



Project Case Study: Dartmouth College

Higher Education - A Model of Sustainability

Project Name: Dartmouth College

Project Location: Hanover, New Hampshire

Project Size: Two Residence Halls (503 Room Sets), Campus (3,000 Beds)

Building Type: College Residence Halls

Project Team: DCI, Dartmouth College

Product List: Maple Bed, Bookshelf, Desk, and Dresser

Backstory



Dartmouth College is one of the oldest and most respected institutions of higher learning in America. It was founded in 1769 as the nation's ninth oldest college. A member of the Ivy League, Dartmouth consistently ranks among the top universities in the country according to U.S. News and World Report.

Dartmouth occupies a beautiful rural campus in Hanover, NH with 4,289 undergraduates and approximately 2000 graduate students. Over 90 percent of students occupy on-

campus housing, which includes residence halls, fraternity and sorority houses, college-approved coeds, and undergraduate societies.

In 2005, DCI forged an innovative partnership with Dartmouth College to build solid hardwood furniture made from timber harvested from their own land. Here's the backstory.

In the late 1700's and early 1800's, Dartmouth College was the beneficiary of two land grants from the state of New Hampshire to help pay for operating expenses. As part of the second land grant, referred to as the "Grant", the college owns and manages 27,000 acres of woodland in the Northern Forest region of New Hampshire.

According to the Dartmouth [website](#): "The Grant is characterized by a remote wilderness aesthetic, a diversity of habitat, and pristine waters. The Grant has long been used for timber harvesting and recreation, although recreation has only expanded more recently as the Grant became more accessible. Timber harvesting has been culturally and economically important to the region for hundreds of years, and the Grant provides income for Dartmouth College. The intent is for harvesting to continue, but in balance with other management goals, such as wilderness recreation, preservation of natural places and waters, and long-term sustainability."

Here's how they describe the impact of their grant management [process](#). "Areas that are selectively cut are allowed to recover at least 15 to 20 years, and 10 percent is a designated natural area that cannot be logged. As a result, the grant is a vital ecosystem where mountains, river valleys, and forests provide habitat for moose, coyotes, ruffed grouse, peregrine falcons, pine marten, and osprey. The Dead Diamond and Swift Diamond rivers offer cold, clear water for native brook trout, a fish that can only live in the purest water."

APPROACH: A Model of Sustainability



In 2005, Dartmouth College approached DCI with a unique and exciting proposition. Could we partner with them to build furniture for their campus made from trees harvested on land they owned?

We were already partners with the college, supplying them with solid hardwood furniture that was harvested in the Northeast. But now they wanted us to furnish their new residence halls with over 500 custom sets of maple bookshelves,

desks, dressers and beds made from their own trees.

We love innovative partnerships, especially when they advance the values of sustainability, and we naturally embraced this opportunity.

Local Partnership

First, we worked with the college forester to select and harvest timber from Dartmouth's sustainably managed forests in partnership with the school's Grant Management Committee and in alignment with their Forest Management Plan.

At DCI, we have the unique ability to process lumber at our own saw mill. This allowed us to keep the sourcing, milling, and manufacturing of Dartmouth's residence hall furniture completely local.

Then we had the pleasure of installing over 500 sets of locally sourced and manufactured solid maple bookshelves, desks, dressers and beds.

As an added bonus, because our mill and our factory are so close to Dartmouth, and because they supplied the timber, we were able to give them a significant discount on the price

RESULTS: Global Impact

Think globally and act locally. That's a core tenet of sustainability and it's exactly what the DCI/ Dartmouth partnership represents. When we act locally to implement sustainable values, we affect the interconnected web of the biosphere. Here are a few of the environmental benefits that emerged from this partnership.

- **Zero Waste:** Through DCI's unique vertical integration process, we control every stage of manufacturing and reuse, reclaim, and recycle all wood by-products.
- **Minimal Carbon Footprint:** Wood by-products power our steam generators. Wood fuel is a clean burning renewable resource.
- **Locally Sourced:** The distance from Dartmouth to our sawmill is 28 miles. By sourcing raw materials (timber) locally, we minimized travel distances and reduced fossil fuel consumption and thus our carbon footprint.
- **Locally Built:** We manufacture our furniture in a state of the art waste-free facility in Lisbon, NH, close to Dartmouth. Consequently, Dartmouth supports a local business and gets to support the community and local economy.
- **Setting an Example:** Creating a model project of sustainability is inspiring for everyone. But more importantly, it sends a message to students. Cross-sectional partnerships between business and educational institutions can be models for environmental sustainability.

The year 2007 marked the 200 year anniversary of Dartmouth's second land grant. Dartmouth was proud of the partnership because it reflected a novel use of this two hundred year old land grant. At the same time, it honored the spirit and values which have guided the management of the grant. They even referred to it in the student newspaper.

From [VOX of Dartmouth](#)

About 4 percent of the Grant is logged each year, producing 7,500 cords of lumber, some of which is fashioned into campus furniture by a company in Lisbon, N.H [DCI]. Every bookshelf, desk, and dresser (503 full sets) in the recently opened McLaughlin Cluster and Tuck Mall Residence Halls are made from Grant wood, as are some 3,000 beds on campus, according to David Eckels, director of residential operations. "It's locally grown and locally made," he says.





ABOUT DCI

DCI supplies student and military housing programs with the finest and most sustainable furniture on the market. As the industry leader in green furniture manufacturing, we deliver both quality and value. Our team of dedicated employees is focused on high standards, sustainability, continuous improvement, and establishing a close partnership with our customers and their evolving needs.

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