

Atwater Commons Dining & Residence Halls

New Construction

Site Development

Constructed between August 2002 and January 2005, the Atwater Commons Project consists of two residence halls containing 154 student beds in suite configurations, and a dining hall that houses a 225-seat dining facility as well as a lounge and seminar room.

The Residence Halls

The residence halls face one another in a staggered fashion across the sloping lawn of Atwater Common. Each is placed parallel to and slightly engaged with the two ridges forming Atwater's landscape. The halls bend slightly with the landscape contours, subtly breaking the long sides of the halls into smaller increments. The halls are approximately 90' apart at the closest interval framing the view to and from



the north. Their roof ridge lines stay constant although the residence halls vary in height relative to their relationship to the terrain. The green falls away making Residence Hall A a four to five-story building accommodating 84 beds and Residence Hall B a three to four-story building accommodating 70 beds. The buildings contain various sized (3, 4, 5 bedroom) flexible suite arrangements and some single rooms. Both halls are vertically accessed through lobbies serving stairs. Each stair serves six-to-ten suites with a maximum number of students using any entry totaling 40. The suites are oriented 'through' the building (across its width) with exposures and views to the east and west. Single rooms are grouped vertically about one stair and entry. The residence halls are naturally ventilated. At the lowest levels, each hall contains other programs including a library, seminar room, and laundry.

The majority of materials selected for the residence and dining halls - inside and out, for construction and finish - reflect the College's commitment to selecting materials local to Vermont and the region, durable and of long-life, and generally 'green' or sustainable to the environment.

The Dining Hall

The dining hall is positioned as a gateway on the path to the Atwater Commons faculty residence to conveniently serve all students of the Commons. This puts the dining and social center in the geographical center of all buildings forming the Commons. It is oriented to capture views to the southeast toward the Town of Middlebury and the Green Mountains beyond. Engaging the dining hall into the eastern slope reduces the building's mass, and provides for a view of its landscaped roof, extending the landscape of Atwater into, around and over the building. Skylights, roof ventilation stacks and fireplace chimneys provide a sculptural landmark to the

structure from the Common and College's main campus path. Eastern (morning) and western (evening) light enters the hall and serving areas.

Service spaces are located below in a base or plinth engaged into the slope. The base itself is faced in lead-coated copper shingles and pierced by the pathway stair. The dining hall floor proper, containing a student lounge, reception area, seminar room, and other kitchen services is primarily glass in wood frames with wood infill walls. The fireplace chimney is limestone and brick, sharing a common element with the residence halls. Trims and other surfaces of the soffits and roof are lead-coated copper.

Residences Completed:	August 2004
Dining Hall Completed:	January 2005
Total Square Footage:	Residence Halls 93,474 sf
	Dining Hall 21,423 sf
Project Cost:	\$32,600,000
Project Manager:	Mark Gleason
Architect:	KieranTimberlake Associates, Philadelphia, PA
Construction Manager:	Lee Kennedy Co., Boston, MA
Awards:	AIA Pennsylvania 2003 Honor Award Excellence in Architectural Design ASHRAE Regional Technology Award 2004-2005 Honorable Mention for Institutional Buildings Boston Society of Architects - Citation 2007 Sustainable Design Awards Building Stone Institute 2008 Tucker Design Award



[Atwater Dining Hall & Landscape brochure](#) (pdf 5,739kb)

[Natural Ventilation & Green Roof Strategies project summary](#) for (pdf 439kb)

[For more info on the sustainable design features of this and other Middlebury projects.](#)