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The Architectural Team and Suffolk Construction Celebrate Ribbon-Cutting for Sustainable Army Barracks—New Building is Energy Efficient, Green

A new U.S. Army barracks project in Fort Myer, Va., is a model of sustainable building and living for military personnel, with special features for security and energy-efficiency to improve quality of life and reduce operating costs.

FORT MYER, VA, July 22, 2011 – A new exemplar of the U.S. Army's commitment to green building and durable, energy-efficient operations opens on July 26th with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony presided by Colonel Carl R. Coffman, Jr., commander of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall at Fort Myer, Virginia.

The new, three-story barracks Building 421, which is aiming for a LEED Silver certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, was designed by The Architectural Team of Chelsea, Mass., in a design-build venture with Boston-based Suffolk Construction Company. The two companies were awarded the project under a MATOC Multiple Award Task Order Contract (MATOC), the only team in New England to earn this contract type. The ribbon-cutting begins at 3pm at Building 421, as the new barracks are known, next Tuesday.

“In addition to being comfortable and welcoming for unaccompanied enlisted personnel, this is a very energy-efficient building with renewable systems designed to reduce the use of fossil fuels and the production of greenhouse gases,” says Michael Liu, AIA, principal-in-charge for The Architectural Team. “The resulting 30% reduction in energy use sets the bar high for future barracks projects.”

According to Liu, the building incorporates a solar water-heating system and a continuous layer of three-inch insulation behind its brick façade. The groundbreaking for the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall barracks was held in May 2010, and the \$19 million project was substantially completed this past March, according to Suffolk Construction's Darick Edmond, project executive. “It's a 108-room, 216-bed building with all the rooms set up in suite arrangements. There are two doors leading to the bedrooms: The first door opens up into a small hallway that connects the bathroom and kitchen on either side,” he explains. Rather than sharing a bedroom, barracks occupants each share a bathroom and kitchen with a suitemate.

The new barracks also have been built with recycled materials, highly efficient windows and heat-recovery wheels, according to Bill Lucas, Directorate of Public Works building coordinator. “The goal of the Army energy policy is for all installations to reduce energy consumption by 3 percent per year, reduce dependence on fossil fuels and reduce production of greenhouse gases,” says Lucas.

In anticipation of the ribbon-cutting, Colonel Coffman praised the effort of all the involved parties. Also attending is Russell B. Hall, Installation Management Command Northeast Region director, who says the building “sets a high standard for all of us to stand by. It’s a beautiful new barracks for the military personnel who serve us.”

Mike DiNapoli, vice-president and general manager of Suffolk Construction Mid-Atlantic Region, adds that the design-build team had “delivered on the promise to build a barracks with a lasting impact on Fort Myer and the armed services, but with a low impact on the environment.”

Other green features of the barracks include automatic sensors on plumbing and lighting fixtures designed to minimize energy and water consumption, says Suzanne Hren, an architect with Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall’s Directorate of Public Works. She added that plumbing fixtures incorporate low-flow technology, and that the insulated-glass window units are all laminated and double-glazed. During construction process, care was taken to ensure no materials were left exposed to the elements.



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“This is about Soldier quality of life. This is about Marine quality of life. This is about Sailor quality of life,” said Col. David E. Anderson, commander of the Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, in a statement at the project’s groundbreaking.

According to Liu, the barracks also represents an important trend in the increasing focus on energy use, sustainable development, and quality of life in the U.S. military. “We’re proud to have been a part of this project, which advances the goals of the armed services while also attending to the opportunity to make our society more competitive, sustainable and lasting,” says Liu.

According to the U.S. Army, Fort Myer, Virginia, traces its origin as a military post to the Civil War. Since then it has been an important Signal Corps post, a showcase for Army cavalry and site of the first flight of an aircraft at a military installation and the first military air fatality. The acres encompassing Fort Myer and Arlington National Cemetery were called Arlington Heights when they were owned in the 1800s by Mary Anna Randolph, granddaughter of Martha Washington’s grandson.

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About The Architectural Team, Inc.

Founded in 1971, The Architectural Team, Inc. is a 60-person master planning and architectural firm that has grown through its design excellence and commitment to responsive and collaborative client relationships. The firm has developed a portfolio of distinctive design solutions for a broad range of building types and programs, and has earned more than 75 awards for design excellence. These include the new construction of large urban mixed-use developments, multifamily residential, commercial, hospitality, recreational, and academic facilities, as well as a national reputation in the area of historic preservation and adaptive reuse. The firm is located in the restored 1840s-era Commandant’s House in Chelsea, Mass. Visit the firm’s website at www.architecturalteam.com.

About Suffolk Construction Company

Suffolk Construction Company, Inc., is one of the largest privately held construction and construction management companies in the United States. Founded in 1982, the company has main offices in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, southeast and west coast regions. Suffolk provides preconstruction, construction management, design/build and general contracting services, and has a strong reputation for delivering challenging building construction projects in the healthcare, education, science/technology, government and commercial sectors.