

SRG Partnership, Inc. was challenged by the monks at Mount Angel Abbey to design a building that was more than just a generic classroom building. It had to have a fundamental tone and atmosphere that expressed the privileged position of theology in the Catholic tradition. The building had to compliment the existing contemplative setting of the Abbey and demonstrate the Benedictine values of stewardship for the environment, hospitality, craftsmanship, beauty and love of prayer. The central idea of the building, dedicated primarily to the intellectual formation of future priests, was to graciously express, through the architecture, that this is a place where God's Wisdom is sought. One should sense this in every space and in every detail of the building.

To support such a lofty vision, the building needed to embody truth, goodness and beauty in its design, quality of construction, and integrity of materials and furnishings. It needed to be an environment that would enhance the dignity of all who enter and draw those who study into deeper communion with God and one another.

The new building, aptly named Annunciation, embodies a beautiful convergence of spiritual and sustainable design. The abundance of natural light, the views outward, the rhythm of the arches, and the simplicity of the color and materials palette, all contribute to a building that is contemplative and disciplined but also very gracious in its openness.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN MEASURES

In monastic tradition, there is an important interplay between the 'material' and 'spiritual'. That interplay was a consistent theme through the design process and found expression in the innovative natural ventilation and daylighting solutions, supporting both the spiritual vision of the monks and energy efficiency. Completed in 2006, the building is expected to be 62% more energy efficient than the Oregon Energy Code.

The thermal mass of the concrete floor and roof structure, along with air movement from ceiling fans, expand the comfort range of building occupants by five degrees. The building has a very modest radiant heating system and no active cooling system; it uses a night flush cycle combined with thermal mass to cool the building. Quarry tile floors, and linoleum floors in lieu of carpet, facilitate thermal transfer between ventilation and night flush air and the thermal mass of the building.

Classroom ventilation air is drawn through louvers that surround the windows. It circulates through the room past the building occupants and thermal mass to vent by stack effect through turbine ventilators at the roof near the corridor wall. The highly efficient heat recovery system transfers heat from the exhausted air and mixes it with the required incoming ventilation air supply during the heating season; it also transfers heat from the incoming air to the exhaust air during the cooling season.

Classroom skylights with integral louvers and custom reflectors combine to eliminate glare and evenly distribute daylight throughout the room. Reflectors are comprised of extruded aluminum triangular tubes arranged under the skylight in concentric layers of diminishing density. Skylights are sized so the classrooms can be naturally daylighted for 95% of the occupied hours.

The integral louvers automatically rotate to control the level of daylight entering the space. As daylight is the primary light source, electric lights, modulated by continuous dimming ballasts and occupancy sensors, are used only when the natural daylight is inadequate.

A series of slatted wooden benches are rhythmically located adjacent to artwork along the primary corridor. Each bench has a skylight above and dense radiant heating coils in the floor to encourage people to pause for conversation or study throughout the seasons.

Offices have exterior louvers with dampers and heating coils to regulate the temperature and flow of ventilation air. The occupants use manual dampers and transoms to regulate the temperatures within the offices. Operable windows are included in all classrooms and offices throughout the building.

Offices have sunshades and lightshelves, and light fixtures with occupancy sensors. Ceiling fans are used to help achieve occupant comfort during the cooling season.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Annunciation, the New Center for Theological Studies for the Seminary at Mount Angel Abbey, is the first new building to be built on the hilltop since the Aalto library was constructed in 1970. Planning for Annunciation necessitated a comprehensive look at the entire hilltop, which resulted in a reorganization of pedestrian and vehicular circulation to meet the multiple needs of the seminary, the monastery, retreatants and visitors. SRG and their consultants worked collaboratively with the entire monastic community on the design of both the building and the landscape. A new landscaped courtyard replaces all the parking on the hilltop to create a more cloistered and reflective sense of space. The 22,000 sf building includes six classrooms, twenty-five faculty and administrative offices, a boardroom and student and faculty support spaces. Now fully integrated into the fabric of the hilltop, they represent significant changes for Mount Angel Abbey, and also their future. In 2007, the Abbey celebrates the 125th anniversary of their founding in Oregon.

### Awards:

Northwest Construction's Best of 2006  
Best Sustainable Award and Grand Award  
(for Oregon and Washington)



#### Owner

Mount Angel Abbey

#### Owner's Representative

O'Brien Constructors, LLC

#### Architect

SRG Partnership, Inc.

#### Design Consultants

Architectural Cost Consultants (ACC)

Benya Lighting Design

James D. Graham & Associates

KPFF Consulting Engineers

Mitchell Nelson Group, LLC

SOLARC Architecture & Engineering Inc

UO Energy Studies in Buildings Laboratory (BetterBricks)

WDY Structural/Civil Engineers

#### General Contractor

Emerick Construction

#### Sub Contractors

II-S Mechanical, Inc.

Architectural Reproductions

Atlas Electrical Contractors, Inc.

Bratton Masonry, Inc.

Burgener's Woodworking, Inc.

CPI Daylighting, Inc.

Cedar Landscape, Inc.

Hanset Stainless, Inc.

L.P. Company, Inc.

North Santiam Paving Co.

Paragon Tile & Stone, Inc.



SRG PARTNERSHIP INC

ARCHITECTURE PLANNING INTERIORS



**Mount Angel Abbey**  
ANNUNCIATION New Center for Theological Studies

