

Talk & Tour: UW Oshkosh, Sage Hall

This Tuesday, we traveled to the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh for a Talk & Tour. The event marked the completion of the University's new academic building, Sage Hall. Our program began with presentations by Michael Lizotte, Director of Sustainability and Steve Arndt, Director of Facilities Management. Following the presentation, we headed over to Sage Hall to experience the project first hand.



Attendees listen as Michael showcases the lobby. The building has been designed to achieve a LEED Gold rating. The panels lining either side of the atrium are actually made of bamboo! As the fastest growing plant on the planet, bamboo makes for an eco-friendly alternative to other hardwoods. It is also completely degradable and can regenerate on its own.





From the lobby, we moved into the courtyard. Situated in the center of the building, this quiet area is more than just an escape from the city. Filling this space with classrooms would have led to increased energy costs as it would be difficult to convey natural light throughout. Situated in the city, faculty and students are still getting used to these quiet zones, we think they'll catch on quickly!



Even the vending machines in Sage Hall are eco-friendly! Although these look ordinary, they are actually named, “energy misers” and will automatically detect when there is little or no hallway activity. No activity prompts the machine lights to turn off; motion sensors turn the lights back on when activity increases. If you have large facilities, be sure to ask your vendors about these energy miser machines!



Most of the classrooms were full during our tour; however we were able to find this “executive training” room designed especially for the College of Business. All classrooms are smart and will automatically raise shades and turn off projectors once the room is idle.



Notice something missing? There are no projection screens in Sage Hall. The top portion of the front wall is used in conjunction with ceiling mounted projectors to display images. Additionally, the dry erase board below is actually a wall paper treatment with metal border. Minimizing hardware in the building allows for easy, affordable maintenance.



Future thinking is everywhere throughout this building...even the carpet squares. The random pattern allows for each square to easily be replaced with additional carpet in storage. This not only lowers the overall maintenance costs, it also creates a more sustainable environment.



In addition to solar panels, the building is outfitted with a green roof. This is the University's first fully operational green roof project. These patches of indigenous plants will help heating and cooling efforts stay within the building. They will also help with flood control and rain water run-off.

It was wonderful to see the completed building after more than two years of working with the University on this project!

For more information on the WasteCap Talk & Tour program, please email Victoria Arnold at varnold@wastecap.org