



## GateWay Community College

Phoenix, Arizona, US



**An oasis for services and learning—that’s one way to look at the Integrated Education Building at GateWay Community College. Combining all essential functions under one big roof, the sprawling three-story building is the destination point for every GateWay student. It’s the heart of the campus community—and designers found varied ways to bring that community together.**

Ask for directions on most college campuses and you’ll probably end up getting lost anyway.

Ask for directions at GateWay Community College, and you can’t go wrong—because you’ll almost certainly be pointed to a striking three-story building that doesn’t just anchor the campus; it practically is the campus.

Designed by the Phoenix office of SmithGroupJJR, GateWay’s Integrated Education Building is particularly easy to find because it’s so hard to take your eyes off. Using a medley of masonry, glass, and copper, the immense building swirls, cascades, and hovers, almost seeming like a skyline unto itself.

## Case Study

And, in a way, it is—the skyline of an academic city. To keep up with enrollment, GateWay Community College originally figured it needed at least three new buildings. Instead, the college decided on a single multipurpose centerpiece that integrates a bit of everything—classrooms, labs, faculty offices, library, learning center, student services, even an art studio.

“The building feels like a destination as opposed to just another place students pass through,” says Dr. Janet Langley, an administrator with the Maricopa County Community College District. “It breaks down silos between academics and services because everything is right there. Combining so much into one building has really contributed to the sense of community on campus.”

### Welcoming Design

The Integrated Education Building creates that sense of community both indoors and out.

Situated in an industrial area, the compact campus had little in the way of outdoor gathering space before the new building provided some options with numerous patios, terraces, and balconies. Usable year-round in the Phoenix climate, these shaded outdoor spaces are among the many sustainable features that helped the building earn LEED Gold certification.

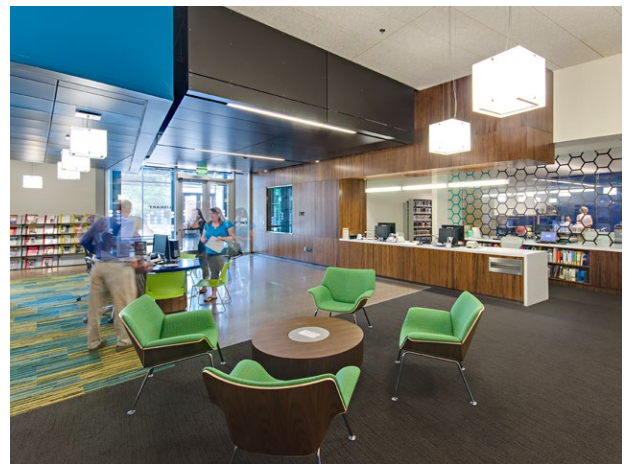
Community also occurs through a design strategy that makes the Integrated Education Building uncommonly welcoming—two first floors.

The catalyst for the unusual approach? With so many essential services in one building, architects wanted even more prime first-floor real estate than the generous footprint allowed. They got it—after a fashion—by creating a trio of oversized feeder stairs from the exterior plaza to the second floor. Now, second-floor classrooms are every bit as accessible as the first-floor library.

“We call it the second first floor,” says Carrie Perrone of SmithGroupJJR, who served as the interior architect. “Students can circulate easily and get wherever they’re going in a hurry.”



Work chairs are either Mirra® (shown here at the Student Affairs reception desk) or Aeron®, depending on employee preference.



An arrangement of Swoop® Lounge Furniture in the library is characteristic of GateWay’s resolve to encourage casual collaboration throughout the Integrated Education Building.

## Case Study

### Corridors Become Collabways

Once inside, students get their bearings quickly because the layout has the familiar feel of a shopping mall. The various academic functions—library, learning center, student services, faculty offices—are clearly delineated with distinct entryways, much like storefronts.

This mall concept is further realized through exceptionally wide corridors, spacious enough to provide collaboration seating within the circulation space.

“We think of them as ‘collabways’ rather than corridors,” Perrone says. “The idea isn’t just to get people from point A to point B, but to provide convenient gathering places for students to connect.”

Case in point: Just outside the entrance to the third-floor science labs is a circle of eight Eames® Aluminum Group Chairs that invite students to take a break from the bustle.

“So often on campuses, you see students sitting on corridor floors between classes,” Perrone says. “We like to provide transitional space in front of instructional space—a place for students to meet with peers before or after class.”

“The idea isn’t just to get people from point A to point B, but to provide convenient gathering places for students to connect.”

– Carrie Perrone

“The collabways are being used just the way we hoped they would be,” Dr. Langley adds. “Students are having impromptu meetings with each other, and they feel comfortable interacting with faculty outside the classroom.”



A circle of Eames Aluminum Group Chairs turns a corridor into a collabway.

## Case Study

### A Place for Everything

Similar collaboration settings are found in both the library and learning center, where groupings of Swoop Lounge Furniture nudge students to work together, further fostering the sense of community.

“The GateWay user group responsible for selecting furniture loved Swoop,” says Linda Salzmann, Senior Interior Designer with SmithGroupJJR. “It’s great for students because they can sit or sprawl in the chair however they want and always be comfortable.”

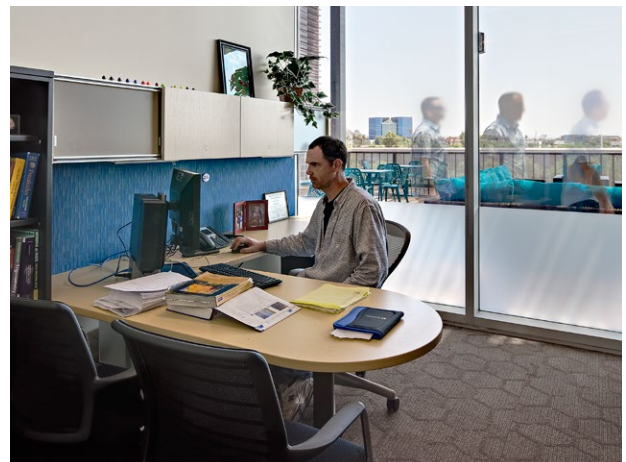
Other Herman Miller furniture in the Integrated Education Building includes Aeron and Mirra Chairs in workstations and faculty offices. Employees and instructors picked which of the two they preferred for their primary work chair.

Likewise, faculty members had the final say for the workspace furniture in their private offices, selecting Canvas Office Landscape® from a group of four competing mockups.

“The building is truly an academic city unto itself,” says Stacey Kranz, a Herman Miller Territory Manager. “With so much going on inside, there was a place for just about every type of furniture you can imagine that might work in a higher education setting.”



The sweeping curves of Swoop Lounge Furniture make it easy for students to get comfortable whether they're studying alone or working together.



Faculty members evaluated four mockups before electing Canvas Office Landscape for their private offices.

# Case Study

**Industry**  
Education

**Topic**  
Collaboration

**Application**  
Collaboration  
Hubs  
Library  
Private Office

**Project Scope**  
122,000 square feet

**Herman Miller Product**  
Canvas Office Landscape  
Aeron Chairs  
Eames Aluminum Group  
Chairs  
Mirra Chairs  
Swoop Lounge Furniture

**Year Completed**  
2012

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Swoop Lounge Furniture welcomes students to the Learning Center, which provides tutoring services and a computer lab.

