also to orient them if they decide to walk through the building. A central feature stair draws visitors upward through the heart of the building, creating a clear, intuitive path that effectively navigates the grade. The design team used exposed

cross-laminated timber decking (CLT) in the public-facing lobbies on both level G and the first floors to bring warmth and continuity between the levels.

FUNCTIONAL ENGINEERING ON DISPLAY

Collectively, the team explored how exposed building systems and structural elements themselves could

contribute to the experience of learning, teaching and working in the building. Concepts like “engineering on display” informed decisions to expose structural elements, cross-laminated timber ceilings and MEP systems throughout.

Structural designers from Coughlin Porter Lundeen created design expressions for exposed brace frames and trusses in the building’s largest classroom. Engineer-

ing, architecture, and construction management students will now have tangible opportunities to learn about loads, spans and connections.

These elements have become an integral part of the building’s fabric.

Schweitzer Engineering Hall’s structure is now complete and enclosure work—including brick, glazing

DESIGN-BUILD DELIVERY — PAGE 18



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INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF HIGHER ED INNOVATORS

WWU's Kaiser Borsari Hall becomes first mass timber higher-ed STEM building in the U.S. to pursue Zero Energy and Zero Carbon certifications.



BY JENNIFER KIM & PAIGE ADKINSON MORTENSON



All classrooms have extensive access to natural daylight. CLT ceilings, mechanical systems and "cloud" installations improve acoustics.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN SCOTT

As college campuses strive to meet decarbonization goals while expanding facilities as efficiently and cost-consciously as possible, university decision-makers are increasingly considering mass timber as a viable construction material. Given its inherent environmental and speed-to-market advantages, mass timber utilization has accelerated in recent years, including here in the Pacific Northwest, and

for good reason.

Last fall, Mortenson delivered Kaiser Borsari Hall, a 60,000-square-foot, \$53

million mass-timber facility on the campus of Western Washington University in Bellingham. The project is

the U.S.'s first mass timber STEM building to pursue Zero Energy and Zero Carbon Certifications. After collecting 12 months of operational data, it will officially receive certification through the International Living Future Institute's rigorous sustainable design standards as an

alternative pathway to Washington State's LEED Silver minimum requirement.

A LIVING LABORATORY

Designed by Perkins&Will's Seattle studio, the new electrical engineering and computer science facility com-

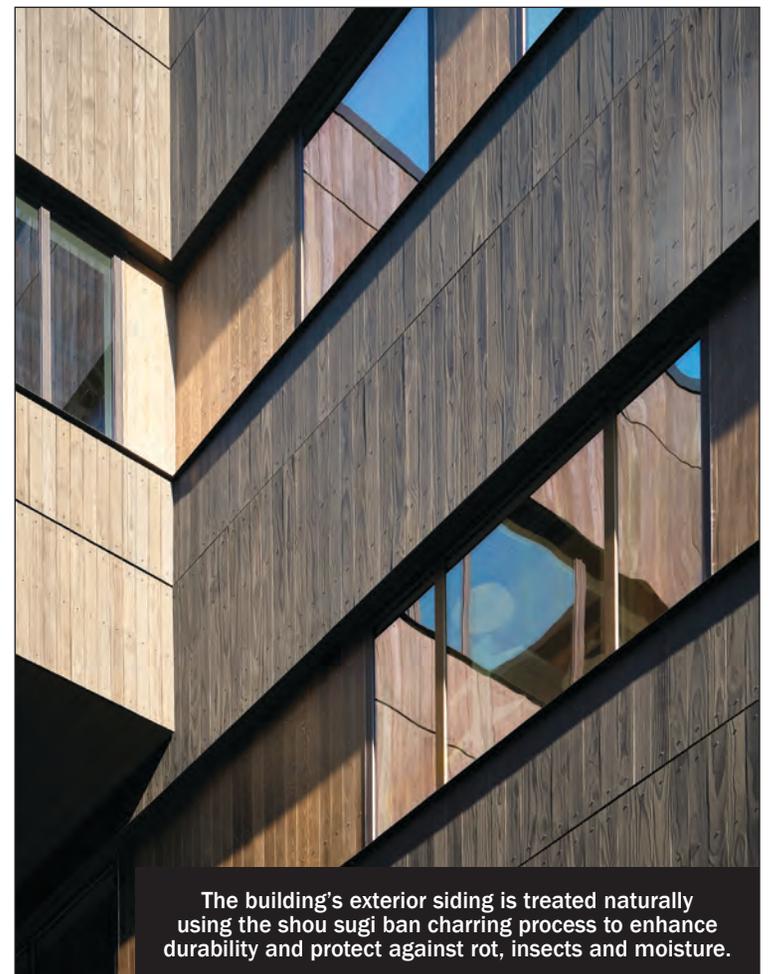
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The building's exterior siding is treated naturally using the shou sugi ban charring process to enhance durability and protect against rot, insects and moisture.

bines the electrical, computer engineering and energy studies departments into a single standalone facility. It creates multidisciplinary learning environments with state-of-the-art teaching and collaboration spaces, research labs, and administrative offices in a “living laboratory” to inspire the next generation of innovators.

During the project’s design, WWU’s aspirational sustainability certification goals quickly became foundational to the team’s execution, where Mortenson and our partners dove into determining pathways to reduce the building’s operational and embodied carbon.

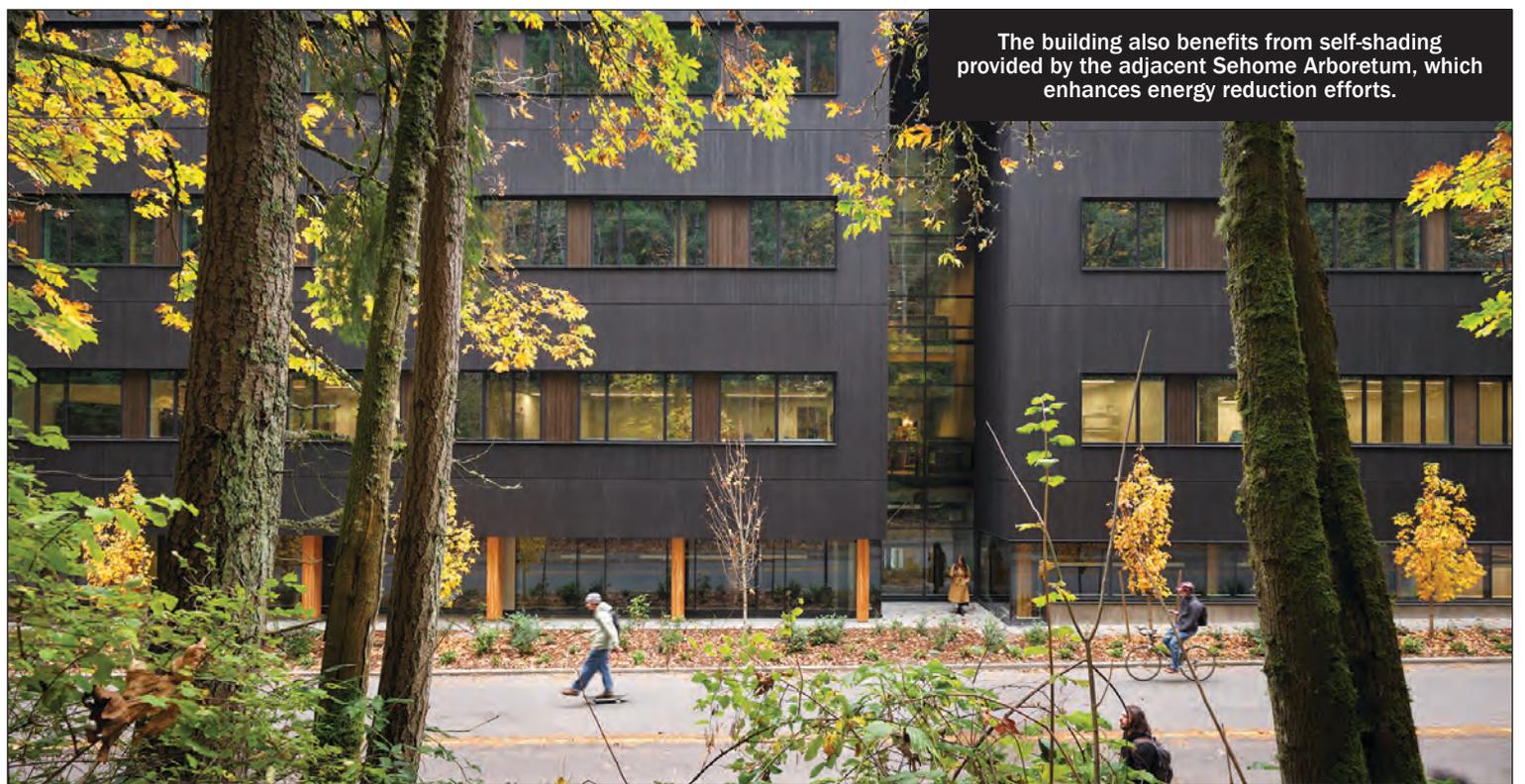
MASS TIMBER FOR DECARBONIZATION

Like WWU, many other higher-ed institutions have started investigating the use of mass timber as a step towards decarbonization. This exceptionally sustainable and renewable resource decreases reliance on carbon-intensive materials such as concrete and steel. Additional benefits include faster structural construction, reduced need for interior finishes, and the visual aesthetic of exposed timber.

Mass timber is available in various forms, including glue-laminated timber (glulam) and cross-laminated timber (CLT), used in many of today’s sustainable commercial and public-sector buildings. The timber used for the WWU project is sustainably harvested within 600 miles of the site, ensuring sustainable forestry practices and minimal transportation emissions. The team realized further carbon and cost savings through the lightweight mass timber structure that minimized the concrete required for the building’s foundations.

Mass timber typically allows for a faster, more efficient construction process, mainly because the material is prefabricated off-site. According to Construction Today Magazine, the “controlled environment of a factory allows for precision cutting in mass timber elements, eliminating the need for extensive on-site modifications,” an essential factor in reducing waste and other bottom-line impacts.

Some studies show that mass timber projects are built 25 percent faster than concrete while accommodating MEP installation much earlier than traditionally built projects. This enables general contractors and clients to compress building timelines and minimize disruption



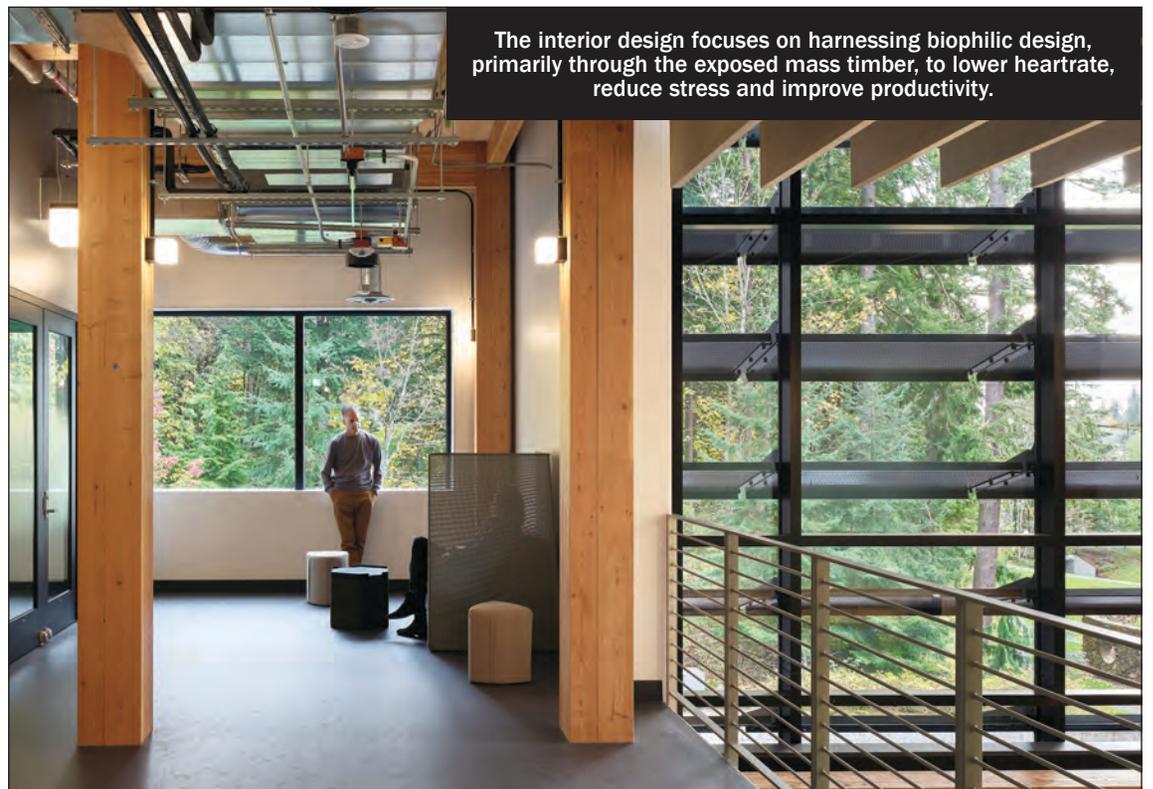
The building also benefits from self-shading provided by the adjacent Sehome Arboretum, which enhances energy reduction efforts.

to students, professors, and the higher education learning experience.

Natural wood for well-being Once a mass timber project is finished, its biophilic design — underscored by the use of natural wood elements exposed throughout the structure — creates a calm aesthetic that has been shown to enhance the engagement of students and their instructors. The Wood Products Council’s Biophilic Design LookBook cites biophilic design as boosting “occupant well-being through connection to nature and the use of natural elements like daylight, plants, water, and exposed wood,” helping to reduce stress and raise productivity.

One of Kaiser Borsari Hall’s signature features is its design harmonization with the surrounding Sehome Arboretum and the many psychological and physiological health benefits offered to students and their professors. Perkins&Will leveraged mass timber to employ a concept called Forest Bathing, which can lower blood pressure and heart rate and positively affect various human immune functions.

Inspired by the arboretum, the building’s exterior wood siding was treated naturally using a “shou sugi ban” charring process. This eases the visual transition of students and teachers as they circle between the natural and built environments. The method also creates an interesting aesthetic contrast with the facility’s lighter-colored interior wood structure punctuated by exposed glulam columns, beams, and CLT ceilings.



The interior design focuses on harnessing biophilic design, primarily through the exposed mass timber, to lower heart rate, reduce stress and improve productivity.

Through these efforts, the team reduced the project’s “whole life” (operational and embodied) carbon impacts by about 90 percent compared to business-as-usual baseline lab projects, with 100 percent operational and 87 percent embodied carbon reduction.

SLASHING ENERGY CONSUMPTION

In addition to carbon reductions realized through mass timber, Mortenson and our partners disconnected the building from WWU’s Campus Steam Plant, which relies on natural gas, and converted the new facility to electric power in keeping with certification requirements. To reach this objective, our team recommended

a high-performance and low-carbon HVAC system that would reduce total energy consumption by 82 percent.

The system’s rooftop solar power generation also serves as an educational display for the building’s electrical engineering and energy studies students. In addition to the energy savings, the highly sustainable HVAC system helped contribute to millions of dollars in project cost savings during the intensive pre-construction process.

The building is the product of years of careful planning and capital fundraising on behalf of Western Washington University, and part of its broad-based commitment to creating an environmentally friendly campus environment for students,

professors and staff. The school adopted its Sustainability Action Plan in 2017, setting a goal of fully carbon neutrality by 2035. WWU is also a founder adopter of the Okanagan Charter, calling on higher education institutions to embed health and well-being into all aspects of their campus culture.

Paige Adkinson, project manager for Mortenson’s Seattle Office, oversaw the construction of Kaiser Borsari Hall. Jennifer Kim has spent most of her career leading Mortenson’s Seattle Office projects at higher education campuses across Washington, including as the project executive for WWU’s Kaiser Borsari Hall.

REVITALIZING EXISTING CAMPUS BUILDINGS TO MEET NEW STATE STANDARDS

Setting up robust monitoring systems, involving students, and showcasing retrofits can help colleges breathe new life into older buildings while cutting energy consumption and emissions.



BY BECKY BARNHART & ANTHONY SCHOEN
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Signed into law in 2019, Washington State's Clean Building Performance Standard (CBPS) implements stringent performance standards and provides incentives for early compliance to reduce emissions and promote sustainable building practices.

As signatories to the AIA 2030 Challenge, we readily embrace these ambitious targets set for architects, engineers and construction professionals. The fact that Washington state is mandating new requirements solidifies this urgent need for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption in the built environment, paving the way for a more sustainable future.

The Washington CBPS categorizes buildings into Tier 1 and Tier 2, each with specific compliance requirements. Tier 1 buildings are commercial buildings exceeding 50,000 gross square feet and require compliance with the standard from 2026-2028. Tier 2 buildings include commercial buildings between 20,000 gross square feet and 50,000 gross square feet.

Buildings over 220,000 gross square feet must be brought into compliance by June 1, 2026, those 90,001-222,000 gross square feet by June 1, 2027, and buildings 50,000-90,000 gross square feet by June 1, 2028. The CBPS presents significant compliance challenges for most higher education campuses, requiring improvements from minor upgrades to major infrastructure overhauls — efforts that rely heavily on capital funding, whether from the state for public universities or private sources for independent col-

leges.

Starting from scratch to design a new building provides a blank canvas to incorporate the latest design thinking as well as sustainable strategies and systems for energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

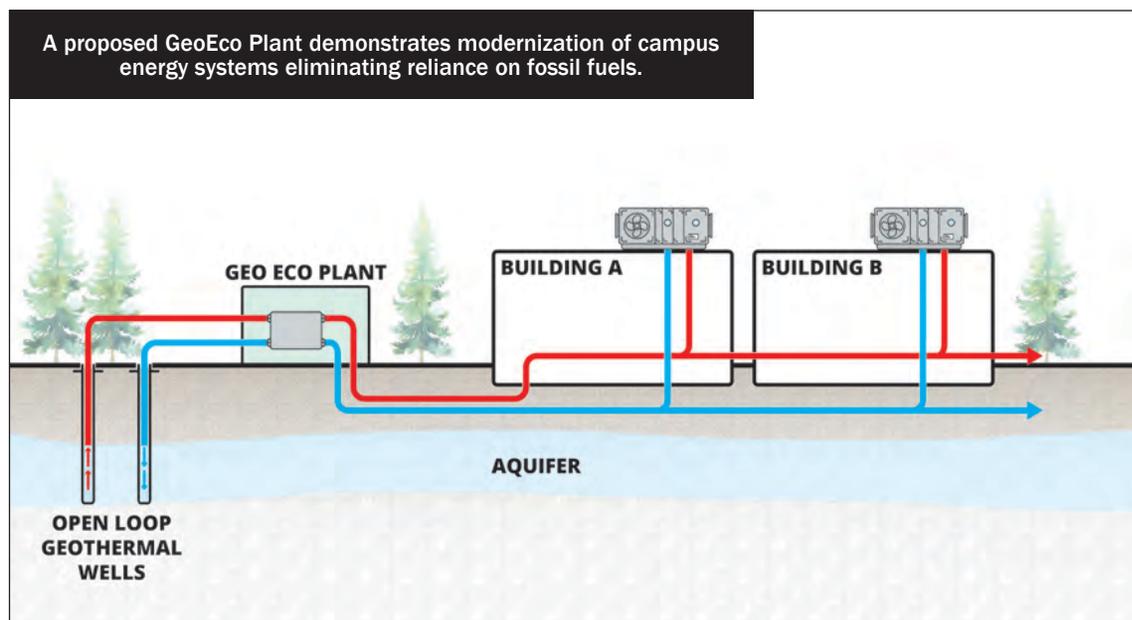
The real challenge lays in upgrading existing inventory, especially for colleges and universities with a wealth of legacy buildings. Transforming outmoded structures often requires addressing outdated and constrained spaces. It isn't just about compliance; it's about innovation, sustainability, and creating spaces that serve the future.

As designers of learning environments, we did this before regulatory requirements were in place, by establishing a roadmap for success using healthy materials and high-performance architecture to revitalize existing campus buildings. While it is exciting to have a state mandate, how do we bring all campuses to compliance—beyond those predisposed to this approach?

REVITALIZING CAMPUSES FOR A DECARBONIZED FUTURE

Integrus Architecture and MW Engineers are partnering with Whitman College and Eastern Washington University (EWU) to make plans for modernizing campus infrastructure and ultimately eliminating reliance on fossil fuel. Through collaborative efforts, we are enabling campuses to meet—and even exceed—state and institutional decarbonization standards.

Working on multiple campuses, we find many of the same challenges. These include funding issues and distilling cultural aspirations. Not surprisingly, defining “sustainability” conveys different meanings for different groups. For some, elevating campus buildings to current standards means a lower Energy Use Index (EUI). For others it is decarbonization, implementing recycling programs, or increasing building performance for efficiency,



IMAGES COURTESY OF INTEGRUS

occupant comfort and cost-effectiveness.

Through our work we have devised best practices to guide campuses on a pathway to incremental achievements or a complete Decarbonization Plan. Lessons learned in addressing these issues can be instructive for others facing similar obstacles. They include focusing on the format and output of energy production and transitioning to options like renewable energy.

Setting up robust monitoring systems that track progress, validate projected metrics and identify areas for improvement is essential. And importantly, engaging students, administration, and the community to drive awareness and participation in sustainable practices.

The campus projects referenced here exemplify what is possible in achieving campus compliance with changing regulations and climate-responsive expectations. Note that these projects are in the planning phases, not yet built, and are awaiting funding.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY – GEOTHERMAL PLANT STUDY

At EWU, the Integrus and MW Engineers partnership involved planning of the university's first GeoEco Plant (GEP), a milestone commit-

ment to eliminating fossil fuels from central campus heating operations. Our team explored transitioning from fossil-fuel generated campus steam to more sustainable energy sources, focusing on the impact, location, and potential of this transition. Plans call for a ground source heat pump utilizing the earth's stable underground temperature — a thermal reservoir known as a heat sink — to deliver efficient, all-electric heating and cooling to campus buildings.

Highly interconnective, it will allow buildings to share thermal energy. When one building generates excess heat, that energy can be redirected where needed or stored underground for future use. This dynamic, energy-sharing network represents one of the most advanced and efficient heating and cooling systems available.

This milestone facility is also designed to serve as a community-facing educational hub — a teaching tool for campus sustainability and stewardship. The GEP site is centrally positioned relative to the eleven buildings along the campus “Sustainability Spine” it will eventually serve.

Showcasing the technology and providing clear views of the equipment and experiential graphics transforms what would traditionally be a

hidden infrastructure building into a new campus landmark. EWU plans to expand this system with future GEPs to deliver campus-wide coverage.

WHITMAN COLLEGE DECARBONIZATION PLAN

Whitman College, a private institution not bound by the state's standards, set ambitious targets: a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and full carbon neutrality by 2040. Integrus and MW Engineers are helping lead the college's voluntary efforts to develop an Energy Renewal and Decarbonization Plan (ERDP).

The plan evaluates carbon emission reductions and maximizes energy savings through three options: a centralized geothermal plant, a centralized ground water exchange plant, and decentralized air or ground source systems. This plan focuses on a mix of math, humanities, social science, academic buildings and residence halls, exploring options to reduce carbon emissions from existing fossil-fuel heating, trade energy between buildings, and maximize energy savings. It also communicates the values of energy savings and carbon reduction across the campus community.

Implementing campus energy metering and refin-

ing a cost model also help evaluate the impact and return on investment of various energy-saving options. The ERDP effectively charts a comprehensive roadmap to meet these goals, integrating building efficiency upgrades, electrification of heating systems, and campus-wide energy planning strategies. This proactive approach positions Whitman as a model of sustainability leadership among private colleges.

SPOKANE COLLEGES CLEAN BUILDINGS ACT COMPLIANCE

In some instances, an initial large capital investment to meet the CBPS and further advance sustainability is not necessary. The Integrus and Custom Energy Consulting team is demonstrating this in our collaboration with Spokane Colleges by focusing on the format and output of campus-wide energy production.

This team was formed to assess current energy sources and assist Spokane College's transition to more sustainable options like renewable energy with robust monitoring systems to track progress and validate projected metrics iden-

tifying areas for improvement, which is an additional requirement of the new law.

The team updated the Energy Star Portfolio Manager, will conduct annual EUI checks, and update Operations & Maintenance (O&M) plans. The overriding goal for compliance is making informed energy-efficient design choices, reporting on benchmarking and maintaining energy management plans. This project also demonstrates the value of engaging students, administration and the community to foster a culture of sustainability through educational initiatives to drive awareness and participation in sustainable practices.

The CBPS requirements present exciting opportunities for campus and design teams to innovate in bringing new life and improved efficiency to existing buildings — both in providing inventive solutions and in growing support for campus sustainability efforts.

Regardless of the state capital planning process, these changes are necessary to keep campuses positioned with functional buildings to serve students and the educational environment



Martin Williamson Hall is targeted to be one EWU's first buildings to benefit from the GeoEco Plant.

long into the future. Perhaps the biggest shift required is a change in mindset, and a commitment to be part of the statewide effort to improve the efficiency and health of buildings to benefit

people throughout Washington state.

Becky Barnhart is CEO at Integrus, providing vision and operational leadership that sets the tone for the

firm's work within the public realm. Anthony Schoen is a Mechanical Principal at MW Engineers, specializing in the design of higher education, laboratory and healthcare facilities.

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SUSTAINABILITY MEETS STEM IN PIERCE COLLEGE'S NEW SCIENCE BUILDING

The new Johnson Science Building practices environmental stewardship – including low impact infrastructure, stormwater management, and habitat preservation – while supporting a future-focused science curriculum.

From the outset, the Johnson Science Building's design team sought to create a facility that reflected Pierce College's commitment to sustainability and inclusivity.

According to Sara Wilder, AIA, from Integrus Architecture, one of the guiding principles was "radical welcoming," ensuring that the building and site were accessible and inviting to all students.



BY MADDIE OLSON
AHBL

This philosophy extended to sustainability as well, with the goal of creating an environmentally responsible structure that could serve as a model for future campus growth.

"A big part of the site design was about completing this green space open quad," Wilder explained. "By making the building three stories, we were able to preserve more open space while also allowing for future campus expansion."

The building's location and compact footprint minimized its impact on the surrounding second-growth forest and nearby wetland. This careful planning preserved the natural landscape as much as possible and reinforced the connection between the built environment and ecological stewardship.

MANAGING STORMWATER AND PROTECTING RESOURCES

Stormwater management played a crucial role in the project's sustainability efforts. AHBL's civil engineering team developed innovative water management solutions to improve water quality and maintain the health of the wetland ecosystem adjacent to the site.

Project Engineer Bill Fierst shared, "The bioretention system in the parking area removes oils and pollutants from the stormwater before it's discharged downstream."

In addition to bioretention systems, the project incorpo-

rated rain gardens and underground detention chambers to further enhance water quality and reduce stormwater flow rates. "The rain gardens were not required but were added to treat roof runoff and help recharge groundwater," Fierst said. "The detention system was also key in reducing stormwater flow rates before the water reaches the wetland."

A BUILDING THAT ENHANCES LEARNING

One of the standout features of the Johnson Science Building is its integration of curriculum with the built environment. The site design intentionally connects students to nature and sustainability concepts, with outdoor spaces designated for hands-on learning.

"There's a woodland side of the building where biology students can study ecological systems up close," Wilder said. "On the other side, there's a meadow and rain garden that highlight stormwater management strategies."

The project also incorporates an outdoor 'stumpery,' a collection of nurse logs that serve as a learning environment for ecology students.

"This space isn't just decorative," said Matthew Bissen, principal at Integrus Architecture. "It serves as a scientific landscape where students can study and engage with their coursework."

Inside the building, flexible lab spaces allow for evolving STEM curricula. A standout feature is the gravity lab, where students can conduct physics experiments involving free-fall and motion. "The building itself becomes a learning tool," Wilder said. "There are spaces where students can do real-world experiments, like dropping objects from an upper level to study gravity."

OVERCOMING SITE CONSTRAINTS

Developing a sustainable site within an active campus presented challenges. One major consideration was the site's significant grade change — an elevation drop

of about 10 feet between the parking area and the quad.

"We worked the grade difference into the design rather than trying to fight it," Wilder explained. "By embedding part of the building into the hillside, we reduced site disturbance and kept the project cost-effective."

Fierst added, "Protecting the second-growth forest was challenging." Existing trails and pathways were preserved wherever possible to maintain accessibility without encroaching further on natural areas. AHBL's civil engineers also reused existing parking areas and fire lanes, minimizing impact to the forest, and reducing unnecessary expansion into green spaces.

COLLABORATION AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

The Johnson Science Building is the result of a highly collaborative process. AHBL worked closely with Integrus, landscape architects from Site Workshop, and the general contractor, Absher, to create a cohesive and sustainable site plan.

"We really worked together to figure out how to minimize the footprint and navigate the grade change in a way that made sense both environmentally and economically," Wilder said.

The project is targeting LEED Gold certification, with sustainability strategies including energy-efficient systems, reduced irrigation and native landscaping. The selection of indigenous tree species also played a role in the building's sustainability goals.

"These trees were chosen because they reflect Indigenous land management practices," Bissen noted. "It was a conscious decision to acknowledge and integrate historical stewardship methods into the project."

A MODEL FOR FUTURE STEM FACILITIES

Pierce College's approach to integrating sustainability



Behind the building, the outdoor 'stumpery'— a collection of nurse logs — creates a unique learning environment for ecology students.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AHBL

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CREATING COHESIVE, LOCAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR NURSING PROFESSIONALS

Five new nursing education facilities coming online for Montana State University in 2026 will support comprehensive training to help ensure highly skilled nurses in communities across the state.

When Montana State University (MSU) awarded Cushing Terrell and CO Architects the design contract for five new nursing education facilities — in Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell and Missoula — it was an incredible opportunity for the two firms to merge the best of education and healthcare design while bringing MSU into the research and exploration process.



BY JIM BEAL
CUSHING TERRELL

The high-level goal for the five-facility project is to help build a skilled nursing workforce in Montana — for urban

The Great Falls facility was the first to break ground and is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2026. The project is being built on land donated by Benefis Health System.



PHOTO BY GRAY MEDIA SERVICES

and rural communities alike. Thus, the team began by addressing a few funda-

mental questions: How can the prospect of becoming a nurse be more accessible? How can learning environ-

ments facilitate long-term career success and satisfaction? What are the core design elements needed for a cohesive experience, and how can the team build upon those core elements to reflect each local culture and environment?

THE RESEARCH: FIELD TRIPS, VISIONING AND FEEDBACK

On the topic of research, the team prioritized client engagement early in the design process. One of the initial steps was to take members of MSU's nursing leadership on tours of three healthcare education projects in Kansas City, Missouri, designed by CO Architects. Located at the University of Kansas, Kansas City University, and Rockhurst University, the projects gave the client representatives a chance to see state-of-the-art programming and learning spaces, in various stages of development, showcasing the latest design trends in nursing education.

Following the field trips, the design team convened MSU leadership, staff and students for visioning sessions. The sessions included experts from both Cushing Terrell's education and healthcare design groups, with the crossover of knowledge contributing to spaces that facilitate hands-on, practical learning and skills that translate directly into

healthcare settings.

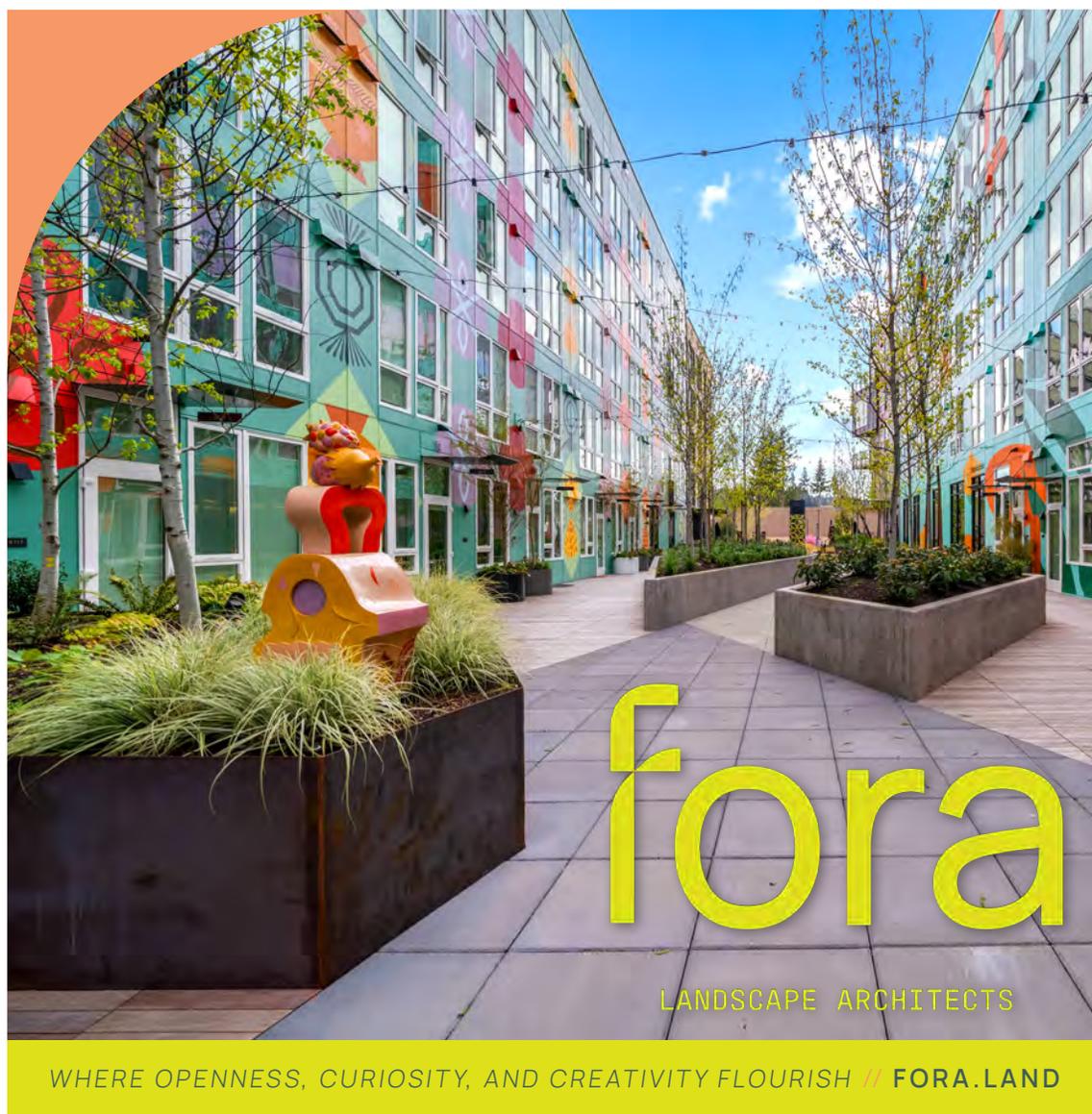
Additionally, the Cushing Terrell team utilized insights from the firm's team members who grew up in and live in the Montana communities where the projects are located. These local connections brought a more nuanced approach to the design as it relates to placemaking.

The guiding principles for the overall program revealed themselves through this series of visioning sessions. The team spent time with MSU stakeholders on the Bozeman campus, with a full-day kickoff in one of the classrooms in Romney Hall, a historic preservation project also designed by Cushing Terrell. The design team took that information and presented it a month later to the nursing faculty and leadership for each of the new facilities, who provided additional input on their individual school culture and what they'd like their learning spaces to become.

With tools such as mind mapping to analyze feedback, the team continued to identify the overarching user needs and wants while exploring different programming relationships.

THE DESIGN: FORM AND FUNCTION

With the research and user feedback phase complete, the design team worked with MSU to develop guiding prin-



WHERE OPENNESS, CURIOSITY, AND CREATIVITY FLOURISH // FORA.LAND

ciples for the project:

- Emphasize the feeling of one college across the five locations
- Reinforce the connection to the university and its land-grant mission
- Express an inclusive, family-like culture and community
- Promote occupant health and well-being
- Craft adaptable learning spaces
- Anticipate growth, curricular evolution and technological advancements
- Commit to building performance and holistic sustainable design

Overall built program. The overarching design concept for the MSU nursing education facilities creates a cohesive visual language that identifies each building as part of the MSU Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing. To emphasize a feeling of one campus across locations, much of the programming is consistent with a “kit of parts” establishing the overall built program. For example, each facility has a front porch, learning studios and a nursing gallery.

While the built program establishes consistency, variables to the design include those inspired by the different geologic landscapes, endowing each with its own regional expression in terms of form, color and façade pattern.

Land grant university goals. One of the intents of land-grant universities is to provide practical education to the local population with direct relevance to improving daily life for people in the surrounding communities. With MSU’s goal to address the nursing shortage, a learning hub was planned for each of

the five communities, creating a ripple effect in the ability to reach surrounding rural communities and have a greater impact.

Establishing the five facilities provides local context, keeps students closer to home (and able to bring their education back to their communities), and provides more of a connection to rural areas. Additionally, MSU worked closely with local/regional medical providers to utilize land donated or purchased by these partners. MSU nursing students will have the ability to work with those providers for their clinicals and training in those healthcare systems will help prepare them even further.

Supportive community. To create community, social spaces and nursing galleries add circulation throughout the buildings as well as a variety of study locations. Nursing galleries have views into other areas of practice to support demonstration, community learning and a supportive team environment.

Communal eating areas and landscaped spaces outside the buildings provide areas to come together in informal settings. With the learning facilities designed near local medical providers (on donated land), these providers serve as partners in education, creating real-world relationships with patients and other medical professionals.

Health and well-being. To promote occupant health and well-being, the design incorporates sky lights and clerestory windows, which allow more daylighting in administration and demonstration spaces. Student nourishment areas include mini kitchens for busy students on the go.

The Missoula facility’s design is defined by a horizontal pattern signifying the strandlines seen on nearby Mount Jumbo and the Ninemile Rhythmites.



IMAGE COURTESY OF CUSHING TERRELL/CO ARCHITECTS

Student study spaces offer relaxation and respite, with lounge-style furniture as well as natural materials and soft color palettes. These areas foster a calming environment with large windows and views that create a connection to nature. Landscaped areas with walking paths and green space support the ability to take breaks from the classroom and enjoy the outdoors.

Adaptability and evolution. The project principles related to adaptability and evolution are supported through the design of a variety of space types to meet differing learning/teaching styles. Learning spaces such as cohort studios and seminar labs feature multi-functional furniture, moveable partitions and advanced AV equipment.

The design includes state-of-the-art technology and simulation environments specific to nursing training where students get hands-on experience to help prepare them for just about any type of real-world situation.

Building performance and sustainability. To meet building performance and sustainability goals, the university and design team are pursuing LEED Silver for each building. All facilities are designed to be solar-ready with the ability to add on-site PV arrays. The Bozeman site will utilize the campus’ geothermal energy system while the other four sites use energy-efficient, high-performance variable-air-volume systems for heating and cooling.

Healthy materials are emphasized, with many interior products meeting certifications such as HPDs, Declare Label, or Cradle to Cradle. The interior light-

ing design uses high-quality LED fixtures with a color rendering index (CRI) of 90, which provides a truer color appearance, which is critical for healthcare applications.

UPCOMING MILESTONES FOR THE PROJECTS

All five MSU nursing education facilities are currently under construction and planned for completion in the fall of 2026. As the projects unfold, there’s great excitement from the local Montana communities about the potential to bring skilled nurses to more rural parts of the state, help meet the

demand for healthcare workers, create rewarding careers and improve healthcare in Montana.

While the design aesthetics were inspired by Montana’s landscapes, the functionality and health and wellness aspects were very much inspired by the MSU staff and students who will be moving through these facilities, creating a foundation for the future within their walls.

Jim Beal is a principal with Cushing Terrell, a leader of the firm’s Education Design team and director of the firm’s research and development initiatives.

MAKING THE MSU NURSING EDUCATION PROJECTS POSSIBLE

The MSU Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing projects were made possible by a \$101-million investment made by Montana business owners, Mark and Robyn Jones, who saw the healthcare challenges people in Montana face and wanted to make a difference. Their donation:

- Provides funding for the five new facilities, ensuring they are equipped with modern classrooms and state-of-the-art simulation labs.
- Establishes five endowed faculty professorships, the first in the history of MSU.
- Develops an endowed scholarship fund to keep the cost of nursing education affordable for all students.
- Creates Montana’s only certified nurse midwifery program preparing doctoral-level nurses, significantly increasing the number of specialized maternal healthcare providers capable of providing services to rural and remote communities in Montana.

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TOP DESIGN TRENDS FOR THE NEW REALITY OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

How architects can help schools grapple with big changes in funding, student needs and technology.

Hybrid teaching and learning, remote working, new technologies, and high operational and capital costs point to a new reality for educational institutions: change is the new normal. At the same time, education is contending with declining student motivation and well-being.



BY FRANCESLY SIERRA GENSLER

Gensler's Design Forecast, published annually, identifies the top trends shaping the next generation of campus environments. Our top three trends for 2025 offer strategies in how higher education institutions can navigate pressing issues through the power of design. We will discuss how these top 3 trends can support our institutions.

1 Reimagining underutilized campus buildings leads to financial and environmental success

In the face of limited



The three-story, 60,000-square-foot Student Success Center at UC Riverside houses an array of classroom, student study and social gathering spaces in both formal and open, flexible settings.

PHOTO BY RYAN GOBUTY

resources, evolving space needs and aging buildings, institutions achieve their strategic goals by leaning into adaptive reuse strategies to reimagine the spaces

they already have.

Institutions are currently grappling with potential funding cuts due to a significant state budget shortfall and rapid changes in federal funding. This financial uncertainty poses a challenge for universities striving to achieve their strategic goals with limited resources. To navigate these constraints, universities can adopt innovative approaches to maximize the use of their existing facilities.

One effective strategy is to assess how campus assets are actually being used through curriculum analysis and observational methods. This evaluation can identify underutilized buildings that may be repurposed for new uses. By repurposing these buildings, institutions can reap both financial and environmental benefits. Adaptive reuse not only reduces project costs compared to new construction, but also typically delivers results in a shorter timeframe.

Moreover, adaptive reuse maximizes the value and lifespan of existing assets by incorporating more efficient building systems, thereby reducing operational costs. This approach also significantly cuts down on embodied carbon emissions by minimizing the need for

new materials, aligning with Washington State decarbonization goals and the Clean Building Act.

Additionally, rethinking the use of campus structures allows institutions to leverage real estate asset values through development partnerships, providing a potential source of funding for other initiatives. By embracing these strategies, universities can continue to advance their missions despite financial constraints.

2 Higher demand for workforce preparedness drives design for interdisciplinary spaces

More multifunctional spaces will support the type of interdisciplinary programming and preparations students need to enter the workforce. Flexible design solutions allow educators to reconfigure spaces for different needs.

The rising demand for workforce preparedness has become a key driver in the design of interdisciplinary spaces. Local industries such as technology, healthcare and green energy require employees with diverse skill sets and collaborative problem-solving abilities. These industries demand effective team collaboration skills, the

ability to adapt to changing environments and the capacity to learn new skill sets continuously.

To meet these needs, educational institutions are increasingly incorporating multifunctional space types that support interdisciplinary programming. These spaces provide students with the opportunity to develop the necessary skills to thrive in modern workplaces. This shift necessitates that educational institutions create environments where individuals from various disciplines can interact, exchange ideas and work together on real-world challenges. Institutions can facilitate these interactions through flexible classroom designs, incubator spaces, shared learning hubs and multipurpose areas that mirror contemporary work environments.

By prioritizing workforce development, institutions can position themselves for continued adaptability and success. Creating these dynamic and collaborative spaces not only prepares students for the demands of the workforce, but will foster innovation and creativity. This approach ensures that graduates are well-equipped

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DESIGN TRENDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

to meet the evolving needs of local industries and contribute meaningfully to their fields.

3 Schools focus on students' well-being and the spaces they need to succeed

Campus environments that support the whole student, including spaces that facilitate academic focus, social gathering and emotional well-being, will improve students' sense of belonging and overall success.

A sense of belonging is what fuels communities. Research has shown that developing a sense of belonging for students is critical for their overall success and retention. National studies show reasons why first-year students don't return is affordability and lack of meaningful connections or difficulty making friends. To address these issues, institutions can focus on creating environments that prioritize belonging, mental health and emotional support. Opportunities lie in innovations in student housing and student success centers.

Student housing can amplify health and well-being. Student housing is a vessel for cultivating friendships and communities. Providing several types of spaces outside of sleeping rooms helps to promote engagement. Visible amenities such as shared kitchens, lounges and nooks can create social connections and strengthen a student's sense of belonging. Other key spaces for chance encounters can also include courtyards, laundry rooms and central stairs.

Student success centers can provide students with a robust support system by integrating services in a one-stop-shop model. These facilities can deliver a comprehensive, multi-lens approach to the needs of diverse groups, including those with disabilities such as low vision, mobility, deafness trauma, and neurodiversity.

Success centers can include inclusive features such as ease of navigation for visual and spatial clarity, transitions and textural changes to support navigation for individuals with

low vision, and designated areas for student ownership to reduce stigma of utilizing support services. Creating more inclusive space benefits enable all individuals to feel welcomed and connected to their institution's community.

While higher education institutions and their leaders continue to address pressing challenges, keeping student experience at the forefront in exploring design opportunities leads to creating spatial environments that set students up for success academically and holistically as institutions compete for enrollment and retention. What's good for student well-being can also be good for the bottom line.

Francesly Sierra is Gensler's Seattle Education Practice Area Leader, focusing on the design and delivery of higher education facilities that build community and collaboration, and support student well-being.

SCIENCE BUILDING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

with STEM education sets an example for other institutions. As more colleges and universities expand their science programs, projects like the Johnson Science Building demonstrate how responsible design can enhance both learning and environmental conservation.

"I think it's critical for campuses to preserve their natural character while growing," Bissen said. "This project shows that you don't have to sacrifice green space for development. You can design in a way that works with the landscape rather than against it."

By balancing infrastructure needs with ecological preservation, the Johnson Science Building serves as a model for future higher education projects. Its emphasis on sustainable engineering, habitat conservation, and educational integration ensures that STEM education at Pierce College is not just about what happens inside the classroom, it is about how the entire campus environment supports learning and sustainability.

Maddie Olson is a marketing coordinator at AHBL, where she specializes in A/E content development and proposal coordination.

DESIGN-BUILD DELIVERY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

and sheathing — is underway. Crews are also installing the mechanical, engineering and plumbing systems. Construction is on track for a summer 2026 opening.

emerging district. This will help reduce carbon emissions — and the university's reliance on fossil fuels — while meeting current and future energy demands. The plant is also positioned to support the campus' chilled water system.

This 4,000-square-foot utility plant is part of a long-range plan to decentralize energy sources on campus through a nodal approach, and initiate the transition toward low-carbon infrastructure.

Joshua Thomson is the WSU Schweitzer Engineering Hall project manager at Lease Crutcher Lewis, and the DBIA regional chair for student engagement. Sara Howell is a principal at ZGF, serving as project manager for WSU Schweitzer Engineering Hall.

ENABLING A LOWER-CARBON FUTURE

Also in development as part of the Schweitzer Engineering Hall project is the construction the university's first nodal utility plant, or NUP, that will initially serve Schweitzer Engineering Hall but have built-in capacity to serve other buildings in the future.

Located down the hill from Schweitzer Engineering Hall and adjacent to the existing Chiller Plant, the NUP will function as a neighborhood district utility facility that will generate a new low-temperature hot water (LTHW) heating source within the



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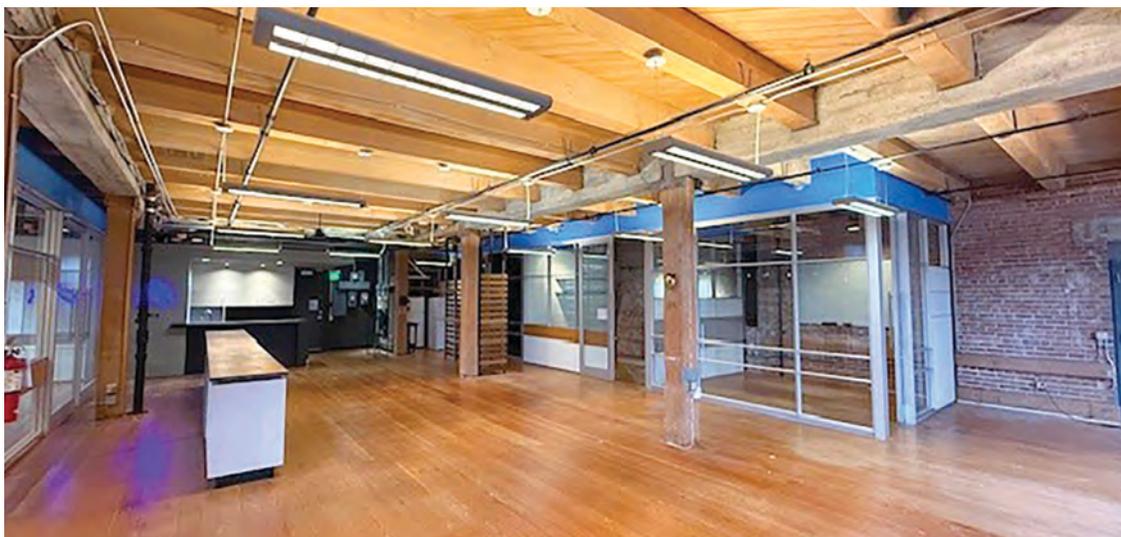
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