

Shepley Bulfinch to Revitalize 108,000 sf UMass Student Union

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Boston, MA Shepley Bulfinch has been selected to design the revitalization of UMass-Amherst's 108,000 s/f Student Union building.

Shepley Bulfinch's design will integrate the University's broader sustainability goals for building performance and energy efficiency with an eye toward LEED certification. The project is anticipated to be complete by fall 2020.

The \$55 million Student Union renovation will transform the facility into a modern hub of student activity and interaction, while reinvigorating the historic campus core around it. With a focus on re-connecting the building to nature and the surrounding landscape, the renovated Student Union will radiate outward from the geographical heart of the campus to once again become the nexus of student engagement.

"The UMass Student Union building has a rich history of serving our students in many capacities, and the time has come to revitalize this important building in the core of campus," said Shane Conklin, associate vice chancellor facilities & campus services at UMass-Amherst. "The design team at Shepley Bulfinch has a unique and personal passion for this project as well as an architectural vision to restore the Student Union to its original cultural vibrancy. We are excited to work with them to strengthen and energize the UMass Amherst Student Union for current students and future generations."

When it opened in 1957, the Student Union was the first building on the Amherst campus dedicated solely to student activities, providing space for the 4,800 students on campus to socialize, form clubs and organizations, and house student-run businesses and student government. The building has not been renovated since it was completed, posing significant space and related infrastructure deficiencies. Today, the Student Union serves 30,000 students and more than 400 registered student organizations, requiring a re-imagined and robust building to better serve students on campus.

Reinventing the building as a social and cultural incubator, the design will embrace student entrepreneurship, organizations, and events to transform the Student Union into a refreshed stage for campus life. Shepley Bulfinch's design will revitalize the Student Union into a "global campus living room" for events, symposia, and colloquia that support multidisciplinary learning and connection to the community and the world beyond. The renovated facility will offer a destination for student collaboration and leadership and create flexible and adaptable spaces to accommodate the needs of a changing and dynamic student body.

Features of the new Student Union are planned to include:

- A highly active "Main Street" promenade with concentrated retail, student services, and dining options
- A consolidated "Media Center" serving the Collegian, UVC-TV19, and WMUA and positioned to be visible from the Main St.
- A new entry and outdoor plaza with an organic connection to the Lincoln Campus Center
- Enlivened student business space and new meeting, activity, office, and assembly space
- A new "black box" theater designed to provide additional on-campus performance and screening space
- A Student Organization Resource Center to provide direction and assistance to visitors

The project team includes:

- Architect: Shepley Bulfinch
- **Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing: Vanderweil Engineers**
- Landscape Architecture: CRJA-IBI Group
- Structural / Building Envelope / Sustainability: Thornton Thomasetti