Education Instilling a Brighter Future
Design of Green Strategies Beyond Architecture

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Theoretical Premise / Unifying Idea

“How can architecture foster the education of green strategies to reinforce future responsible ways of life?" In order to pass along the knowledge of green strategies, we must first foster the education of a younger generation who will become the vessels of this knowledge. Reinforcing these strategies in an educational setting provides the foundation for this knowledge to be reused in the future throughout their daily lives.

We need to educate ourselves on green strategies and change the way we live in order to make a true impact on our surrounding environment. However, in order to sustain this knowledge, it is important to reinforce these green strategies to our younger generations to promote a “greener” way of life.

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The overall design for this project was to create a flexible learning environment that would teach its users how to incorporate sustainable strategies within their daily lives by using the building’s basic functions. Using this... on a daily basis. It is my hope that these strategies would then pass along to be further used within other environments.
Site Context & Development

The center is located within Fargo, North Dakota at the intersection of 23rd Street and 13th Avenue South. When searching for a site that would fit with my particular program, I chose Fargo for its quickly growing school system and need of a facility such as this. Growing up in Fargo, I experienced first-hand its educational climate. While the quality of the Fargo Public School District has since greatly improved, however, its current programming is a capacity and could always become better.

The current condition of the site is badly in need of repair with broken paved surfaces, lack of vegetation and a vacant building with no aesthetic appeal. I felt this site would be wonderful location to rejuvenate due to its potential and its history. The current condition is a wonderful opportunity for the members to have a building with an open atmosphere and the potential for new development. It could act as a community resource to the people in the area as well as an additional resource to its members. Hopefully, it would also create new development in a declining urban environment.

While developing the site, I tried to create a connectivity to the surrounding community while protecting the users within the program. Reusing any current resources while providing new vegetation, the site and building were replanted in a cohesive manor. My hope was to create an interactive feeling without disturbing the overall surrounding context.
Design Intentions

The goal while designing this educational activity center was to create a sense of place enriched with positive reinforcement for children within an alternative educational environment. Within this environment, children are given the ability to learn in a safe and nurturing space where they can develop and thrive. The center is designed to be a beacon of hope and learning, providing another setting for alternative classes, strongly encouraging a connection with the natural environment.

The spaces are designed to have a flexibility and openness, allowing for multiple activities and functions throughout the day. Primarily, the spaces include an office environment, classrooms, a large gathering space with a child activity area, a media center, and a kitchen area. All of these spaces connect to a large atrium and multiple outside spaces which are able to serve as gathering spaces as well. The design allows for a shared learning environment where children can interact and learn from each other.

With every design decision, I tried to incorporate sustainable practices that would benefit and enrich the lives of those within the building. Each structure from the collection of rain water to the use of solar panels would create an energy-efficient environment. The hope is that these practices would then be duplicated in the future for a healthier environment for all.