Public/Civic Project Award winner: SLAC Science and User Support Building | Structures 2016 (SLIDESHOW)

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Public/Civic Project
SLAC Science and User Support Building
Menlo Park

Some of the world's biggest recent scientific advancements have taken place at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in Menlo Park. But its facilities haven't always been something to write home about.

The SLAC Science and User Support Building aimed to provide a modern, collaborative space for scientists while also welcoming visitors and paying homage to the past. The project houses a 350-seat auditorium with a green roof, a cafeteria with two patio areas, multiple conference rooms, a large training room and several collaboration spaces throughout the four-story atrium.

The building is important not just for the scientists who work at SLAC, but also for the institution's larger image. It's the gateway to the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory Campus, and contains a visitor's center and museum that contains pieces of the lab's history and scientific contributions.

Size: 62,125 square feet

Cost:$51.6 million

Status: Completed September 2015

History: The building was constructed on the site of the former Panofsky Auditorium, where the Homebrew Computer Club met in the 1970s and 1980s — where Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak introduced the first Apple computer. To recognize the history, the design/build team of Hensel Phelps and KMD Architects reclaimed 14 seats in the new auditorium — one seat for every Nobel Laureate who worked at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory.

Green features: Designers used both active and passive heating and cooling strategies. In essence, the system uses natural ventilation via manual and automatically controlled windows, and radiant heating and cooling in the concrete floors. The project is seeking LEED Gold certification.

Other features: A 350-seat auditorium; a large cafeteria with two patio areas; multiple conference rooms; a large training room; and several collaboration spaces.

Key Players
Developers: Stanford University and U.S. Department of Energy Office of Science

General contractor: Hensel Phelps Construction Co.

Architect: KMD Architects

Financing: Department of Energy/SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory