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# Iconic ECSU buildings get makeover

**MICHAEL ROULEAU**  
EASTERN CONNECTICUT  
STATE UNIVERSITY

**WILLIMANTIC** — Two fabled buildings on the Eastern Connecticut State University campus reopened their doors this fall after undergoing extensive renovations for more than a year.

Shafer Hall, formerly home to the university's fine arts programs, has been transformed into a loft-style residence hall.

Meanwhile, Goddard Hall, the university's first facility devoted to science, has been outfitted with fresh labs and technology and finished with a contemporary interior.

Constructed in 1946, Shafer Hall remains one of Eastern's most historic buildings.

While major renovations have converted it into a residence hall, the building retains its original glazed block arches, wooden benches lining the hallway and other classic touches.

The original lobby's raised paneling was restored and continues to serve as an entrance to the newly remodeled auditorium and café.

The building has a capacity for 91 residents.

The residential suites include single apartments with kitchenettes, sitting areas, breakfast bars and lofts for bedroom furniture.

Three- and four-person suites feature private bedrooms, kitchens and separate bath and toilet facilities.

The former Harry Hope Theatre will soon be reopened as a gym for students campus-wide.



**Above, an exterior look at Eastern Connecticut State University's newest dorm — Shafer Hall, which was converted from the headquarters of the school's fine arts department. Below, an interior view of a dorm room there.** Courtesy of ECSU



Other building highlights include a game room, a kitchen lounge where students can gather to cook group dinners, as well as computer, study and meeting rooms.

All new mechanical systems, electrical, plumbing, sprinklers, data connectivity, windows, floors and roofing meet the university's standards for safety, technology

and minimal environmental impact.

The renovation was designed in accordance with the Connecticut High Performance Building Regulations, which closely aligns with the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certification

standards.

The project was funded by bonds from the Connecticut Health & Educational Facilities Funds Authority (CHEFA) at a cost of \$24.6 million.

Construction began in August 2018. The architect was Stantec and the contractor was O&G Industries Inc.

The newly reopened Goddard Hall marks the completion of the Goddard/Communication Renovation Project. The Communication Building reopened in fall 2018. The adjoining buildings now represent a modernized academic complex home to several departments.

Completely gutted and rehabbed, Goddard includes fresh labs, classrooms and offices.

There's a suite of six labs for the psychology department as well as a lab for the Kinesiology and Physical Education Department, outfitted with an interactive wall and workout equipment for research.

The building also has new HVAC, plumbing, sprinkler and heating systems. New windows and improvements to the exterior make the building more energy efficient, also aligning it with Connecticut High Performance Building Regulations.

The two-phased Goddard/Communication project was funded by state-appropriated bond funds at a cost of \$21.7 million. Goddard construction began in May 2017. The architect was MDS National Inc. and the contractor was PDS Engineering & Construction Inc.