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Institute Hall at the Rochester Institute of Technology, New York

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Project Details:

Location: Rochester, New York, USA

Type: Educational

Completion Date: 2013

Area: 78,000 square feet

Cost: \$26 million

Architect: Francis Cauffman (franciscauffman.com) designed the core and shell and labs. Rochester-based architecture firm Bergmann Associates (bergmannpc.com) served as Architect of Record.

Collaborators: Welliver was the construction manager for the project.

Photos: Chris Cooper

Landmark new science facility, Institute Hall, officially opened in fall 2013 at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. The 78,000-sq.-ft., \$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.



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.



The building has 12, 750-sq.-ft. dedicated faculty research labs, a 2,500-sq.-ft. chemical engineering unit operations teaching lab, a vivarium, classrooms for training healthcare-related professionals, and an environmentally controlled laser research lab, among other state-of-the-art 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.

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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.