



Geothermal Fueled Residence Hall Constructed in West Chester, PA

West Chester University is a public university with 15,415 students and 800 academic employees in West Chester, Pennsylvania (Chester County). Demand for student housing is very high, the existing university housing is near full capacity, and much of it is old, outdated, and out of code.

USDA Rural Development was able to assist University Student Housing (a wholly-owned subsidiary of West Chester University Foundation) with a \$28 million Community Facilities direct loan to construct a new 653-bed, eight story 180,000 square foot student dormitory on the site of a previously demolished residence hall.



West Chester University constructed a new 653-bed, eight story 180,000 square foot residence hall to replace 1960's buildings with new, modern facilities

Construction is complete for the second phase of West Chester University's multi-year plan to replace 1960's dormitories with new, modern facilities that meet court-mandated sprinkler requirements. The rooms meet modern students' expectations of enhanced privacy, with private bathrooms and apartment-style suites or "semi-suites" in each unit. The buildings contain 22 two-person shared semi-suites with shared bedrooms, 86 two-person semi-suites with private bedrooms, 38 four-person suites with living rooms, and 46 two-person suites with living rooms. Each room is wired for Internet and cable, laundry facilities will be located on each floor, and generous space for study/recreation/kitchen areas will be available for student use.

A geothermal heating and cooling system is an added benefit. The renewable energy system will reduce costs for both the university and students. According to Hank Colker, Sr. Principal of WTW Architects, it is anticipated that the project's sustainable design features will reduce energy costs by more than 50%. The geothermal system, which is innovatively being shared by both academic and residential uses, is being installed at a cost of approximately \$2,000/bed and has a payback period of 7–10 years.

Obligation Amount: CF Loan \$28,000,000

Date of Obligation: February 25, 2013

Congressional District: 6th

Partners: University contributions, public market bonds

Demographics: West Chester, Population: 18,461

Impact: Impact: The construction of a new residence hall will provide a modern facility to meet modern student's expectation of enhanced privacy and court-mandated requirements for sprinkler systems.