

Altieri

Common Ground High School, Urban Farm and Environmental Education Center



Architect: Gary Organschi Architects

Location: New Haven, Connecticut

Program: Secondary Education

Completed: 2016

Size: 15,000 SF

Common Ground High School, one of the first charter schools in Connecticut, opened in 1997. The environmental school on 20 acres of city park land combines urban agriculture and sustainable land-management practice in an innovative curriculum serving high school students as well as the local community.

The project called for a new building that would integrate current ecological concepts and building technologies. The building comprises classrooms and multi-purpose spaces for school assemblies, theater productions, and recreational activities. Altieri-designed systems honoring key Common Ground missions – low-impact practices, efficient use of resources, minimization of environmental impact – included a closed loop well system for producing chilled and hot water, computerized DDC system with web-based interface, low ambient noise, segregation of systems based on program and occupancy, incoming single-phase electric service, metering, and distribution, on-site energy production and storm water treatment, natural illumination, and passive ventilation. IT systems work included telephone and data cabling, electronic support equipment, and infrastructure requirements.

**2017 American Architecture Award*