

DESIGN-BUILD DATELINE

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POST-CONFERENCE ISSUE

**DESIGN-BUILD FOR EDUCATION FACILITIES:
UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITIES**

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PARTNERING WITH SMALL COLLEGES TO ENVISION THE FUTURE

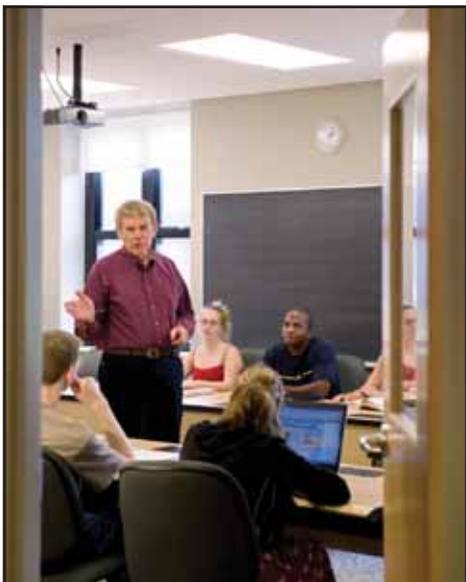
By Andrea Murray, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

How one design-builder focused its energy on understanding the challenges small colleges today face and has enriched and expanded its services to accommodate them.

ACHIEVEMENT, OPPORTUNITY, AND GROWING PAINS

The list of challenges plaguing small college presidents and administrators these days is significant, with the rising cost of doing business, shrinking endowments (if any), and sustained pressure to grow and compete for students at the top. In addition, limited administrative staff makes the logistics of project planning — above and beyond day-to-day operations — even more difficult. Equate the tremendous growth that many small colleges are experiencing to the growing pains a child experiences while approaching adolescence — with those growing pains comes the realization that growth is inevitable and that growth can be painful.

But, let's face it, growth may also be good. And when it's well-managed and thoughtfully planned it can create an occasion for achievement and opportunity.



Academic Building Classroom

Jim Westphalen Photography

THE DIFFERENCE — PLANNING FOR LARGE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

It is important to understand the differences in capital project planning for small and large colleges and universities. Both small and large academic institutions strive to maintain robust curricula and modern and technologically advanced facilities, yet remaining financially stable is much easier for the latter.

Visit any website of a “coffee table” architecture firm, and you’ll find claims like: “Specializing in the planning and design of learning environments,” “The firm is well known for its holistic approach that integrates interior design details and site-related improvements as integral parts of the architectural solution,” “Committed to creating built environments of excellence and distinction that enrich the human experience and exceed client expectations in problem solving,” and so on and so on. These firms are appealing to large institutions for a variety of reasons.

Often the brand name is what large colleges and universities need to attract the dollars for funding a project. In addition, architect and project delivery selections are made by trustees and donors who believe that the resultant buildings will help sell their schools to prospective students. These big-name firms can also develop complex master plans, which may act as menus for interested donors.

Large academic institutions are generally looking for large buildings that will be designed and built over a period of one, two, or several years. In addition, these colleges and universities have architects and project managers on their own staff

to help manage the capital project process from inception through completion. Small colleges, on the other hand, need all the help they can get. While they understand the significance of good design and the importance of quality learning environments, they need results now (or yesterday), and they need good value.

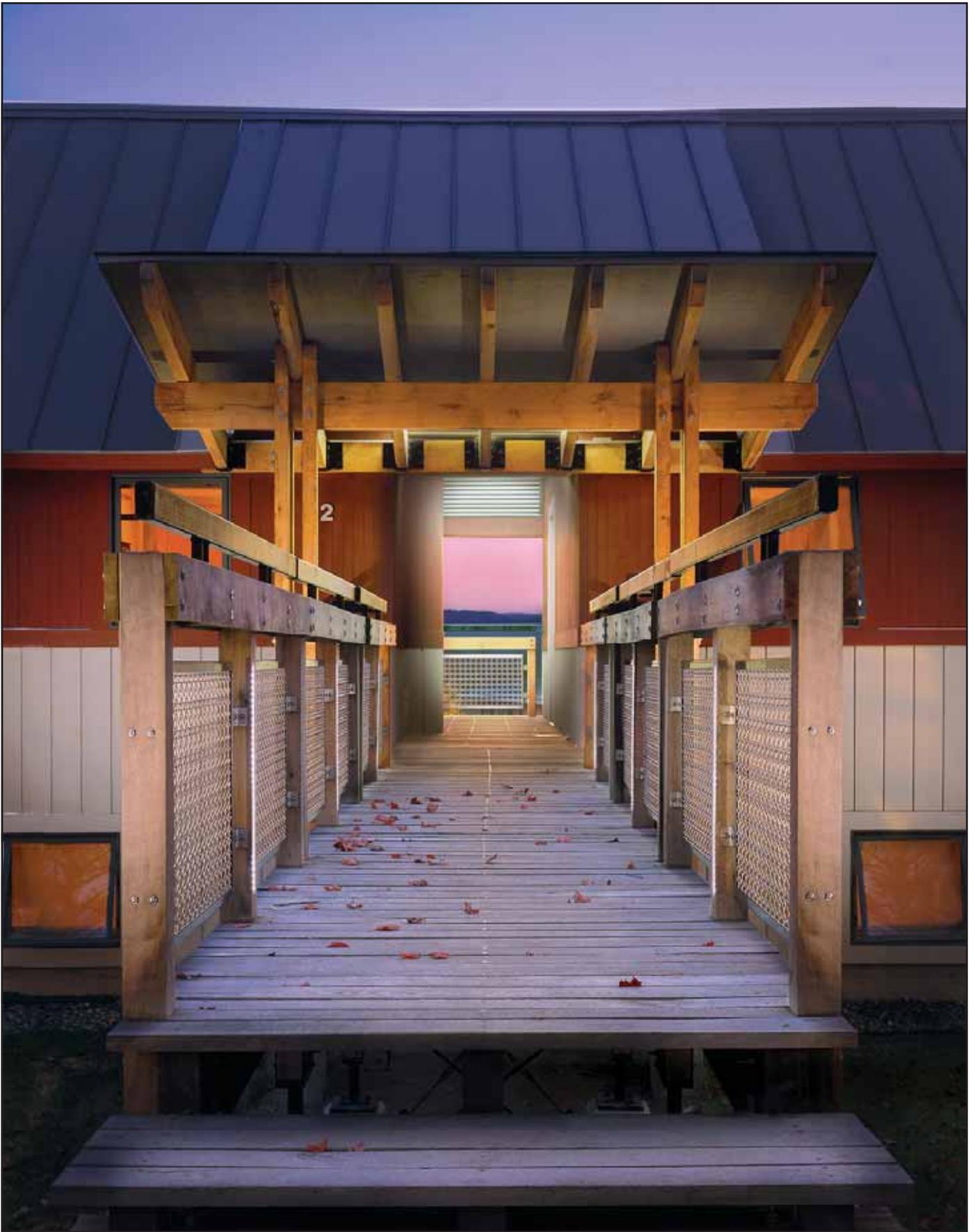
The design component of many design-build collaborations is often as qualified, if not more so, to consider the most important themes for both large and small academic projects. Yet we are uniquely positioned and organized to deliver these thoughtful buildings on time and within budget, an essential service for the smaller college. We are also able to assume sole-source responsibility for the project, or take on the role of campus architect and/or project manager — lifting an often very heavy burden off the shoulders of many college administrators. But is this enough?



Academic Building Auditorium

Jim Westphalen Photography

Many college administrators and trustees are concerned about design-build. Will they have enough control over the process? Will they be able to see where their money is going? The design-builder must break a bit from convention, take these concerns into account, and address them head-on.



The "Bridges" Residence Hall 2

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THE ATYPICAL DESIGN-BUILDER

Bread Loaf Corporation is not your typical design-builder. Bread Loaf integrates planning, architecture, engineering, sustainable design, estimating, and construction services all under one roof. While each component is irreplaceable, in the small college world, planning is key.

At Bread Loaf, we provide our college clients with valuable planning information that can inform

include design, cost, and schedule information. Colleges can use this information to prioritize and inform the project decision-making process.

In addition, being part of the planning process allows us to help shape and define future design-build projects. The success of these projects and opportunities to pursue such projects into design and through construction depends wholly on understanding and meeting a

Photography — Bread Loaf Corporation



Landmark College — Campus Model

future campus improvements and additions. Unlike typical master-planning organizations, we are able to imbue the master plan with dynamic and valuable design, cost, and construction insight — established design-build assets. In addition, we understand that traditional master planning often can be a one- or two-year process involving significant time and money. And we know that these plans are often shelved soon after completion because they are either too complex or quickly out-of-date. Our approach incorporates short-term, focused planning efforts and allows for the easy and timely development of potential project summaries that

client's expectations while delivering an exceptional planning experience. This should go without saying.

When the client has balanced all the various components of the capital project planning process, they will be anxious and eager to begin the building design process. They

will have discussed the planning process and project summaries with trustees and other invested participants. So be ready for the “how do we keep the fox out of the hen-house?” question. Most of us in the design-build world have heard it before and understand that the traditional design-bid-build process can be ripe with conflict-of-interest issues. Clients or owners may be concerned that their interests are not well protected. This is often true as architects and contractors continue to point fingers at each other while trying to absolve themselves from liability. The small-college community shouldn't have to deal with this

nonsense. Design-builders can easily integrate their processes and competitively bid their projects. We can review bid results with our clients and include them in the subcontractor selection process.

Selecting and accepting well-integrated, all-inclusive design-build project delivery methods should be an obvious an easy choice for small colleges.

CASE IN POINT: LANDMARK COLLEGE

Landmark College in Putney, VT, is one of few accredited colleges in the United States designed exclusively for students with dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD), or other specific learning disabilities. This academic support entity began as the Landmark Foundation in 1963 and developed into the Landmark School in 1971. In turn, the Landmark School expanded to offer a one-year college preparatory program in 1982. The success of the college preparatory program then led to the founding of Landmark College in 1984.

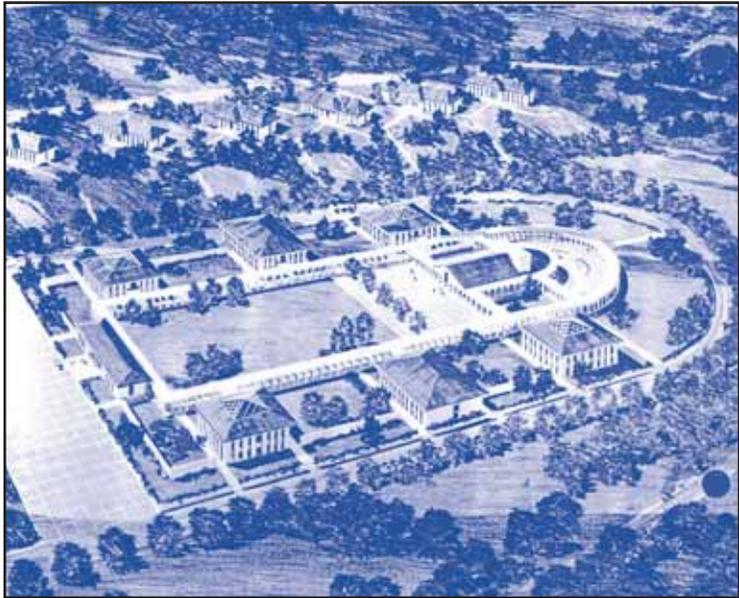
Landmark College occupies the former campus of Windham College, a liberal arts institution founded in 1951 and in operation until 1978, when decreasing enrollment and an inability to meet a loan repayment forced its closing. The former Windham College campus buildings became the property of the federal government, which auctioned the



Actual Campus Plan for Landmark College

Image by Bread Loaf Corporation

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Edward Durrell Stone — Vision for Landmark College

land to a New York developer. There was talk of building a minimum-security prison on the site, which was promptly and overwhelmingly rejected by the town. The property was eventually purchased by four Putney residents and sold to Landmark College.

The campus had been dormant for years and the buildings, while attentively designed by the distinguished, and recently controversial, Architect Edward Durrell Stone, had been neglected. In addition to facing a great deal of maintenance and renovation, Landmark College faced the arduous task of transforming these existing buildings into spaces that reflected and supported their very specific learning agenda.

Bread Loaf's first projects at Landmark were bid and construction projects, which included renovations to their existing facilities. These projects were conceived on an as-needed, "put out the fire" basis. During the course of these projects, Bread Loaf integrated Landmark College personnel into its project management

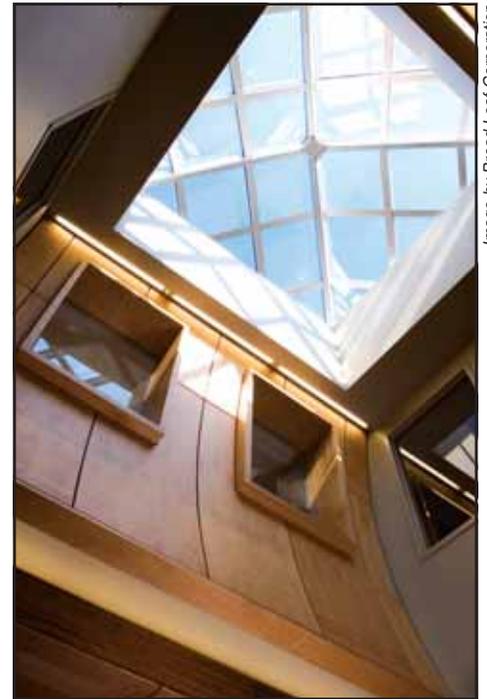
process. It wasn't long before the College gained confidence in Bread Loaf and we began providing them with design-build services. Our single-source project responsibility relieved Landmark personnel and permitted them to focus on what they do best in support of the mission of the college.

As the college was up and running, the popularity of its unique learning environment grew, and so too the college. Landmark needed more sophisticated design and construction support, and Bread Loaf adapted to provide it. In 2001 the college/architect/builder team came together to address how Landmark could meet the needs of a growing demand for services and, therefore, an increased student and faculty population. The college needed to focus on and define the bigger picture with regard to campus development. They needed a vision for the physical aspect of their



"Blue Sky Day" at Landmark College

campus — they needed a dynamic, long and short-term planning tool.

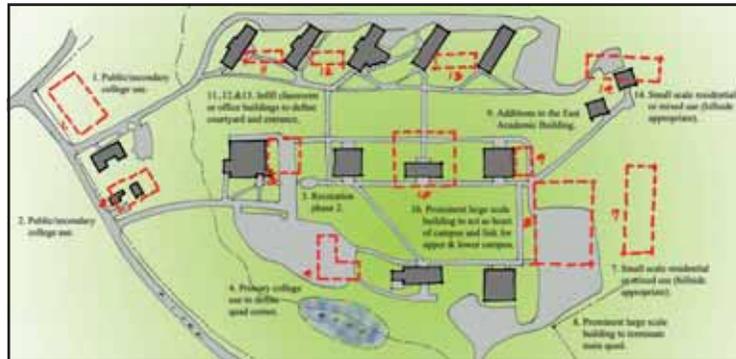


Blue Sky — Results; East Academic Building

To express this need for a campus vision, the college asked Bread Loaf to participate in a focused day of planning they called "Blue Sky Day." Members of Landmark College administration and Bread Loaf Corporation gathered for a day to envision the quality of buildings and grounds of Landmark College for a future enrollment of 600 students. This was a result of the Landmark College Board of Trustees directing the administration to investigate a more aggressive growth scenario for the college. While the college had been projecting that growth would stop at a 400-student enrollment, the Board suggested this number be tested. They asked the college to develop a contingency plan to achieve a still unspecified, higher enrollment over the next several years, defining the limits to growth based on physical and programmatic constraints.

The primary focus of the day was buildings and circulation rather than programs. As outcomes for the day, we hoped to develop:

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Example of Master Planning Document for Landmark College

- A rough schematic master plan of the campus with an enrollment of 600 students, including a diagram of building opportunities and circulation paths.
- Planning budgets relating to construction and renovation components of the schematic master plan.
- A sequence and timeline for development of the master plan based on growth increments of 30 to 50 students.

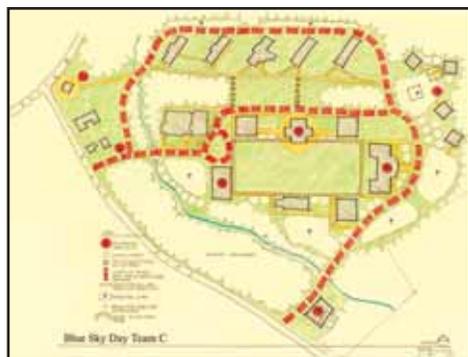
As Dr. Brent Betit, Executive Vice President of Landmark College, so eloquently stated, “Besides the concrete outcomes for the day, we believe that significant organizational learning will occur, and that Landmark College’s and Bread Loaf Corporation’s collaboration in this and other activities represents a symbiotic partnering of talent and interest that will provide substantial benefits beyond the immediate and more obvious outcomes.”

The college used the information generated at and

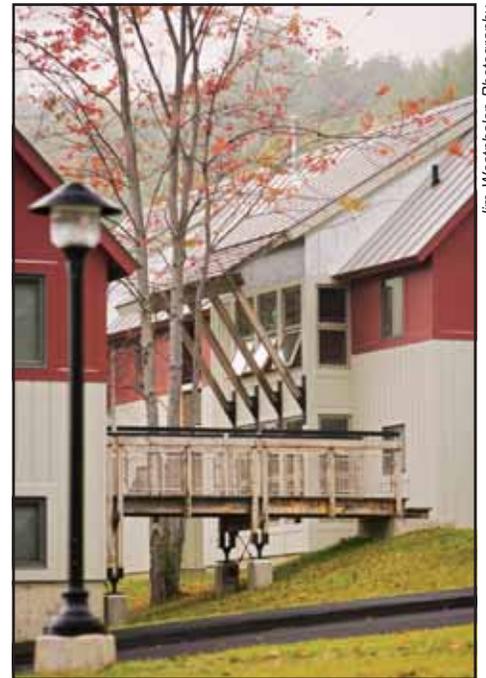
as a result of “Blue Sky Day” to locate, prioritize, and budget for both major and minor capital projects. In early 2004, the College announced that it had \$11.2 million for three projects: an

additional 80 beds of student housing; the renovation of one of the original, still abandoned, Edward Durrell Stone buildings into an academic facility; and the expansion of their dining hall to accommodate a campus of 500. Having successfully planned for these projects, the college and Bread Loaf considered the design and construction of these projects the logical next steps of our collaboration. Together we rose to the challenge: a four-month design and permitting schedule, a particularly tight project budget, and the need to complete construction by the fall of 2005.

In August 2005 Landmark College held its 20th anniversary celebration. A significant part of the festivities was the dedication of the three projects described above. In her opening address, College President Dr. Linda J. Katz explained how proud she is of the school and its “integrated approach to learning” while maintaining high standards for academic achievement. She continued by



Example of Circulation Diagram for Landmark College



Landmark College New Residence Buildings

recognizing the three building projects as the embodiment of these goals, “our cornerstone for the future and a symbol of optimism to enhance that future.” At the celebration, Dr. Katz introduced Vermont



Landmark College East Academic Building — Center Corridor

Governor Jim Douglas who commended the entire Landmark College community for “resisting the inflexible ideologies” of conventional institution practice. The Governor also recognized the new building projects for their outstanding environmental achievements and their respect of the “Vermont Way,” a sensitive balance of economics,

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Jim Westphalen Photography

Landmark College — Middle Hall Dining Expansion

traditions, and sensitivity to our natural resources and surroundings. All praise was certainly the result of a thoughtful, sensitive, and well-integrated design-build process.

Since 1996, Bread Loaf Corporation has worked on over 20 Landmark College projects. We have taken this show on the road and have worked with many colleges throughout New England to achieve similar goals and help temper their all-too-common growing pains.

EXPERIENCE IS THE BEST TEACHER

The concerns of these smaller colleges fit wholly within the design-



Photography — Bread Loaf Corporation

Landmark College Ribbon Cutting Celebration



Jim Westphalen Photography

Landmark College — Middle Hall Dining Expansion

build *scope, budget, and schedule triangle* while maintaining a continual need for design excellence. And Landmark College is just one example. Small colleges are excellent clients for design-builders. At relatively little cost we can provide such institutions with invaluable

information for future planning. In return, we create an opportunity to win the confidence and loyalty of these institutions — the foundation of long-term, repeat client relationships.

WHY THE BEGINNING IS SO IMPORTANT

Remember, it all begins at the beginning. So get off on the right foot and try to change the point at which the design-builder gets involved — move it up and help small colleges plan for their future. By doing so, we not only afford ourselves more, and more clearly defined, project opportunities; we provide our clients with the tools they need to make well-informed capital-project planning decisions — something they will remember and appreciate for years to come. ♦

Andrea Murray, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP is an architect and planner at Bread Loaf Corporation and was the project architect for Landmark College's new 80-bed residence buildings.

Bread Loaf is a full-service planning, architecture, and construction firm located in Middlebury, VT. For 37 years, Bread Loaf has been serving organizations throughout New England and New York State. Over the years, our basic design-build approach has evolved to include the delivery of sophisticated master planning, engineering, sustainable design, and pre-construction services in addition to traditional construction management. We call this seamless and inclusive process Integrated Project Management™. We thrive on delivering exceptionally designed facilities that exceed our client's programming and quality expectations, while staying within budget and on schedule.

For more information about Bread Loaf, its services and projects, please visit our website at www.breadloaf.com or contact Jim Pulver at (802) 388-9871. You may also reach Ms. Murray at amurray@breadloaf.com.