

Future Maritime Center of Excellence to Transform Coast Guard Academy Waterfront



The U.S. Coast Guard Academy is situated along the Thames River in New London, Connecticut. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

NEW LONDON, Conn. – A more than \$23 million project is now underway at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy that will transform the waterfront area of the 90-year-old campus, the academy's public affairs office said in a July 29 release.

The future Maritime Center of Excellence (MCOE) will enhance the waterfront facilities at the Academy by offering interactive and high-tech classrooms for a variety of educational and leadership development courses.

The 20,000 square foot structure will be the Academy's first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building and will highlight the unique waterfront leadership programs and nationally prominent intercollegiate sailing program.

In a twist on the traditional groundbreaking ceremony, leaders signed a ceremonial steel beam which will be used in the construction of the future center during a July 29 event to commemorate the start of the project.

Present at the event were Rear Adm. Bill Kelly, superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, retired Coast Guard Capt. Andrea Marcille, president of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association and retired Coast Guard Vice Adm. Manson Brown, chair of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

The modern design of the MCOE includes ambitious sustainability design goals in line with coordinated climate

resiliency efforts across the service, and one of several lines of effort that the Department of Homeland Security and its component agencies have taken to address the dangers posed by global climate change.

The construction is targeting LEED Gold certification. LEED certification involves a set of rating systems for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of modern buildings to achieve sustainability and resource efficiency goals.

“This LEED certified, multi-purpose facility will serve as gathering spot for cadets and officer candidates from across our great nation,” said Rear Adm. Kelly. “It will be a space where young women and men can gather to learn and grow and I am certain it will serve as a facility that will enhance an appreciation for the water and all its power and beauty and ultimately it will help us instill a liking for the sea and its lore.”

The interior spaces of the future center have been designed with access to daylight, and natural ventilation to minimize reliance on artificial lighting and air conditioning. Double-height spaces for vessel maintenance, office space, and an atrium will provide natural ventilation. Other sustainability goals include the exploration of ground-source heating and cooling, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting. The building exterior will also feature durable, resilient materials that are easily maintained.

With a curvilinear vaulted roof, wooden decks, and true north orientation the building is designed to highlight the waterfront landscape. The new facility will also feature interactive and high-tech classrooms such as the Science and Engineering Innovation Laboratory designed to encourage collaboration in areas of digital processing, robotics, alternative fuels and emissions, and environmental and coastal resiliency among others.

This represents a significant step forward as the Academy works to recapitalize 1930's infrastructure and build modernized training and education venues to deliver the knowledge, skills, experience and values necessary to develop the future Coast Guard workforce.