



By Tracy Eisnaugle



## RINGLING COLLEGE *of Art + Design*

Artfully combining the rich heritage of Ringling with the latest trend of sustainable building, Ringling College of Art and Design goes green. Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. has been contracted to build two new facilities on campus, the New Academic Building and the New Student Housing Building. The Academic Building will be a five story sustainable structure consisting of studio gallery spaces and an auditorium. The Student Housing Building will also be a five story sustainable structure consisting of dorm rooms to house up to 228 students.

Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. is not a new comer to The Ringling College of Art and Design or to sustainable building. The company has constructed all of the buildings on the Ringling campus since 1992, including the Keating Center which was recently completed in 2008. Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. is a member of the Florida Green Building Coalition, U.S. Green Building Council and Sustainable Sarasota. They have been actively asserting themselves in the green building front. Their first sustainable project was the Schroeder-Manatee Ranch corporate headquarters in Lakewood Ranch which was awarded green status from the Florida Green Building Coalition. A recent press release from Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. stated, "Our commitment to eco-friendly building is exemplified by the fact that we have eight LEED Accredited Professionals

(green experts) on staff and that we are presently working on eight LEED projects."

The two new facilities being constructed at The Ringling College of Art and Design will include numerous sustainable features including; a 25,000 gallon rain-water cistern, energy efficient heating and air conditioning, photovoltaic solar panels, low emissivity glass windows, cool roof systems, smart indoor lighting, and low flow commodes. Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. is proud to practice construction waste management, recycling 50% of the construction waste materials such as; concrete, metal, and lumber.

The 25,000 gallon rainwater cistern will collect the building's water run-off from their roofs into a large underground storage vessel. This water will then be used to flush commodes and urinals, reducing the use of domestic water, and at the same time decreasing the amount of rainwater run-off into the storm drainage system.

To supply energy efficient heating, cooling and ventilation to each of the buildings a direct expansion variable refrigerant system will be utilized. This system allows different spaces, even if located on the same floor, to independently control their desired temperature, allowing the system to only function when and where it is needed.

Both buildings will be equipped with low emissivity glass windows and cool

roof systems. The windows will have an ultra-thin layer of reflective material applied to the glass to repel a significant amount of the sun's radiant heat without drastically diminishing the sought after natural light to illuminate the interior. The roofs will also have a reflective surface, reducing the amount of solar radiation absorption allowing the structure to maintain its interior temperature and remain cooler in the smoldering summer.

Energy saving photocell interior lighting with motion sensors will switch lights off during times of sufficient interior daylight and turn lights on when the amount sunlight diminishes. Motion sensors will also automatically turn lights on when they are needed and automatically turn lights off in areas that are unoccupied.

The most noticeable green feature will be the exterior sun control devices, a cutting edge system that will cover exterior areas of the building during intense sunlight conditions. Visually striking aluminum shades will consciously function to reduce the amount of interior heat gain within the buildings.

The Ringling College of Art and Design collaborating with Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. is instituting a new standard of form following function. Both new facilities are scheduled for completion in August of 2009.