

MassArt's Tree House Shines GOLD



Rising from the Avenue of the Arts and inspired by Gustav Klimt's 1909 'Tree of Life' painting, Massachusetts College of Art and Design's Tree House Residential Tower is clad in over 5000 composite aluminum panels and has recently attained LEED Gold Certified classification. "The Tree House Residence Hall was conceived with the collaborative input of students, faculty and the neighboring community, as a refreshing, artful and sustainable building housing 493 students in a suite-style layout," said Kurt Steinberg, Executive Vice President of MassArt. "We are so pleased to have brought the collective thinking and creativity of the MassArt community to the important cause of creating sustainable housing for our students."

Prior to construction, the site was classified as a brownfield, and the redevelopment and remediation

of the site was in compliance with the Massachusetts Voluntary Cleanup Program. The site provides 49.46% of open space with pedestrian-oriented hardscape and vegetation. The building's unique design decreases the storm water runoff by 33.16% from the predevelopment site, and limits the pollution of natural water bodies by capturing and treating the storm water with its recharge systems, drywells, and stormceptors.

The building's energy cost usage is 22.83% more efficient than the baseline for residential buildings as designated by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE 90.1-2007). This savings was achieved with a high performance thermal envelope, efficient mechanical equipment, and an efficient lighting design. Enhanced commissioning of the building systems reduces energy use and operating costs by ensuring that all of the systems are operating

properly and efficiently.

Potable water used for plumbing fixtures is reduced by 33.17% (in comparison to a baseline

standard) by using low-flow water closets, lavatories, kitchen sinks, and showers, and reduces the

amount of potable water used for landscape irrigation by 76.66% using efficient drip irrigation and

native and adapted vegetation.

The project's construction team reduced the amount of waste sent to a landfill by recycling and salvaging 90.03% of the total construction waste generated by the project. All adhesives, sealants, paints, and flooring systems in the project contain zero to very low VOC limits for a better indoor air quality.

Other green features include: a filtered water bottle station in the community kitchen to eliminate

the need for plastic water bottles, FSC-certified wood for 88.8% of the total new wood material cost;

and the building teaches occupants about the optimal use of operable windows with an instructional

green light bulb on every residential floor - when the light is on, occupants can open their windows

because the outdoor temperature will not create extra loads on the building systems.

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Finally, the completed building is offsetting 70% of the project's electricity usage for two years with

renewable energy technologies by using renewable energy credits.

You can see the full certification designation for Mass Art's Tree House here.

<http://www.usgbc.org/projects/massart-residence-hall-tree-house?view=overview>