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CROWDER COLLEGE'S MARET CENTER RECEIVES PLATINUM LEED CERTIFICATION

KRJ Planning & Research planned one of only three Missouri facilities to earn the highest honor from the U.S. Green Building Council in 2018

St. Louis, MO (March xx, 2019) — The US Green Building Council has recognized the Missouri Alternative and Renewable Energy Technology (MARET) Center at Crowder College as a LEED Platinum facility. The building, which itself acts as a hands-on training tool for student learning, is one of very few Platinum LEED buildings that produce more energy than it consumes, making it “net-positive.”

This efficiency was achieved through significant modeling, planning and research by KRJ Planning & Research, who utilized renewable energy sources (solar heat, wind, biomass, solar electric), together with an exceptionally well-planned and constructed building envelope with an internal energy distribution system. Daylighting is utilized throughout the entire facility, keeping use of electric lighting to a minimum. Solar cells on the roof produce energy, as does a wind turbine on the site. HVAC is provided through geothermal means, in addition to hydronic heating and cooling that utilizes roof-mounted solar collectors. The building is cooled by groundwater alone. Even rainwater from the roof is collected and reused for plantings surrounding the facility.

The building is utilized by the college as a teaching facility to demonstrate how energy can be collected, stored and distributed, so accessibility to the facility's mechanical systems was paramount for educational purposes. Likewise, the facility was organized to allow ease of building system modifications, allowing students to run energy use experiments. Finally, the facility was built with modular construction, allowing students and building prefabricators to participate and learn with these systems. Overall, the entire facility is an incubator for student and industry learning.

Of key interest to instructors and students alike, is how a facility in the Midwest, with high temperature extremes and high humidity levels, can be so comfortable and energy efficient year-round. Students involved in STEM projects, those interested in renewable energy businesses, and those seeking training and certification in alternative energy processes are all drawn to the facility.

“When we conceived of the idea to build a facility that would itself be used in teaching energy efficiency, we knew we needed to work with an architectural planning group that went well beyond the norm,” said Dr. Kent Farnsworth, former President of Crowder College. “We had worked with KRJ Architects in the past, and they had recently formed an innovative planning group to allow the types of in-depth planning and research that we required for this project.”

The 10,000 square foot building was conceived in 2003, built in 2011-2012, and has been utilized as a teaching facility by Crowder College for several years. The facility itself has been tested, improved and modified, allowing students to take full advantage of cutting edge technology. Awarding of the Platinum LEED certification came in 2018, after the college renewed their interest in securing the USGBC certification.

David Kromm of KRJ Planning & Research stated: “We were thrilled to be selected to plan and develop this outstanding facility for Crowder College, and are honored that our work is being used as a teaching model for tomorrow’s leaders. The MARET Center is a great example of how innovation can lead to an efficient, functional, delightful and culturally meaningful facility.”

In addition to being used as a teaching facility, the MARET Center also houses a small business incubator.

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About KRJ Planning & Research

Architects and planners at [KRJ Planning & Research](http://www.KRJPandR.com) focus on the integration of design and development in educational settings, with the goal of increasing the effectiveness of learning spaces while reducing energy use and operating costs. The group strives for highly efficient facilities that serve as incubators for life-long learners. KRJ Planning and Research is a division of KRJ Architects in St. Louis, Missouri. It was established in 1996. www.KRJPandR.com.

About KRJ Architects

Acting as the architect of record, the St. Louis firm of Kromm, Rikimaru & Johansen, Inc. (KRJ) is an award-winning, dynamic organization known for “architecture that builds communities.” The firm is respected for its work in the education and public sectors, seamlessly creating functional architecture. For educational organizations including K-12, community colleges and universities, KRJ evolves its designs to accommodate changes in methods of teaching, the learning environment and technology. Established in 1955, KRJ is an employee-owned firm. <http://www.krjarch.com/>



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