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Francis Cauffman celebrates RIT's green Institute Hall opening



Institute Hall at RIT - Rochester, NY

Rochester, NY According to Francis Cauffman, the new science facility, Institute Hall at RIT has opened. The 78,000 s/f, \$26 million research building houses RIT's brand-new chemical and biomedical engineering departments. Serving as a crossroads for the campus community, the building's innovative design incorporates lounge and study spaces with labs, classrooms, and faculty offices. The building also completes a new science quad on campus, joining three other new buildings. Francis Cauffman designed the building's core and shell and labs.

The building has 12,750 s/f faculty research labs, a 2,500 s/f chemical engineering unit operations teaching lab, a vivarium,

classrooms for training healthcare-related professionals, and an environmentally controlled laser research lab, among other scientific research facilities. The ground floor includes classrooms for the general campus, which serve to promote movement, while the upper floors mix student spaces and classrooms with faculty offices in order to facilitate interaction between students and faculty.

The team is targeting LEED Gold certification. Sustainable elements include a "green data center" that uses air from outside, instead of MEP cooling, as well as a rain garden on the building's east side. Architecture firm Bergmann Associates served as architect of record, and Welliver was the construction manager.

Institute Hall fulfills RIT's vision of bringing state-of-the-art science facilities together with community amenities like a café, a rain garden, and a study space located in an elevated bridge that connects Institute Hall with an adjoining building. Its ground floor is raised five to six feet to provide better views throughout. The building's spaces attract the wider campus community and foster collaboration between science students.

"We are thrilled to have designed a facility that meets RIT's goals for sustainability," said Jim Crispino, president of Francis Cauffman. "Additionally, we are very excited to have collaborated with RIT on a building that creates a new way for science students to work and study together."

Referred to as the "Brick City," RIT is well known for its large collection of Modernist brick buildings. Institute Hall plays with this tradition. Unlike the more solid buildings on campus, it has a transparent, glazed core that is wrapped in a red brick shell, with a traditional rectangular brick wall on its west face and a striking curved glass façade on its north face. The brick sections house labs, while the glass encloses offices and classrooms, allowing in daylight.