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**Morgan State University Thurgood Marshall Hall dining facility features Rockfon’s wood-look metal ceiling baffles**

Chicago (Oct. 2023) – Morgan State University (MSU), a historically black university and Maryland’s Preeminent Urban Public Research University, recently opened a new world-class student residence – Thurgood Marshall Hall. The new building is named in recognition of the life and legacy of Baltimore-native, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Thurgood Marshall. Moody Nolan, Inc., the nation’s largest African-American-owned architecture firm, served as the project’s interior architect.

Helping create a place for community as well as learning, Thurgood Marshall Hall’s 40,000-square-foot 24-hour dining facility offers a place for people to gather, study, share meals and build connections. Supporting a welcoming and energetic atmosphere, Moody Nolan selected Rockfon acoustic, metal ceiling baffles finished with a wood look. The biophilic aesthetic presents a warm, natural look with the low-maintenance, fire-resistant, sustainable benefits of metal.

“Make no mistake about it, there is a monumental transformation taking place on and near the campus of Morgan State University. The growth that we’re experiencing has come to be known as Morgan Momentum, and to sustain that growth we’ll need modern facilities that are equipped to address the work of the future and the future of work,” said David K. Wilson, Morgan State University, president.

Working closely with MSU, Moody Nolan and Hord Coplan Macht partnered on designing Thurgood Marshall Hall. Together, they focused on enhancing student success with the creation of a vibrant new live/learn community that will “bring Morgan students home,” while enhancing the MSU’s south campus presence. The residence hall dining facility and carefully cultivated individual and group study areas, form a “live, dine, learn” nexus for students.

Creating acoustic comfort, visual interest and definition within Thurgood Marshall Hall’s large dining area, Rockfon® Intaline™ Round-Base vertical baffles showcase a Weathered Oak Woodscenes® painted finish. The baffles mask the exposed plenum and the electrical, plumbing, HVAC and other services above it, yet allows easy access for future upgrades or renovations.

Conveniently integrating with standard lighting and air diffusers, Cindell Construction Company installed more than 10,500 linear feet Rockfon’s aluminum ceiling baffles and 15/16-inch acoustic ceiling suspension system. Complementing the baffles, Cindell also installed Rockfon® Cubegrid® Open Plenum 15/16-inch metal ceiling grid, finished in black. Freedom Acoustics supplied all Rockfon material for Thurgood Marshall Hall’s dining facility project.

Contributing to indoor air quality and occupants’ wellbeing, Rockfon’s metal ceiling systems do not contain organic compounds, and do not support mold or microbial growth. Supporting project’s sustainability goals, the metal baffles are manufactured with up to 100 percent recycled content. Rockfon metal ceiling products are 100 percent locally recyclable at the end of their life in the building.

Thurgood Marshall Hall’s 10-story, 233,000-square-foot building provides a mix of semi-suite and apartment-style housing including more than 660 beds for undergraduate and graduate students. It is a critical component of MSU’s strategic plan with a primary goal of increasing recruitment and improving retention of students on campus.

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“Morgan State University, a historically black university and Maryland’s Preeminent Urban Public Research University, has recently undertaken a strategic plan with a primary goal of increasing recruitment and improving retention of students on campus. A critical component of this plan’s progress is the creation of a new, world-class student residence hall and dining facility. The building [forms] a new campus hub for student activity and strives to enliven the culture of community by creating a vibrant and robust space for gathering. The residence hall, inclusive of 24-hour dining and carefully cultivated individual and group study areas, forms a ‘live, dine, learn’ nexus for students,” described Moody Nolan.

Founded in 1867, MSU is the only university to have its entire campus designated as a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The university serves a multiethnic and multiracial student body and seeks to ensure that the doors of higher education are opened as wide as possible to as many as possible.

Moody Nolan is the recipient of the 2021 Architecture Firm Award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), which is the highest honor the AIA bestows on an architecture practice. During the past 40 years, Moody Nolan has been a leader in facility design and the development of Historically Black College and University (HBCU) campuses, working on 71 projects across 32 HBCU campuses nationwide. As a part of its process, the firm’s design professionals take time to get to know and understand each HBCU’s mission and rich history, incorporating those key learnings into the design of a leading-edge facility for the future.

The first students moved into the building in August 2022. “The main thing I just love is how students utilize this space,” noted MSU’s resident director, Aunya Brown. “The students I feel are really thriving in this space. As someone who has worked in residence life for a few years, these are the type of space that we want to see.”

The students agree. “I think that this is an amazing environment,” said Tyrane Graham, MSU junior and resident assistant. “This is leading the world. This is what growing the future look likes because of all these amenities. …This is the type of place where students get to meet new people and get to work and study. This is an amazing studying environment. This is what going to an HBCU is about. It’s getting the experience, it’s getting the luxuries, it’s getting the education that we deserve and need to benefit society.”

In addition to praise from those on campus, Thurgood Marshall Hall is gaining recognition by the architectural and interior design community. Among the accolades, the dining facility earned a 2023 Construction Excellence Award from the Ceilings and Interior Systems Construction Association for its inviting design featuring biophilic metal ceiling baffles from Rockfon.

“Both the University and the design team are focused on enhancing student success with the creation of a vibrant new live/learn community that will ‘bring Morgan students home,’ while enhancing the University’s south campus presence,” noted Hord Coplan Macht.

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***Morgan State University’s Thurgood Marshall Hall dining facility; 1700 East Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, Maryland;*** [***https://msu.sodexomyway.com/dining-near-me/Thurgood-Marshall-Dining-Hall***](https://msu.sodexomyway.com/dining-near-me/Thurgood-Marshall-Dining-Hall)

* Architect: Hord Coplan Macht; Baltimore; <https://www.hcm2.com>
* Interior architect: Moody Nolan, Inc.; Columbus, Ohio; <https://moodynolan.com>
* Construction manager: Gilbane Building Company; Providence, Rhode Island; <https://www.gilbaneco.com>
* in association with WarrenBuilds; Baltimore; <https://warrenbuilds.us>
* Dining facility ceiling – installing contractor: Cindell Construction Company, Inc.; Frederick, Maryland; <http://www.cindell.com>
* Dining facility ceiling – distributor: Freedom Acoustics; Newark, Delaware; <https://www.freedomacoustics.com>
* Dining facility ceiling – manufacturer: Rockfon; Chicago; <https://www.rockfon.com>
* Photography: Anne Chan, Hord Coplan Macht and Patrick Ross Photography

***About Rockfon***

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

*At 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 12,200 passionate colleagues in 40 countries, we are one of the world leaders 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.*

*For more information, please visit* [*https://www.rockfon.com*](https://www.rockfon.com)*.*

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