

Phoenix, Arizona has a burgeoning Biotechnology industry and in order to help fill the demand for skilled employees the Paradise Valley Community College plans to double its Biotechnology Program. The new Life Science Building provides new instructional space, housing the college's Anatomy, Physiology, General Biology, Biotechnology, Microbiology, Marine Biology and Environmental Biology Programs.



The PVCC Life Science Building is a fusion of unique educational laboratory and specific environmental response, a manifest symbol of a commitment to collaborative learning, creating an interactive forum for both the formal and informal exchange of ideas within the context of sustainable and responsive desert architecture.

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For the best in the development of the new Life Sciences Building, three major conceptual ideas

Weave the campus fabric:

Create a major campus amenity and help foster campus-wide interaction by interlacing classrooms, a major campus walk, informal gathering spaces and a campus green under one roof. Facing the future campus green, this Big Porch creates an amenity for the entire college community and establishes a truly three-dimensional public space. The large, east-facing porch shades a gently sloping bridge, an extension of primary campus circulation, which connects the existing campus to the remote Athletic Fields and to the location of future campus expansion. This simple thread weaves the Life Sciences building and these peripheral facilities into the fabric of the campus.



Promote collaboration:

Develop a catalyst for innovation through collaboration. The series of eight exterior collaboration pods located under the Big Porch roof provide welcoming, informal gathering spaces. The various sized pods incorporate power, data, lights, marker boards, fans and furniture to create highly functional spaces that overlook a future campus green. Each collaboration pod is a different size and proportion and features a bridged connection back to the building. By presenting the pods along the main façade, the Life Sciences Building proudly presents its dedication to interaction and collaboration as a primary value of the sciences.





Celebrate the sonoran desert:

Respond to the context of the site. It is of great necessity that the new Life Sciences building respond to the extreme temperatures and intense heat of the desert sun. The large “porch” roof shades the glazing and exterior spaces below reducing the temperature and making the exterior spaces usable for most of the year. The design team also sought to express the beauty and diversity of the Sonoran Desert.





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Projects Details:

Architects: Marlene Imirzian & Associates Llc, Architects

Location/Address: Paradise Valley Community College, Phoenix Arizona, USA

Project Area: 35,403 sf

Project Year: 2009

Construction Manager at Risk: Barton Malow

Lab Consultant: Design for Science

Structural: Paragon Structural Design

MEP: ESD - Energy Systems Design

Landscape: The Moore/Swick Partnership

Civil: Kland Huval Engineers

Audio Visual: Convergent Technologies

Cost: Rider Levett Bucknall

Client: Maricopa Community College District

Photographs: Bill Timmerman, Timmerman Photography Inc

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