

PORTER LIBRARY CERTIFIED LEED GOLD

Written By: Gabriel Khouli with www.covnews.com

The Porter Memorial Branch Library was officially awarded LEED Gold certification Wednesday, becoming the second library in Georgia to receive that level of environmental honor.

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a third-party certification program run by the U.S. Green Building Council and is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings. Fewer than two dozen buildings in Georgia have achieved LEED Gold certification, according to a press release.

“In many ways, Porter Memorial represents the past, present and future for Newton County,” said Library Director Lace Keaton. “One of the county’s goals for the Porter branch was to set an example for the environmentally conscious design of future buildings throughout the state. In addition to offering state-of-the-art library services, the building itself can actually be used as a teaching tool for sustainable design, renewability and the role architecture can play in preserving our environment.”

The 19,200-square-foot library features an abundance of natural lighting to reduce power usage, a raised floor to regulate efficiently temperatures and provide flexible infrastructure, a landscape of indigenous plants that eliminates the need for irrigation, and a rainwater-collection system that further reduces water usage, according to a press release.

“We looked to the context of the site for regional materials and ideas,” said architect Stuart Stenger in an email. “The stone columns and exposed wood beams and ceilings carry the natural environment theme throughout the library, both exterior and interior. In the children’s area, this theme is expressed by the tree like forms on the shelving end panels, to the abstract tree sculpture, and even down to the reptile and insect cut outs in the chairs. These features, along with ample North facing glazing, help reinforce the natural theme and bring the outdoors in.”

The South Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects gave its 2011 Committee on the Environment Honor Award to Craig Gaulden Davis for its design of Porter Memorial, according to Craig Gaulden Davis’ website.

The library was constructed by Hogan Construction Group of Norcross and opened in January 2011. The Porter branch has had 51,896 visitors in 2011 through November, despite only being open 35 hours per week, according to Britt Ozburn, an information and reference assistant.



Hogan