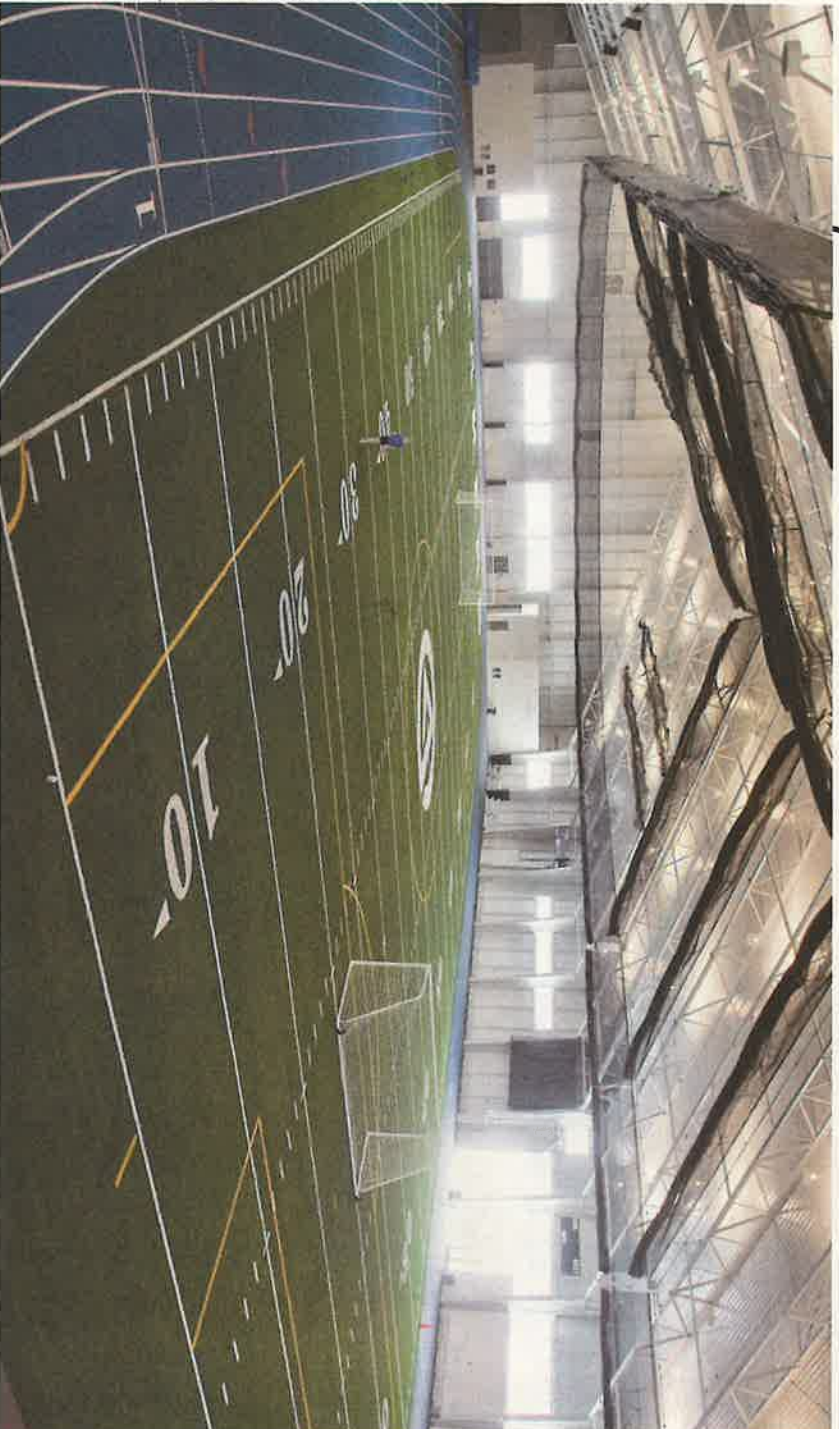


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**New construction on the GVSU Allendale Campus includes the new \$18 million Movement Sciences and Indoor Recreation Facility, the Turf Building, and a \$12 million addition to Mackinac Hall.**

# College of Construction

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ALLENDALE — While construction companies and architectural firms throughout the state struggle to find enough new projects to keep their employees busy, a handful of local companies have found the solution involves going back to school.

**Design Plus, Integrated Architecture, Pioneer Construction, Christman Construction and Erhardt Construction** all found plenty of work in the last several months as they helped officials at **Grand Valley State University** design and construct new facilities and build additions onto existing facilities at both the GVSU Allendale and Grand Rapids campuses.

James Moyer, assistant VP of facilities planning, said the projects have included a 30,000-square-foot addition to the Kirkhof Center, a new 83,000-square-foot addition to Mackinac Hall, a 138,000-square-foot indoor recreation facility, and a new Honors College featuring 200,000 square feet of additional student housing.

Moyer noted that as GVSU has continued to expand its academic programs, student enrollment has followed suit. The result is a greater need for classrooms, student housing and faculty facilities.

He said the various expansions will allow the university to “reclaim labs that have had to be used as classrooms, partially address the shortage of faculty office space, and allow existing spaces to be renovated to function for other needs.”

Moyer said the \$33 million Glenn A. Niemeyer Honors Hall, located along Calder Drive on the Allendale campus’ south end, includes four apartments for visiting faculty, about 450 beds for students, nearly two dozen large and small gathering rooms, and 41,000 square feet of academic space.

Scott Veine, project manager and director of sustainability for Pioneer Construction, said the marrying of residential and academic facilities together at the Honors Hall posed a host of challenges, including the need to cre-



**Pioneer Construction headed up construction of a \$6.2 million addition to the Kirkhof Center, which is now home to GVSU’s Multi-Cultural Affairs and Women’s Center departments, as well as the university’s campus newspaper, radio station, and television station.**

ate different security systems to serve the building’s two functions.

Veine said the challenge of working under time constraints to finish the Honors Hall project intensified when one of its lumber suppliers suffered a fire and lost its entire inventory.

Pioneer Construction also headed up construction of the \$6.2 million addition at the Kirkhof Center, which is now home to GVSU’s Multi-Cultural Affairs and Women’s Center departments, as well as the university’s campus newspaper, radio station, and television station.

Referring to the Kirkhof Center as “the epicenter of the campus,” Veine said his crew had to complete its construction work in a way that allowed students and staff to continue to occupy the center. He said that through coordination between his company and GVSU officials, bookstore and food service operations at the center were never disrupted.

At Mackinac Hall, the \$12 million addition added two 70-seat caserooms, eight 48-seat classrooms, and twelve 32-seat classrooms, along with more 120 faculty and department offices, several conference rooms,

gathering areas for students and faculty, a food service area, and a courtyard that lies between the original, 10-year-old Mackinac Hall and the addition.

John Gorman, a site manager for Christman Construction, served as project engineer in construction of the Mackinac addition.

“The main challenge was that the project was in the center of an operating college campus,” Gorman said, adding that his crews had to deal with the logistics of moving materials to the site while a “lot of college kids were walking around.”

Gorman said some interesting features of the addition include a live roof that covers a portion of the structure’s roof. A live roof is created by applying vegetation on top of a roof membrane and is sometimes featured in green buildings, Gorman said.

John Weiss, president and CEO of Design Plus, said his architectural firm designed the additions at both Mackinac Hall and the Honors College.

He said Design Plus and GVSU have a long-standing relationship and that univer-

sity officials have shown a consistent commitment to sustainability in their construction projects.

“They do it because it’s the right thing to do and they believe in it,” Weiss said of GVSU officials’ commitment to sustainability and environmentally-friendly practices.

The biggest project on the university’s construction list was the new, \$18 million Movement Sciences and Indoor Recreation Facility, referred to by GVSU officials and students as the “Turf Building.” Centrally located between the campus’ football stadium, softball field, and basketball arena, the Turf Building will serve as a training and practice facility for GVSU’s various sports teams and will be home to the university’s intramural and physical education programs and classes.

Kevin Kamradt, a project architect at Integrated Architecture, the firm that designed the Turf Building, said the facility is on a par with similar facilities at Notre Dame and Akron universities, two sites Kamradt and other Integrated staff visited in preparation for designing the GVSU structure.

Kamradt said the “sheer size” of the building, which encloses an indoor football field surrounded by an athletic track, posed a design challenge. He said that because of the Allendale campus clay soil, Integrated also designed rain gardens created to hold water on site rather than funnel it elsewhere with traditional drainage techniques.

Dale Brammer, senior VP at Erhardt Construction, said GVSU officials “placed a strong emphasis on value added, rather than on just creating perceptions.” Brammer said the officials made it clear that the LEED certification standards they wanted to achieve at the Turf Building and other construction sites around campus were truly about functionality rather than accolades.

Brammer said Erhardt was able to divert 97 percent of construction site waste away from a landfill and toward renewable resource use.

Asked about challenges in the project, Brammer said, “There were many issues, such as coordination of athletic events, coordination of student events, student safety.” But those issues were addressed through teamwork between GVSU’s construction and facilities staff and Erhardt employees, he said. **AHEB**