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# Durham College, Centre for Collaborative Education, Oshawa Campus, earned LEED Gold, features Rockfon ceiling systems

Chicago (Dec. 2022) – Durham College’s Centre for Collaborative Education (CFCE) holds the honor of being the first building on the Oshawa, Ontario campus to achieve LEED® certification through the Canada Green Building Council. Earning LEED Gold, the CFCE’s design and construction reflects the college’s commitment to sustainability, wellness and academic engagement.

Fostering connections within the campus and surrounding community, the CFCE’s transparent exterior showcases outdoor views and indoor natural light. Rockfon Tropic® acoustic stone wool ceiling panels were specified for the bright learning spaces, convertible social spaces, formal classrooms, student services, offices and laboratories. Along with a smooth white surface that maximizes light reflectance, the ceiling panels provide good sound absorption, support indoor air quality and present a clean, modern aesthetic.

***Student-focused design***

Designed by Montgomery Sisam Architects working jointly with the Architecture Council, the CFCE serves more than 30,000 students within its multi-level, 75,000-square-foot facility. Working with Eastern Construction Company Ltd., Anco Contracting installed more than 40,000 square feet of Rockfon’s ceiling systems as supplied by Commercial Drywall Supply Inc.

“The Centre for Collaborative Education prioritizes the student experience in all aspects of its design and function,” noted Durham College’s president, Don Lovisa. “When students told us they wanted more collaborative learning and social spaces, we listened. There are very few offices in the CFCE. Instead, it holds industry-grade, cutting-edge labs, entrepreneurial and maker spaces, touchdown spaces and inclusive learning environments all focused on ensuring the student experience comes first.”

Hosting numerous educational programs and innovative learning spaces, the CFCE includes the 360insights Entrepreneurship Centre; the Interprofessional Simulation Lab; the Centre for Success and Academic Upgrading; the Office of Student Diversity, Inclusion and Transitions; the First Peoples Indigenous Centre; the Global Classroom and the Durham College Spa.

***Interactive, inclusive, acoustic experience***

In the CFCE’s Global Classroom, this high-capacity video conferencing space transforms how students interact. State-of-the-art technology enables students and faculty to discuss topics in a virtual classroom, joined by experts and other students from around the world in real time. Selected classes and lectures are available to the public.

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To provide the acoustic experience needed for successful virtual and in-person discussions and debate, Rockfon Tropic stone wool ceiling panels were selected for the Global Classroom. Rockfon Tropic achieves a Noise Reduction Coefficient of up 0.85 NRC for high sound absorption. Anco Contracting installed the ceiling panels in layered rows at sloped angles to further optimize acoustics and enhance speech intelligibility.

Corridors and common areas throughout the CFCE are purposefully designed as informal study and social spaces with Rockfon Tropic acoustic ceiling systems suspended above in grid and cloud forms. The same sound-absorbing Rockfon Tropic ceiling panels also were installed in the CFCE’s Spa and Patient-Care Laboratories. Open to the public, this patient-centered, inter-professional, inclusive health care education space is committed to making beauty, health and wellness accessible and more affordable for all.

***High-performance, sustainable spaces and ceiling solutions***

The inherent qualities of Rockfon’s products offer high-performance attributes, benefiting specialized learning spaces, such as laboratories, and wellness environments, such as spas.

Stone wool and metal are hydrophobic materials, meaning that they do not absorb water, a helpful feature given Oshawa’s average annual rainfall of more than 27 inches. Stone wool and metal not only resist moisture, they also do not support the growth of mold, mildew, bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms. In addition, Rockfon Tropic and Chicago Metallic Tempra products provide excellent fire performance and are easy to clean without harsh chemicals.

Contributing to indoor air quality and healthy interiors, acoustic stone wool ceiling panels from Rockfon are UL® GREENGUARD® Gold certified for low-VOC emissions in office and education environments. Further assisting design and building teams with material transparency and product selection, Rockfon also provides Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), Health Product Declarations (HPDs) and Declare Labels. The reporting documentation and GREENGUARD Gold certification are recognized by LEED, WELL and other current building programs focused on sustainability and well-being.

All of Rockfon ceiling panels on the CFCE are made from stone wool, which blends naturally occurring, volcanic basalt rock and recycled content. The stone is a plentiful resource and Rockfon’s high-tech production processes allow for environmentally responsible, efficient product manufacturing. The 2-by-4-foot stone wool ceiling panels are installed in Chicago Metallic® 4000 Tempra™ 9/16-inch exposed grid ceiling suspension system, which also is manufactured with recycled content and is 100 percent recyclable at the end of its useful life on a building.

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***Commitment to the future and UN Sustainable Development Goals***

Beyond achieving its first LEED certification building with the CFCE, Durham College signed the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals Accord in February 2022. By joining the UN SDG Accord, Durham College has committed to a central and transformational role in achieving the United Nation’s SDGs by 2030.

As part of the ROCKWOOL group, Rockfon also participates in the UN’s SDGs. ROCKWOOL began using the SDGs as a strategic framework in 2016, pursuing 10 of the 17 goals that align with the company’s business competencies and greatest opportunities for impact.

“Durham College is supporting the advancement of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals; taking meaningful action within our own institution and drawing on our strengths in collaboration and innovation to help transform our local and global community,” said Lovisa.

A catalyst for future development, the CFCE informs Durham College’s design, programming and integration of spaces and places to come. Honoring the project, the CFCE received an Urban Award for Design and Innovation from the City of Oshawa.

“It is only by working together, listening to each other and seeking to better understand one another that we will achieve the breakthroughs – professional, technological, social or otherwise – that will propel us forward,” added Lovisa. “This is what we seek to inspire and support with the CFCE.”

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**Durham College, Centre for Collaborative Education (CFCE), Oshawa Campus, 2018 Simcoe St., North Oshawa, Ontario L1G 0C5, https://durhamcollege.ca/centre-for-collaborative-education**

* Owner: Durham College; Oshawa, Ontario; https://durhamcollege.ca
* Architects:

Montgomery Sisam Architects, Inc.; Toronto; https://www.montgomerysisam.com

joint venture with Architecture Counsel; Toronto; https://www.architecturecounsel.com

* Design-build contractor: Eastern Construction Company Ltd.; Scarborough, Ontario; https://www.easternconstruction.com
* Ceiling systems – installing contractor: Anco Contracting Inc.; Woodbridge, Ontario
* Ceiling systems –­ distributor: Commercial Drywall Supply Inc. (CDS); Markham, Ontario; http://www.commercialdrywall.com
* Ceiling systems – manufacturer: Rockfon; Chicago; https://www.rockfon.com
* Photographer: Tom Arban Photography Inc.

***About Rockfon***

*Rockfon is part of the ROCKWOOL Group and is offering advanced acoustic ceilings and wall solutions to create beautiful, comfortable spaces.*

*At the ROCKWOOL Group, we are committed to enriching the lives of everyone who experiences our product solutions. Our expertise is perfectly suited to tackle many of today’s biggest sustainability and development challenges, from energy consumption and noise pollution to fire resilience, water scarcity and flooding. Our range of products reflects the diversity of the world’s needs, while supporting our stakeholders in reducing their own carbon footprint.*

*Stone wool is a versatile material and forms the basis of all our businesses. With approximately 11,500 passionate colleagues in 39 countries, we are the world leader in stone wool solutions, from building insulation to acoustic ceilings, external cladding systems to horticultural solutions, engineered fibers for industrial use to insulation for the process industry, and marine and offshore.*

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