

BEST OF
2008
AWARDS

Center for Wellness

PROJECT OF THE YEAR: Sports Facility Project

The Center for Wellness at the College of New Rochelle in New Rochelle, N.Y., was designed by architect ikon.5 of Princeton, N.J., to represent the college's mission to teach integrated wellness for the total body, mind and spirit.

"Designing a sustainable facility became a way of illustrating to the world, the college's commitment to good stewardship of the Earth and commitment of service to others," says Joseph G. Tattoni AIA, principal of ikon.5 architects.

Ground was broken in November 2006. The college wanted the project to include homes for physical education programs, competition sports programs and the nursing and holistic medicine programs. It also wanted a facility that appropriately fits on the campus and the adjacent 19th Century residential neighborhood.

College user groups together with ikon.5 architects developed a program for the Center of Wellness that would include teaching and gathering spaces, a 1,500-seat NCAA gymnasium and convocation center, distance-learning classrooms and seminar spaces, holistic meditation room and 100-seat competition natatorium.

The design team created a design metaphor in which the center is conceived as a contemplative garden where the natatorium is a grotto, the gymnasium is a rock outcropping and the concourse is a crevasse between both.

"Our interest in sustainability is fueled by the conditions of the world at the moment," Tattoni says. "Our specific design approach is to not have sustainability alone be the design concept of a



building but instead to have sustainable approaches reinforce the greater conceptual ideas of the architecture."

The project, which was completed in April, achieved a LEED silver certification. And to make the design metaphor a reality, the natatorium/grotto was carved out of the sloping site and a roof garden, locally quarried granite was used in the gymnasium/rock outcropping, and the concourse/crevasse was built out of cast in place of concrete including recyclable materials of fly ash and blast furnace slag.

More than one third of the Center for Wellness is built into the ground in order to reduce the overall scale and allow it to fit on the campus and in the surrounding neighborhood. This proved to be an obstacle, however, because pre-existing bedrock on the site had to be removed to accommodate the subsurface drainage and below-grade structures.

Planning was also done to build around a group of mature trees rather

Key Players

Owner: College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, N.Y.

Architect: ikon.5 architects, Princeton, N.J.

Construction Manager: Andron Construction, Goldens Bridge, N.Y.

Owner's Representative: Appleby Construction Management, Norwalk, Conn.

than remove them.

This 50,000-sq-ft, \$26 million project stands out as a sports facility that reinforces the values of the college and expresses the metaphors of a paradisiacal garden through its design.