

July 6, 2005

UWSP Learning Resources Center supports a “Green Roof”

The Albertson Learning Resources Center (LRC) at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point has received a new roof, but most people would be surprised by the choice of materials used in the project.

The east section of the LRC’s first floor has received the first “green roof” in Central Wisconsin. In June the stones that once covered the roof were cleared away and replaced by a GreenGrid System, a set of interlocking, recycled plastic modules. Patented and installed by Weston Solutions, the system rests directly on the roof membrane and holds soil and plants. The five species of sedum plantings used for the project will eventually cover the roof in a colorful mosaic.

Though the installation of the green roof was completed at the end of June, the young plants are not expected to fully take hold until sometime in 2007. In the meantime, a makeshift irrigation system operated by staff volunteers will provide water to the roof.

Once fully mature, the green roof will be able to absorb an entire inch of rain and will be mostly self-sustaining. The nearly \$100,000 project will serve several functions, including improving the appearance of the building, extending the life of the roof membrane by protecting it from high temperatures and ultraviolet light and reducing energy costs by acting as insulation in the winter and creating shade in the summer. Outside of the building, the green roof also serves to improve air quality by trapping undesirable gases, volatile organic compounds and airborne particulates.

The idea was originally introduced to the UWSP Sustainability Committee two years ago as a student initiative to improve the campus. The project was supported by the UWSP Global Environmental Management (GEM) Education Center, University Library, Wisconsin Division of State Facilities, UWSP Facility Services and Wisconsin Public Service.

More information and photos are on the Web at
<http://library.uwsp.edu/news/news154.htm>.