

# New downtown MCC campus features 'green roofs'

By RANDY GORBMAN



*Rochester-based Elmer Davis, Inc. worked with Wayside Gardens to retrofit four buildings at the downtown MCC campus.*

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MCC's new downtown campus, located in a former Kodak building on State St. in Rochester, will feature a number of upgrades and amenities for students and staff.

Some of those changes involve the way the building fits into the environment.

When MCC's downtown campus, which is moving from the Sibley Building to High Falls, opens in September, it will feature various ways to help the building reduce its environmental footprint.

That includes four, newly installed green roofs, which basically are roofs with a layer of dirt and plants at the top.

Jerry DeRomanis is project manager for LaBella Associates, the lead architectural firm on the MCC move, and he says this green roof system can absorb 13,000 gallons of rainwater, which is a swimming pool's worth of water, after a rain storm.

"The advantage of that is that typically on a roof system, the rain comes down, hits the roof, and enters the stormwater management system, so the roof drains down into the sewer system. So what we're trying to do is filter that water or retain that water to allow it to back into the atmosphere. Essentially capturing that before it enters the rainwater system."

DeRomanis says that the new roofs will be able to reduce energy usage from heating and cooling by adding insulation, as well as capturing rainwater.

"The purpose of the growing media and the plants on top is to add additional insulation on top of, obviously, filtering the water, so what that does is cuts down on our energy use."

DeRomanis says the green roofs can be a teaching tool as well. Two biology professors plan to incorporate the green roofs into their environmental science lessons.

The roofs were funded with the help of a \$1.6 million state grant through the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council.