



SWBR Architects celebrate groundbreaking for SUNY College of Brockport Liberal Arts Building

November 12, 2012 - Upstate New York

A ground breaking ceremony was held for the SUNY College of Brockport Liberal Arts Building, which will be one of the first new academic facilities on the campus in four decades. Team members, including Philip Wise, principal of SWBR Architects, who is leading the project, participated in the ceremony. According to SWBR, the Liberal Arts Building will provide a new, shared home for the dean of the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and five departments within the Humanities. Humanity departments to be housed within the building are: english, history, philosophy, women & gender studies, and modern language and cultures.

Building site placement was formed through an understanding of the existing context, vocabulary and utilities. Views also played a factor in shaping the overall footprint of the building as can be seen by the knuckle that was created at the south entry. This bend in the plan turned the eastern wing to the north allowing people coming from the underpass to have a more expansive view of the Children of the World sculpture, the grove to the north of the sculpture and Drake Library.

The building will also provide a variety of new learning environments to be utilized by all college departments. Classroom modules are sized to support multiple configurations of seating to accommodate lecture, group discussion and team-based work. Learning environments will support seminar classes with one 10-person and three 25-person seminar rooms; mid-sized classes with three general purpose 30-45 seat classrooms; larger classes with two 70-person, sub-divisible classrooms; and larger lecture and conference space with one 200-person, sub-divisible auditorium. Flexibility will be provided for various teaching styles through "active/collaborative/group learning" spaces. It is also designed to have "learning on display" by providing transparency between the public spaces and the classrooms.

The formation of the interior street articulates the interior social spaces which are maximized by allowing those spaces to carry through to the exterior, further emphasizing informal learning spaces and opportunities. The building shall also support special events and conferences, such as the Writer's Forum. The 200-seat auditorium and an event lobby will serve this function.

The common area located adjacent to the auditorium will serve as an informal lounge and queuing area for classrooms as well as pre- and post-function support for events held in the auditorium. Lounge spaces will surround the common area on the second floor creating a dynamic and lively multi-story zone within the building. Several secured display cases will be located throughout the common area and lounges housing pieces from the E.E. Cummings Collection on a rotating basis.

Research indicates the importance of both formal and informal spaces for coursework, group discussions, and individual study. To this end, public space adjacent to the formal learning environments and the office suites is being planned to incorporate individual and team work zones, writing and technology interface, faculty-student discussions spaces and study areas.

Faculty offices are located along a secondary circulation zone which is buffered from learning environments and the main circulation zone by "soft" program spaces such as support areas, conference rooms and adjunct offices.

An enclosed second level bridge provides a connection to Drake Library and to the pedestrian bridge to the north side of campus.

The college intends to occupy the building in the summer of 2014 in preparation for the fall semester.

SUNY College of Brockport Liberal Arts Building Project Team:

General Contractor: LeChase Construction

Architect: SWBR Architects

Structural: Ravi Engineering

Electrical Contractor: Hewitt Young Electric

MEP: M/E Engineering

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