

FALL 2021

# LEARNING BY DESIGN

THE PREMIER SOURCE FOR EDUCATION DESIGN INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE

## Awards of Excellence



Oss Elementary School, Austin, TX  
Photo: Tom McConnell



COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY | PROJECT IN PROGRESS | SCIENCE CENTER

### The Morwick Groundwater Research Centre at The University of Guelph

Guelph, ON Canada



#### WalterFedy

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Fei Wei, Architect, Ph.D., OAA, MRAIC, AIA, Partner,  
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#### DESIGN TEAM

Fei Wei, Ph.D., OAA, MRAIC, AIA, Partner, Principal  
Architect  
Gregory McLean, OAA, MRAIC, Associate, Senior  
Architect  
Nelson Cecilia, B. Tech., Senior Associate, Senior  
Architectural Technologist  
Danica Beggs, Architectural Technologist

#### OWNER/CLIENT

University of Guelph  
Guelph, ON  
Wilfred Forwerda, Project Manager

#### KEY STATS

Grades Served: Post-Secondary  
Capacity of Students/Occupants: 162  
Size of Site: 1.26 acres  
Gross Area of Bldg./Space: 13,150 sqf  
Space per Student: 81 sq. ft.  
Cost per Student: \$40,740  
Square Foot Cost: \$502  
Project Cost: \$6,600,000  
Occupation Date: 12/31/2022

PHOTOGRAPHY: WALTERFEDY

Groundwater is a relied upon source of drinking water for nearly half of the population and represents 99% of the available fresh water on the planet. As groundwater becomes increasingly vulnerable to contamination and over-extraction, field-based and interdisciplinary study is paramount to properly manage this vital resource for future generations.

The Morwick Groundwater Research Centre was designed to help generate global respect for groundwater. The expanded

facility at the University of Guelph will allow them to intensify and expand their efforts to conduct leading-edge groundwater education, training, technology advancement, and research.

The Centre's design reflects the concept of vernacular architecture, leveraging local, natural materials to connect the building to the lands on which it is built. Low-profile, sloped roofs tie the addition into the existing context creating a harmonious juxtaposition between the built and natural environment.

Expansive windows throughout the facility invite natural light into the space and remind staff, students, and researchers of the direct link between their work and the world around them.

A striking stone feature wall, sourced from existing quarries, sweeps across the atrium. The wall represents naturally occurring rock formations and creates an opportunity for a teaching moment—one of several experiential learning opportunities across the facility.