

ABOUT BNIM

BNIM is one of the most significant design firms working to redefine practice in the realm of green architecture today. As early pioneers in the arena of sustainable design, BNIM continues to shape the national and global agenda for responsible architecture and design excellence. Established in 1970, the firm has emerged nationally as a leading resource for established methodologies, innovative technologies and cutting-edge research in architecture, planning, landscape and workplace design. Our process is deeply rooted in the concept of integration, where clients and collaborators work together to create buildings and spaces that embrace the Triple Bottom Line—a balance of people, planet and prosperity.


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THE SCHOOL OF NURSING AND STUDENT COMMUNITY CENTER

At The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston



The building optimizes daylight and rejects unwanted heat and glare with its **UNIQUE FIVE FACADE DESIGN** that includes the roof

GRANT FAY PARK, to the east, is an amenity to the building, providing shade and a connection to nature for the adjacent spaces.

The annual purchased utilities cost for the School of Nursing is approximately **60% LESS** than comparable buildings on the campus.

The building is **LEED GOLD** certified by the U.S. Green Building Council and received an AIA COTE Top Ten Green Projects Award

RAINWATER STORAGE TANKS capture approximately 826,140 gallons of rainwater or “grey” water (non-potable water) per year fulfilling the estimated 42,000 gallons needed each month for toilet flushing and irrigation.

The School of Nursing and Student Community Center is an education building, student center and faculty administration building – all in one. Its design speaks to the important relationship between the practice of nursing and our built environment in promoting health-centered lives. Each aspect of the design promotes human health by considering human comfort and indoor air quality, access to nature and the ample use of daylight. Simultaneously, the building considers natural resources by using them wisely. The design utilizes many recycled materials and building systems that reduce energy and resource consumption.

“Nursing is not only scientific and knowledge-based; there is also caring and compassion – the healing component. So we wanted a building that feels like a nurturing environment the minute you enter it.”

Patricia L. Starck, D.S.N.
Dean, The UT School of Nursing at Houston

THE BUILDING AT GLANCE:

SCHOOL OF NURSING AND STUDENT COMMUNITY CENTER
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston | Houston, Texas

In 2009, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston – School of Nursing maintained its rank among the top five percent of the nation’s nursing schools in the U.S. News & World Report’s 2010 edition of the influential “America’s Best Graduate Schools” guide. The School of Nursing ranked 19th among 395 master’s programs surveyed, and its gerontological/geriatric nursing program is ranked in the top 10 in this specialty.

SUSTAINABLE FEATURES:

- LEED Gold
- 195,000 square foot, 8-story facility in the Texas Medical Center
- This classroom and academic office building contains 20,000 square feet of classrooms and skills labs, a 200-seat auditorium, a cafe and dining room, bookstore, student lounge, student government offices, a research laboratory and faculty offices.
- This facility was designed using three guiding principles:
 1. Provide physical and visual connections to the park to the east;
 2. Express the interior functions with the design of the exterior massing and materials;
 3. Maximize human health and productivity and minimize the impact on the environment.
- This signature facility creates an identity for the University by providing an important sense of place for students and visitors within the UT Health Science Center at Houston campus.
- The building was designed to save 33% more than a similar ASHRAE 90.1 1999 compliant building.
- The building was designed to easily install photovoltaics on the roof structure for further emission reductions and self-reliance.
- Daylight penetration was a key strategy so that all occupants have access to natural light. Vertical atria and a horizontal atrium provide additional controlled daylight.
- Operable windows are installed throughout the building and could be open approximately 134 days or over 1/3 of the year.
- Indoor air quality has been improved with healthy interior materials such as agri-fiber board and low VOC paints, adhesives and sealants.
- For teaching and offices spaces, an under-floor air distribution system is used to increase energy efficiency and provide increased thermal comfort for building users by providing user controls.
- Flexible building elements such as raised floor and demountable partitions will accommodate building changes over time.
- Water reduction strategies amount to a 93% total reduction of potable water through the reuse of collected rainwater for flushing and irrigation, as compared to a LEED baseline case.
- Efficient plumbing fixtures such as waterless urinals, low flow lavatories and low flow showerheads are installed throughout.
- 75% of the building’s total construction waste was recycled or salvaged—including waste from the deconstruction of the building that had previously occupied the site.
- Building materials were chosen to minimize environmental impact and include recycled brick from a 19th century warehouse in Texas, wood siding from reclaimed cypress logs, aluminum panels specially fabricated with 92% recycled material, and structural steel specified to have more than 80% recycled content.
- The building used 48% fly ash in its concrete mixture, saving approximately 1,808 tons of carbon dioxide that would have been released into the atmosphere.
- Designed in collaboration with Lake | Flato and a consultant team that represented 17 disciplines and specialties.