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University wins platinum for library

By [Charlsie Dewey](#)
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A college library has been designated the first LEED Platinum library in the state.

Green building

Grand Valley State University's Mary Idema Pew Library Learning and Information Commons has been awarded LEED Platinum status by the U.S. Green Building Council.

LEED Platinum is the highest of four possible levels of certification.

LEED certification is based on several factors, including site sustainability, water efficiency, energy use, materials and resources, environmental quality and innovation in design.

The 154,000-square-foot library incorporates multiple energy management and green practices, beyond those that are usually incorporated into a library building: energy-efficient under-floor air distribution; super-efficient exterior walls; a heat-recovery system to reduce heating demands; low-flow water fixtures that reduce water usage; a rainwater-fed irrigation system to eliminate use of potable water for landscaping; and the usage of locally made materials in the production process; and many more.

“The university embarked on a journey to improve its energy signature more than 10 years ago,” said James Moyer, associate vice president of facilities planning, GVSU. “We concentrated on making the building more energy efficient, from both a basic construction perspective and an operations perspective. We had to reduce the energy signature of the buildings, then operate the buildings as designed.”

The building is more than double the size of the former James H. Zumberge Library and has triple the seating capacity.

[GVSU](#) now owns and operates 18 LEED-certified buildings and facilities.

The space

The [library](#) features multiple customizable spaces for both quiet studying and collaborative work, more than 700,000 books, one million ebooks, an abundance of natural lighting, outdoor workspaces and a Knowledge Marketplace where students can find academic support services.

Firms

Berkeley-based [SHW Group](#)/Stantec — a national firm with focus on higher education facilities — designed the Mary Idema Pew Library.

The project team was comprised of mostly Grand Rapids-based businesses, including ARUP Laboratories, [Pioneer Construction](#), [Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber](#) and Pacific Northwest National Laboratories.

The Mary Idema Pew Library was completed and dedicated in 2013.



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