

Ratcliff in Cupertino, California

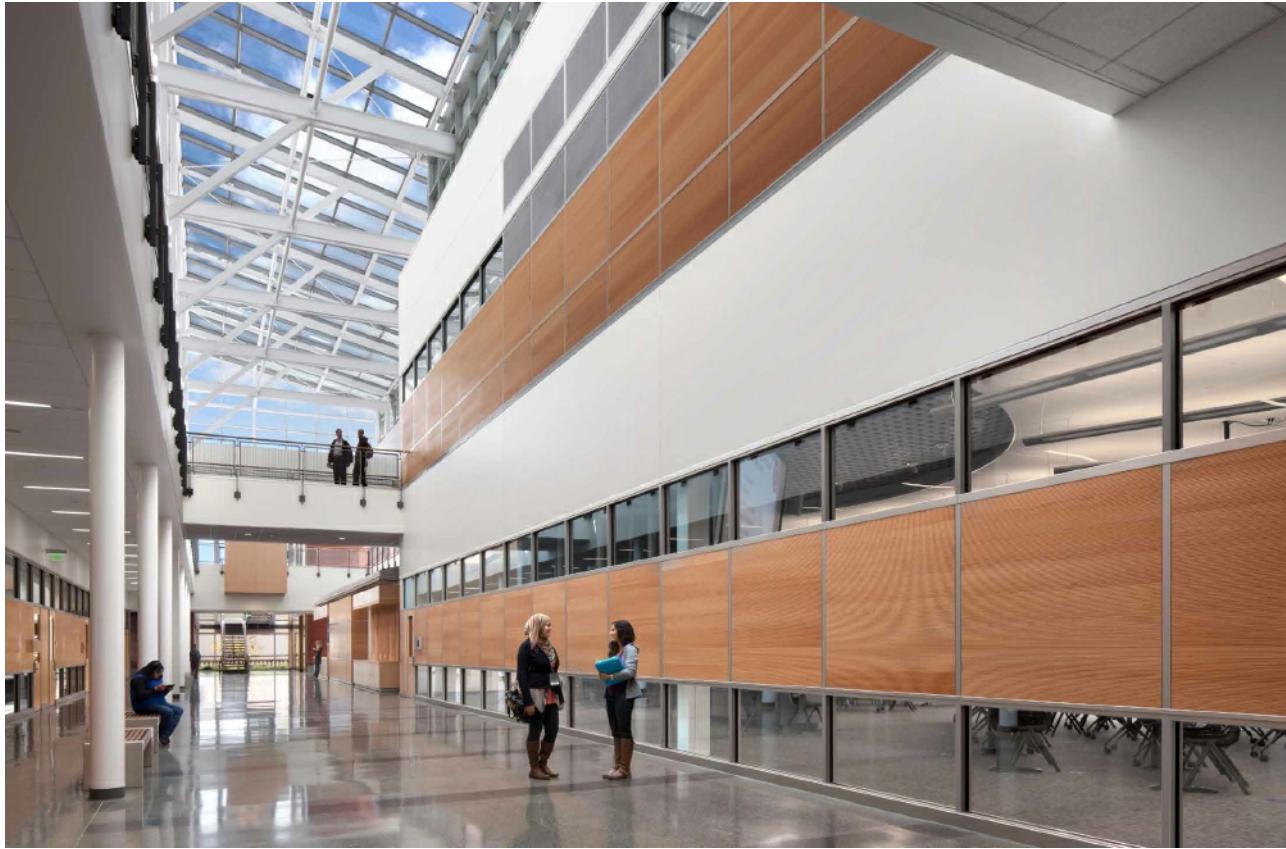
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The two-story De Anza College Media and Learning Centre, in Cupertino, California, designed by Ratcliff.

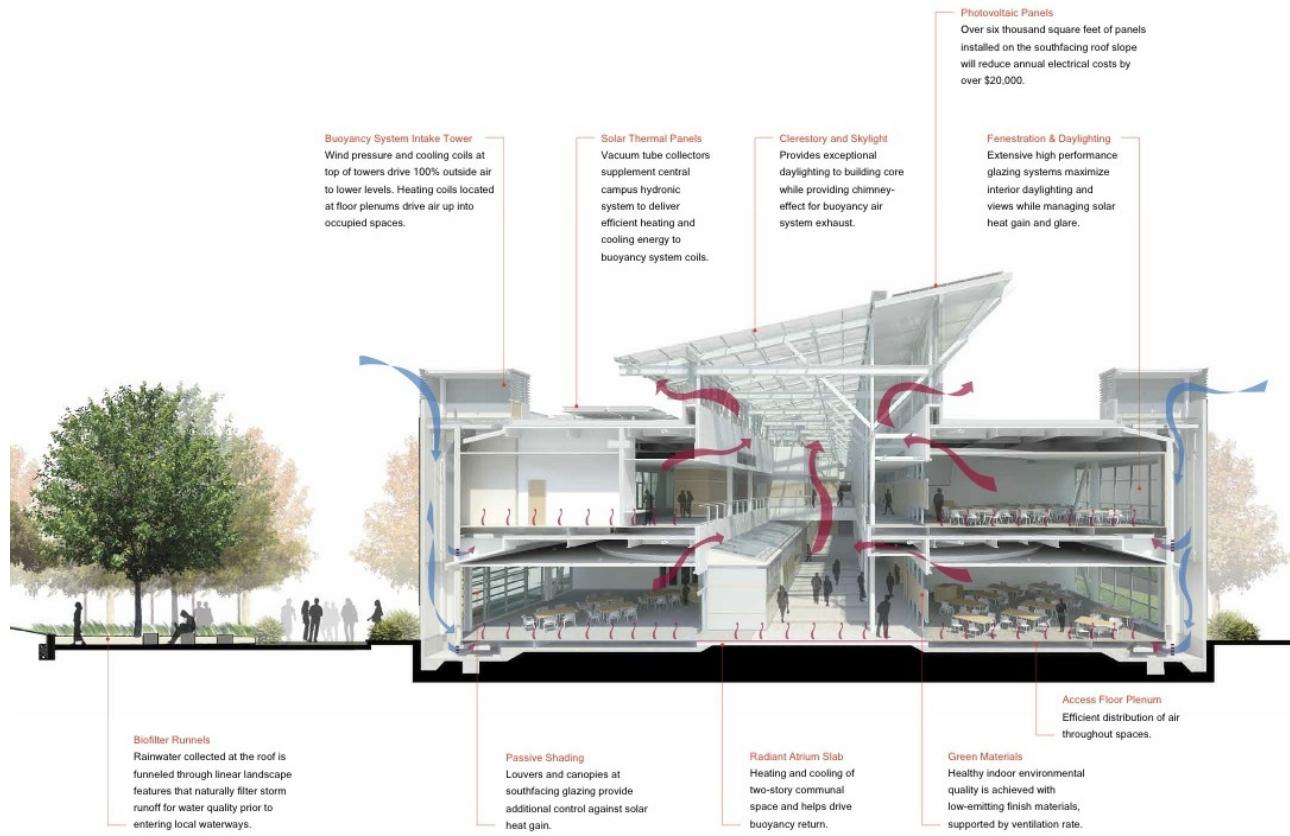
Photo: David Wakely

Ratcliff, an architecture firm in Emeryville, California, designed the recently completed Media and Learning Center at De Anza College, in Cupertino, California. The 14-classroom, 67,000-square-foot (6,200-square-meter) project opened for classes in September, accommodating classes in anthropology and general education.



The 80-foot-long (24-meter-long) atrium of the Media and Learning Center. Photo: David Wakely

The building is expected to earn a LEED Platinum certification and sports a number of sustainable features, including a 6,000-square-foot (560-square-meter) photovoltaic array mounted adjacent to the fritted-glass skylight over a central atrium space. The atrium's clerestory glazing, along with considerable glazing along the building's facades, helps to provide daylight access to many of the spaces.



Section diagram showing air circulation patterns. Image: Ratcliff

The atrium also plays a central role as the exhaust point of the center's passive-downdraft ventilation system. Cooling towers located along either side of the building serve as the system's air supply. And rooftop vacuum-tube thermal solar array also provides heat for the HVAC system.



The vacuum-sealed thermal solar array. Photo: David Wakely

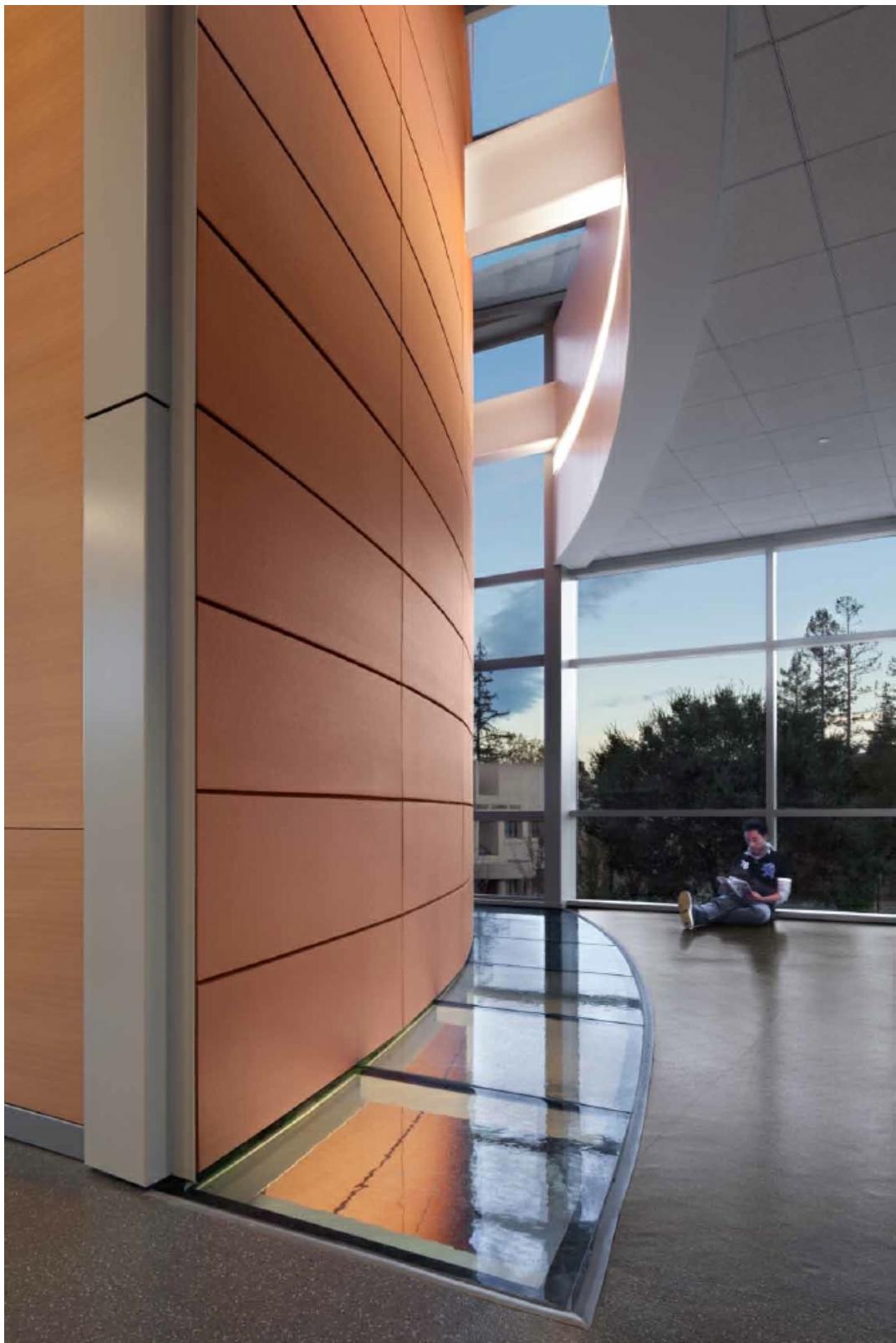
The grounds are planted with drought-resistant vegetation and shade trees, and include storm-water runnels that conserve irrigation water.

The building's steel structure is a buckling restrained brace-frame system that absorbs seismic energy by allowing a building to flex, reducing the possibility of damage at key structural connections during earthquakes.



A radially configured classroom of the Media and Learning Center. Photo: David Wakely

The firm estimates that the Media and Learning Center will use as much as 71% less energy than the regional average for higher-education buildings. WSP Flack + Kurtz is the engineer of record for the \$37-million project.



Smaller skylights can be found around the building. Photo: David Wakely



The building's photovoltaic array. Photo: David Wakely

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