

Altieri

COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL, URBAN FARM, AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

ARCHITECT

Gray Organschi Architects

LOCATION

New Haven, Connecticut

SIZE

14,760 SF

SUSTAINABILITY

LEED Gold 2019

COMPLETED

2016

AWARDS

2017 American Architecture Award



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Common Ground High School, one of the first charter schools in Connecticut, opened in 1997 with a curriculum focused on the environment. On 20 acres of city park land, the School 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, and advance environmental learning and leadership. The \$7.5 million building – the nation’s first building to use cross-laminated timber (CLT) as a “stressed skin” assembly – houses a gymnasium, laboratories, communal areas, 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.