



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRINNELL COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITY WINS DESIGN AWARD

Grinnell College's green building commitment is gaining attention from those who know sustainable design. The college's environmental education center at the Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA) has received a design award for sustainability, presented biennially by the Chicago American Institute of Architects. Chicago architects Holabird & Root, who designed the CERA building in 2004, were awarded the Design Excellence Award for Sustainability, which celebrates building design that integrates architecture with technology and natural systems, fosters site appropriateness, and protects and enhances the environment.

CERA is a 365-acre environmental research preserve located approximately 14 miles from the Grinnell College campus. Completed in April 2005, the on-site environmental education center includes two classrooms with flexible layouts, a teaching laboratory, greenhouse, and support spaces for field biology and environmental sciences.

The CERA education center was designed by Holabird & Root to minimize disturbance to the surrounding prairie, maximize exposure for winter solar heating, and incorporate other sustainable design features such as geothermal energy and a storm water cistern which collects rainwater for plumbing use and irrigating the attached greenhouse. A 50 kW wind turbine provides more than 90 percent of the electricity needs for the center and reduces carbon dioxide emissions related to energy use, which is a Grinnell College strategic initiative.

The CERA education center was also the first building in Iowa to receive the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Rated designation. The Grinnell College campus has since applied for LEED certification for its recently completed student center and a science building addition, also designed by Holabird & Root, which is currently under construction.

For more information about the sustainable features at the Grinnell College Conard Environmental Research Area, go to <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/biology/cera/about/>