



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LEED GOLD AWARDED IN NJMS VIVARIUM RECONSTRUCTION **ONLY U.S. VIVARIUM TO ATTAIN GOLD LEVEL CERTIFICATION**

NEWARK, NJ, JUNE 25, 2014--Modernization, increased capacity, streamlined operations, and energy efficiency are the major outcomes of the just-completed 30,000 GSF, \$15M American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funded Vivarium Reconstruction of a 1975 Central Research Animal Facility for Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences New Jersey Medical School (RBHS-NJMS). The renovation project that began with the goal of achieving basic LEED certification resulted in the medical school vivarium receiving the second highest level of certification, the only Vivarium in the nation to reach this level.

LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class green building strategies and practices. Depending upon how much criteria a specific project meets, it earns credits toward certification. To get a building or project certified, it must attain 40-49 credits. To reach a silver level certification is 50-59 credits; the gold level is 60-79 credits and the platinum level is 80 credits and higher. In this case, the vivarium received Gold level certification with 66 points.

The ARRA grant stipulated that the project must meet LEED certification. "We went into the design phase with 49 credits," said Matthew Peterson, Senior Project Manager. "As the project continued, we realized we would be able to apply for a much higher level, and we ended up applying for Gold level certification."

"It's very difficult to reach this level for a research laboratory or a vivarium," said Nicholas L. Fabbroni, Director, Project Services. "Laboratories and vivariums use a lot of energy, which presents a challenge when trying to reach all of the specified criteria. Gold level is a major accomplishment. We are the first vivarium in the state and in the nation to reach this level of certification."

The original vivarium, located in the RBHS-NJMS Medical Science Building, was built about 40 years ago. The scope of the new project required reconstructing the vivarium to accommodate improved operating efficiencies, mechanical systems, and reconfigured administrative space. Spaces include, Small & Large Animal Holding Rooms,

Procedure Suites, Surgery Suites, Rack & Cage Wash Area, Bedding & Food Storage, Isolated Administrative Suite and a Future Imaging Suite. Project phasing strategies were employed to maintain funded research programs during construction.

Improved operating efficiencies include optimized work practices, flexibility, and disease control measures which all contribute to RBHS-NJMS's enhanced faculty recruiting capabilities. "Within the same footprint we can house and use more animals in a safe and modern environment," said Bruce Scharf, Executive Director, NJMS Comparative Medicine Resources.

Among the requirements that had to be satisfied to meet LEED certification was an 85% recycling level of the construction materials. "We actually had a 92% recycling level," Peterson said. In addition, the new design increased energy efficiencies, enhanced water conservation methods, and reused as much of the existing furniture as possible. "We received maximum credits for furniture reuse," said Project Manager, Fernando Arroyo.

Because vivariums use a lot of energy, the new energy efficient sterilizers and cleaning equipment were critical to meeting LEED standards. In addition, with the project located in the city of Newark, it received a lot of credits for accessibility to mass transit and the use of bikes. "We created dedicated bike storage and bike racks, and we have the light rail, city buses, Rutgers Shuttle, and CHEN shuttle," Peterson said. (The CHEN shuttle conducts runs among the colleges located in the University Heights section of Newark.) These alternate modes of transportation resulted in additional credits. The paint and epoxy floor materials were all low volatile organic compound (VOC).

"It was truly a team effort to meet gold level criteria," Peterson said. "Nalls Architects shepherded everything and made the actual submission. Torcon Construction tracked all of the materials and actually inventoried what was going into the dumpsters."

The project was submitted in two phases. The design phase allowed for feedback from the Green Buildings Council. Since that phase confirmed that the project already met the 49 points needed for basic certification, the Facilities team worked aggressively to accumulate more points for the final submission.

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Rutgers University is comprised a total of 27 million square feet and 1,009 buildings throughout the state. The University Facilities & Capital Planning organization is the agency responsible for construction, renovation, maintenance and repair of all buildings and grounds found within the campus perimeters and outlying areas.