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**SmithGroupJJR and River Architects Selected to Design**

**Instructional Science Facility at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**

***Result of increase in demand for allied health and STEM education***

**La Crosse, WI, Nov. 25, 2014** – The new $82 million instructional science facility at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse will be designed by a collaboration of national architecture and engineering firm [SmithGroupJJR](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/) in association with local partner [River Architects](http://www.river-architects.com).

This project will provide a complete replacement of Cowley Hall, the current UW-La Crosse science instruction facility built in 1965. The increased demand for access to the allied health professions programs as well as basic science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses required by other degree programs has greatly increased pressure on the existing laboratory facilities. The intense use of the facilities, coupled with Cowley Hall’s aged infrastructure, made it increasingly problematic to accommodate students and deliver instruction.

The first phase of the project includes a new 180,000-square-foot building located immediately north of Cowley Hall to house the instructional and research labs for the University’s physical and life sciences programs. Cowley Hall’s classrooms, lecture halls and faculty offices will remain operational during construction of the initial phase.

“This facility will alleviate the pressure on current laboratories that are unable to accommodate the level or intensity of use that is needed,” said Tony LoBello, SmithGroupJJR Learning Studio leader in Chicago. “With more than eighty-five percent of the building dedicated to instructional and research labs, the new facility will address the critical, immediate needs of students and researchers.”

The second phase of the building project will include the demolition of Cowley Hall, to be replaced by a connected, 148,000-square-foot structure. It will satisfy the balance of the program needs such as classrooms, collaborative learning spaces, offices, conference rooms, and other ancillary departmental and building support areas.

Upon completion of the two-phased building project, the University will have a distinctive new home for science instruction and include the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Geography/Earth Science, Mathematics, Microbiology, Physics, River Studies and the offices of the Dean of the College of Science and Health.

Phase one is currently in preliminary design stages and construction is estimated to complete in 2018. LEED certification is targeted.

**The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse** ([www.uwlax.edu](http://www.uwlax.edu)), founded in 1909, is one of 13 four-year campuses in the University of Wisconsin System. It offers more than 90 majors, minors and special programs for undergraduates in business, education, the sciences, the arts, health, recreation, physical education and liberal studies. Twenty-five graduate programs are available. More than 10,500 students attend classes on the compact, 128-acre campus. UW-L boasts a student to faculty ratio of 20:1 and an average class size of 26 students. Located on the banks of the scenic Mississippi River in western Wisconsin, the La Crosse metropolitan area with its 110,000 residents serves as a regional center for shopping, business and industry.

**SmithGroupJJR** ([www.smithgroupjjr.com](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/)) is a recognized [integrated](http://bit.ly/18pDMZI) architecture, engineering and planning firm ranked Top 10 in the U.S. by *Building Design + Construction* magazine. Notable projects recently completed include the new $44.5 million New Education Building (Centennial Hall) at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, which opened in April 2014. The $95 million Electrical and Computer Engineering ([ECE](http://bit.ly/17xJjyK)) Building for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was completed summer 2014. A national leader in [sustainable](http://www.smithgroupjjr.com/sustainability) design, SmithGroupJJR has 344 LEED professionals and 122 LEED certified projects.

**River Architects, Inc. (**[www.river-architects.com](http://www.river-architects.com)), located in La Crosse, WI, is a collaborative architecture firm practicing in the tri-state area of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Formed in 1981, River Architects focuses on projects in six distinct studios: historic, education, religious, residential, commercial and civic. The firm’s design work can be seen throughout the University of Wisconsin System on five of the 13 university campuses. Among River Architect’s completed campus projects is UW-La Crosse’s Centennial Hall, a LEED Gold, 188,000-square-foot academic building located at the center of the campus. The project received the 2011 Best Project Award from the State of Wisconsin.

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