

THE

BULLETIN

OF ACUI



RENOVATION & CONSTRUCTION SHOWCASE





UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA
MEMORIAL UNION
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA

★ **NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**SUBMITTED BY: CHERYL GREW-GILLEN, DIRECTOR, MEMORIAL UNION;
 AARON FLYNN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MEMORIAL UNION FACILITIES
 AND OPERATIONS**

CAMPUS TYPE: FOUR-YEAR, PUBLIC

FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT: 13,772

PROJECT BROKE GROUND: OCTOBER 2019

PROJECT COMPLETED: AUGUST 2021

TOTAL AREA: 154,081 SQ. FT.

FLOORS: 4

PROJECT COST: \$80 MILLION

**ARCHITECTS: WTW ARCHITECTS – PITTSBURGH;
 JLG ARCHITECTS – GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA**

Great things take time, and patience paid off last year when the doors swung open at the University of North Dakota’s \$80 million Memorial Union. Beginning with a campus assessment in 2015 by ACUI’s College Union and Student Activities Evaluation Program, followed by a facility condition index report on equipment and infrastructure, and still yet a two-tiered planning study from eventual project architect WTW, staff, faculty, students, alumni, and administrators at North Dakota made sure their planning process would be thorough and collaborative.

As a project overseen by the university’s Facilities Management and Planning, Design, and Construction departments, some aspects of the project were inherently designed to align with the campus master plan, allowing broader priorities to provide additional guidance and framework for the project. In the end both a renovation with expansion and a phased renovation project were both ruled out over a new construction project.

“The planning process exposed program needs and desires that would have been challenging to accommodate in renovating the spaces,” said Chery Grew-Gillen, director of Memorial Union. “Outcomes of the assessments showed the building had substantial accessibility and life safety shortfalls, as well as systems with significant need of maintenance or replacement.”

In 2018 a student government-led initiative to increase student fees was passed, followed by a bond issue, and a commitment of additional university funding that would be provided after the facility opened.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA



What resulted from the decision was a sense of pride, energy, and excitement throughout the greater campus community in a facility that would become a destination point for anyone visiting the campus. Branded locations throughout the building and exterior spaces are now primary stops for university media, students, and guests looking to capture photographs, selfies, and other university marketing opportunities, and the use of union spaces by student organizations has doubled.

A new retail dining concept provides varied seating styles and spaces, including patio seating, with selections available from five different venues, some of which are supported by a catering and bakery kitchen. Ballrooms have adjacent banquet set-up spaces, the main ballroom has direct access to a service elevator, and acoustic barrier ceilings and wall panels contain sound between event and dining spaces.

Nearly a dozen meeting rooms, a dozen collaborative pods, a food pantry, art gallery, pride center, mothering room, and changing rooms showcase purposeful amenities under one roof. A hearing loop system is provided in two ballrooms, providing convenient audio support for those with hearing aids equipped with a T-Coil, and the two ballrooms and the main fireplace lounge also have electrochromic glazing that uses solar sensors to automatically adjust the tint of the windows to react to the amount of sun entering the space. A branding consultant worked with the design team and the project steering committee to create a variety of installations throughout the building to highlight campus history, honor current and past student veterans, foster a sense of inclusion, and imbue the spirit of the University of North Dakota throughout the facility.



★ NEW FACILITIES

RETAIL DINING FOOD COURT (FIVE VENUES): 4,676 SQ. FT.
 STARBUCKS: 2,334 SQ. FT.
 CONVENIENCE STORE: 1,205 SQ. FT.
 SHARED CATERING AND BAKERY KITCHEN: 3,058 SQ. FT.
 STUDENT INVOLVEMENT, PARENT PROGRAMS,
 AND STUDENT GOVERNMENT: 2,686 SQ. FT.
 SOCIAL STAIR PROGRAMMING VENUE: 1,609 SQ. FT.
 COMMON LOUNGE SPACES: 11,172 SQ. FT.
 SUITE CO-SHARED LOUNGE SPACE: 2,633 SQ. FT.
 CONFIGURABLE BALLROOM: 10,794 SQ. FT.

BALLROOM AND MEDIA/PRODUCTION GALLERY: 3,921 SQ. FT.
 FOUR CONFIGURABLE MEETING ROOMS: 724-1,432 SQ. FT.
 SEVEN SMALL MEETING ROOMS: 225-528 SQ. FT.
 REFLECTION SPACE/CHANGING ROOMS: 474 SQ. FT.
 12 COLLABORATION PODS: 1,215 SQ. FT.
 PRIDE CENTER: 662 SQ. FT.
 ART GALLERY: 1,236 SQ. FT.
 FOOD PANTRY: 244 SQ. FT.
 MOTHERING ROOM: 102 SQ. FT.
 MID-GAMES ROOM: 1,100 SQ. FT.