

*Toward Sustainable, Inclusive & Inspiring*  
**FACILITIES**

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Special Insider  
content



Facilities & Services



# TOURING AND HISTORIES

with Dennis Craig



F&S is home to the university's historic preservation officer, Dennis Craig. He's a walking, talking history book when it comes to what has happened on campus since it was called Illinois Industrial University, dating to the late 1800s and can bring some context to almost any site, building, location, or notable person on campus.

Craig helped guide part of a tour for about 30 students in Scholar Adventurers Series of the Campus Honors Program at the Observatory, the building which has housed a telescope for investigating the stars since 1896. Craig's specialty is early history of the campus and relaying just how different life was back then.

"Although the Observatory seems to be in an unusual location on our modern campus, when it was constructed, its location was remote from the academic area of campus on a high spot of land," said Craig. "This original location functioned well for the first twenty years of its existence."

The Observatory has added space, but the main dome and telescope are functionally the same as they've always been. There's a creaky wooden ladder that rotates around the main room, and managing and using the telescope itself is a very manual, tangible task. Incredibly, the foundation for the telescope itself is separate from the foundation of the building, with the "many-ton" telescope basically sitting on a brick column that goes down to the bedrock.

A time capsule from the early days of Huff Hall was recently opened, then called the New Gym, more than 100 years ago. The time capsule was displayed and celebrated as part of a weekend of programming about the building and its importance to athletics and events at the university from 1924, particularly until the development and construction of the Assembly Hall, now called State Farm Center.

The items inside the Huff time capsule were known before it was re-opened, as a materials list was written up on a typewriter decades ago. Included are game tickets, posters, meeting minutes, reports, scores, news clippings, and other booklets and information about the university and its athletics programs.

"Historically, time capsules were included in buildings with the idea of the builders capturing information about their time to be shared with future generations," Craig said. F&S brickmasons were the ones who removed bricks near the cornerstone.

In addition to Dennis Craig and other experts who can help lead a tour about F&S services, F&S leads regular tours at the Solar Farms (1.0 and 2.0), Abbott Power Plant, and the Waste Transfer Station: <https://fs.illinois.edu/tours>.





Page Image: Aerial view from University Hall, circa 1912. Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives

# PLANNING, DESIGN, & CONSTRUCTION

## Q&A with Jim Sims



What is the primary role and responsibilities of the senior director of Planning, Design & Construction position?

*My primary roles in this new position at F&S include but are not limited to: Leading the development and implementa-*

*tion of strategic initiatives to empower and equip Planning, Design & Construction (PDC) teams to deliver more efficient and effective projects for Illinois; Build a culture of respect, continuous improvement, curiosity, and value-added services within PDC teams; Provide increased support to the F&S Associate Vice Chancellor as a PDC point of contact and subject matter expert; and improve communication and collaboration with campus partners for all services and projects delivered by PDC teams.*

The cost and time it takes to deliver projects is a general campus concern. What opportunities has or will F&S be pursuing to deliver more timely and cost-effective projects for campus?

*PDC team has initiated several strategic initiatives in pursuit of delivering more timely and cost-effective projects. Following are a few representative examples:*

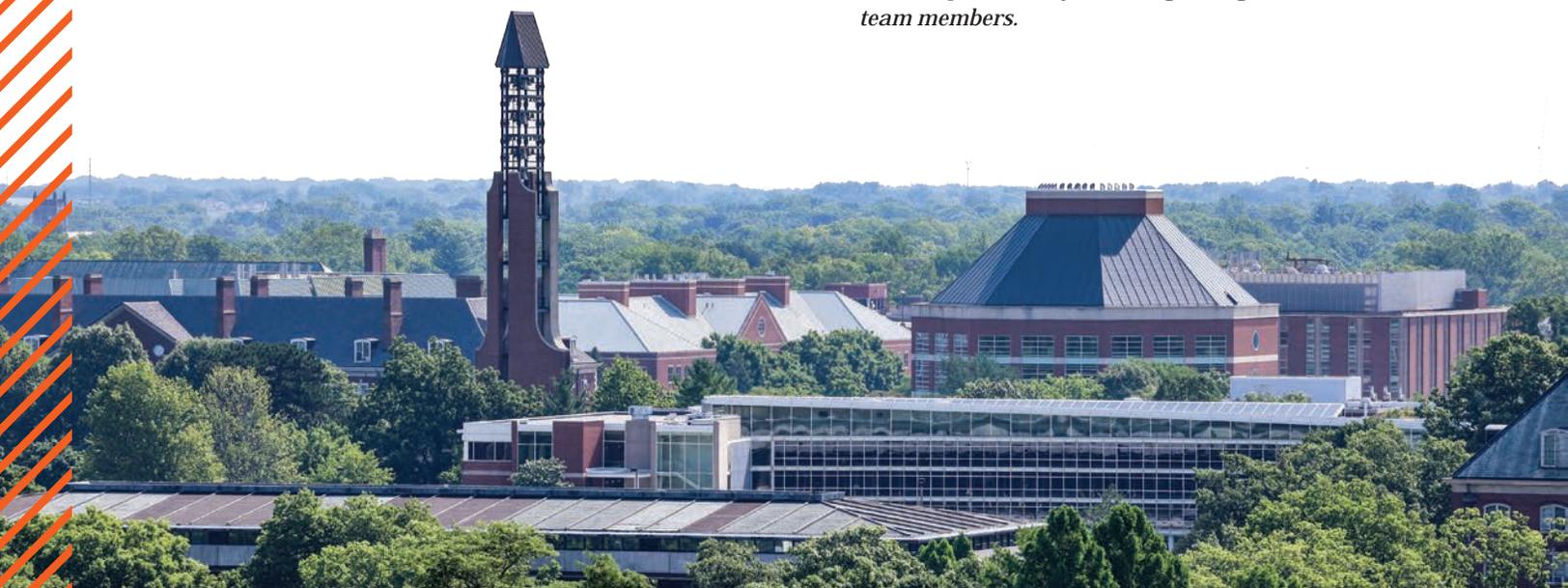
- *Collaborative effort with the Strategic Project Management Office to map current state processes to*

*deliver capital projects followed by future state process mapping and implementation.*

- *PDC team has engaged external architectural & engineering consulting firms to evaluate University Facilities Standards to better align with industry best practices and peer institution practices.*
- *PDC leadership is actively and proactively increasing outreach with contracting community and local unions to build a more robust and diverse contracting pool to improve competitiveness and responsiveness on construction projects.*
- *Expanding delivery methods and advocating for additional delivery method options to deliver more timely and cost-effective projects.*

How will this new position and reorganization at F&S improve communication of Planning, Design & Construction services?

*An area of emphasis for this position will be to develop collaborative and trusted partnerships with campus stakeholders and customers including university leaders such as deans and department heads that have not historically had direct contact with F&S leadership through recurring discussions. Additionally, I have already started meeting with facility managers to discuss current and proposed communication strategies to improve our communication throughout all areas of services provided by Planning, Design & Construction team members.*



# 2025 F&S STAFFING UPDATES

**Akins, Brittani**  
Assistant Contracts Specialist

**Albers, Clarke**  
Electrical Inspector

**Allen, Leavell**  
Building Service Worker

**Althaus, Cole**  
Sheet Metal Worker

**Azeez, Tobi**  
Contracts Specialist

**Barcus, Cory**  
Carpenter

**Bash, Cody**  
Painter

**Blandford, Keith**  
Accounting Officer

**Boykin, Samuel**  
Building Service Worker

**Breeden, Michael**  
Grounds Worker

**Buchholz, Leonard**  
Pipefitter

**Burton, Tevin**  
Carpenter

**Clardy, Zach**  
Temperature Control Mechanic

**Cothron, Jared**  
Pipefitter

**Cross, Scott**  
Cement Finisher

**Daniels, Lawrence**  
Grounds Worker

**Doyle, Kip**  
Senior Construction Project Manager

**Elam, Charles**  
Environmental Health & Safety Technician

**Fair, Derrick**  
Steam & Power Plant III

**Farmer, Mary**  
Accounting Associate

**Farney, CJ**  
Painter

**Farren, Lucas**  
Building Service Worker

**Fazio, Chrissy**  
Construction Project Manager

**Floyd, Tyson**  
Building Service Worker

**Fontaine, Chris**  
Storekeeper I

**Foster, Kelly**  
Storekeeper I

**Gifford, Jake**  
Driver

**Goad, Peyton**  
Temperature Control Mechanic

**Hannah, Thomas**  
Carpenter

**Hanpeter, Brad**  
Mill Worker

**Hardney, Jeff**  
Building Service Worker

**Harris, Brett**  
Construction Laborer

**Kipf, Adam**  
Locksmith

**Law, Eric**  
Grounds Worker

**Leith, Derek**  
Carpenter

**Lynch, Dustin**  
Painter

**Mabrey, Tony**  
Electrician

**Mannin, Dalton**  
Automotive Technician Assistant

**McClellan, Chris**  
Building Heat & Frost Insulator

**McCoy, Kameron**  
Painter

**McGath, David**  
Building Service Worker

**McMechan, Gunnar**  
Carpenter

**Moen, Bridgette**  
Landscape Architect, Project Planning

**Morgan, David**  
Automotive Technician Assistant

**Morton, Chris**  
Construction Laborer

**Murphy, Justin**  
Driver

**O'Connell, Megan**  
Utility Engineer Specialist

**Orwick, Jeffrey**  
Painter

**Painter, Jared**  
Locksmith

**Paris, Rachel**  
Accounting Officer

**Richardson, Zane**  
Sheet Metal Worker

**Rosenbeck, Tyler**  
Electrician

**Schweighart, Tyler**  
Sheet Metal Worker

**Seets, Terry**  
Sheet Metal Worker

**Shore, Anthony**  
Building Heat & Frost Insulator

**Sylvester, Troy**  
Carpenter

**Taylor, Mark**  
Automotive Technician

**Thomas, Willis**  
Building Service Worker

**Vega-Zamora, Ricky**  
Pipefitter

**White, Evan**  
Automotive Technician Assistant

**Wickenhauser, Robert**  
Cement Finisher

**Wilcoxon, Lillian**  
Accounting Specialist

**Williams, Lawrence**  
Automotive Technician Assistant

**Wilson, John**  
Heavy Driver

**Witte, Barbara**  
Business/Administrative Associate

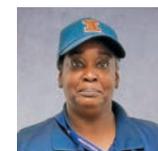
## SUPERVISORY POSITIONS



**Berry, Calvin**  
Brickmason Foreperson



**Cravens, Angela**  
Director of Human Resources, Diversity & Strategy



**Durant, Louiza**  
Building Service Sub-Foreperson



# CIF BENEFITS FROM RCx

Campus Instructional Facility (CIF) has quickly become an on-campus hub, drawing tens of thousands of students per week through its doors. A wide array of classes are hosted there, and public space areas are often populated as study areas. The building opened in 2021 and in these years since, F&S Retrocommissioning (RCx) experts figured it likely they would work on mechanical and operational improvements, with its high usage and advanced mechanical systems.

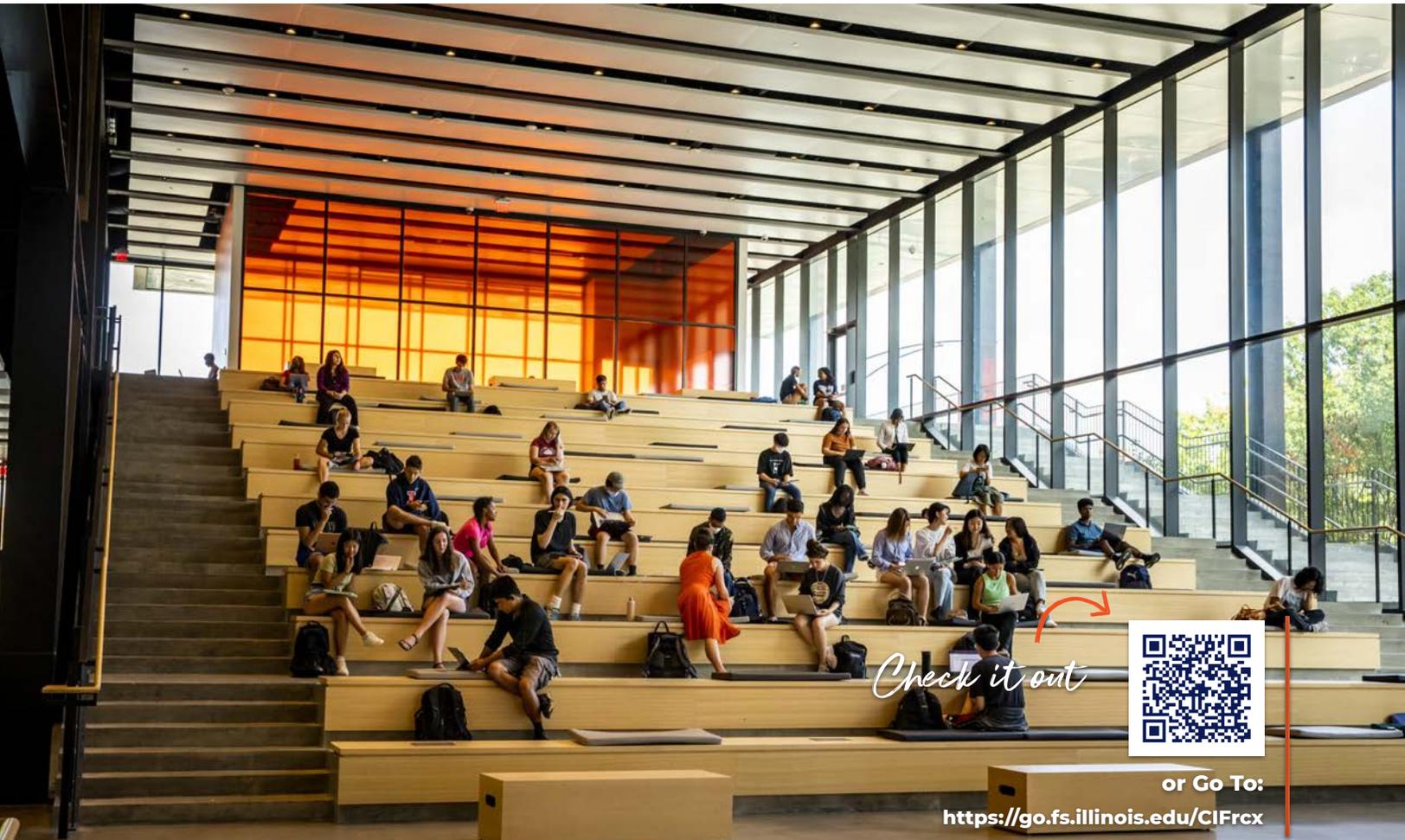
CIF was also introduced as a geothermal-powered facility, meaning it draws on the relative stability of below-ground temperatures to keep the building warm or cool, depending on need. Special windows help prevent heat gain and can change tint. Panels in individual rooms keep users comfortable. The air handling unit has dual energy recovery wheels, rooms have CO<sub>2</sub> and humidity sensors, and it was designed with good window and wall insulation and air sealing.

The building was given a LEED® Platinum rating once built, one of just five on the Urbana campus.

But there's always room for improvement, and RCx efforts have resulted in a 38% drop in energy use (kBtu/ft<sup>2</sup>/year).

## RCx PRESCRIPTIONS

Retrocommissioning teams make solutions happen — a team is deployed to the site with the express goal of, through hardware, software, education, and investigation, making the building more effective at heating and cooling its occupants. RCx has made improvements to more than 350 buildings totaling a cost avoidance of \$160M since 2007. Occupancy is one piece of low-hanging fruit within reach of most any building's energy use reduction plans. Ideally, you



*Check it out*



or Go To:

<https://go.fs.illinois.edu/CIFrcx>



should use less energy when there's fewer people in the building, like at night, during unscheduled days, holidays or break periods, and in summer months.

Bringing 40,000 students through each set of doors per week raises periodic peak needs — as they open the door to enter or exit, more conditioned air will need to offset that fresh air that just swept inside.

Andy Robinson, F&S engineer in energy services administration, was on the team addressing CIF concerns. The results, says Robinson, have made CIF a "contender for most efficient building on campus, especially one that has so many students in it."

"We save a lot of energy in large campus rooms by turning down the airflow based on the CO<sub>2</sub> demand or when nobody is there at all," said Robinson. "Every room at CIF already had CO<sub>2</sub> sensors, but the program wasn't letting the air go as low as we determined it could. CIF is the busiest classroom building on campus, but there are still plenty of hours when rooms were sitting empty or with one person keeping it running too high."

The project ran from March through June 2024, and results have been impressive.

Electricity use is down 6%, chilled water reduction 72%, and steam reduction 52%, with more expected this winter.

↓ **6%**  
Electricity  
Usage

↓ **72%**  
Chilled Water  
Reduction

↓ **52%**  
Steam  
Reduction

{in}

# SHOP SPOTLIGHT: PIPEFITTERS AND REFRIGERATION MECHANICS

**Hot or cold: pipefitters and refrigeration mechanics find solutions.**

Professionals in the pipe trades, including pipefitters and refrigeration mechanics, build and repair all of the complex systems that rely on the circulation of liquid, steam, or gas.

Refrigeration mechanics specialize in air conditioning, ice machines, coolers, and other cold-temperature connections, while pipefitters do the same but with standard, non-refrigerated components, including hot water and steam.



## AT CERL

And shifting from hot to cold was exactly the strategy, too, in a project at CERL, the Construction Engineering Research Laboratory. This collection of facilities is where the US Army Corps of Engineers conduct operations for the Department of Defense (DoD). CERL is described as the "premier center for developing technologies that provide high-quality facilities and realistic training lands to the DoD."

The buildings are owned by the university but F&S pipefitters and refrigeration mechanics worked together to replace lines of hot and cold water with new pre-insulated pipe technology.

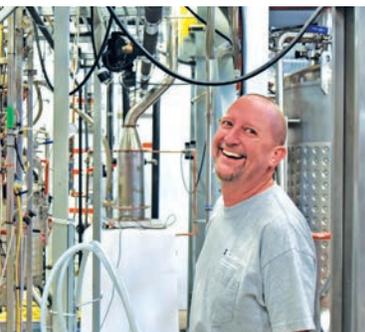
Said Jim Smith, refrigeration mechanics sub-foreperson:

*"The boiler house has battled a leak in the underground heating piping for several years. The leak would come and go with seemingly no rhyme or reason. Eventually, maintenance noticed a sidewalk starting to settle in an odd location. It was decided to do an exploratory dig to see if that was the location of the leak. After a forty-foot by forty-foot hole was opened up, a leak was discovered. A metal support had been welded to the pipes and the welds had begun rusting away. The crack would open and close with the changes of heat in the pipe and heat in the ground, making it appear to go away and come back."*

*"It was eventually determined to replace all 4 lines and eliminate ever having this problem in the future. This would allow the heating lines to be isolated and replaced. Once they were completed, the chilled water could be diverted into the heating lines. This would allow the facility to maintain air conditioning in the hottest part of the summer. With the chilled water running in the heating lines, this would allow for the underground chilled water piping to be replaced."*

*"This was a pretty big project for F&S to be able to complete in-house. There are many spokes to this wheel and we are just a part of it."*

## ONE OF OURS: BJ GLASA



At the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory (IBRL), basically, companies and researchers use the facility to ferment things under different conditions to find new products that can be made of local crops like corn and soybeans. The building has giant metal containers, each with an overwhelming amount of sensors, inlets, holes, controls, detectors, outlets, and valves.

Connections need to be made to each container, many using local utilities used as part of experiments — resources like water, pressurized air, or steam.

Real science is happening here, and it's thanks, in part, to F&S refrigeration mechanic BJ Glasa.

"BJ is an integral part of the IBRL team," said Marissa Nyland, assistant director of operations & safety at IBRL. "He provides invaluable expertise and perspective to the team, helping with all types of problem solving in the pilot plant. In addition to piping almost all the existing fermentation infrastructure at IBRL, he's also our technical team's go-to when they need to talk through an unusual equipment problem. Even if it is something he hasn't encountered before, he's always got a good idea on who else to call, or what to try next. His in-depth knowledge also allows our plant staff to really get creative with projects since they can work together collaboratively to come up with solutions that are unique but still safe."

## ICE COLD PLAYERS

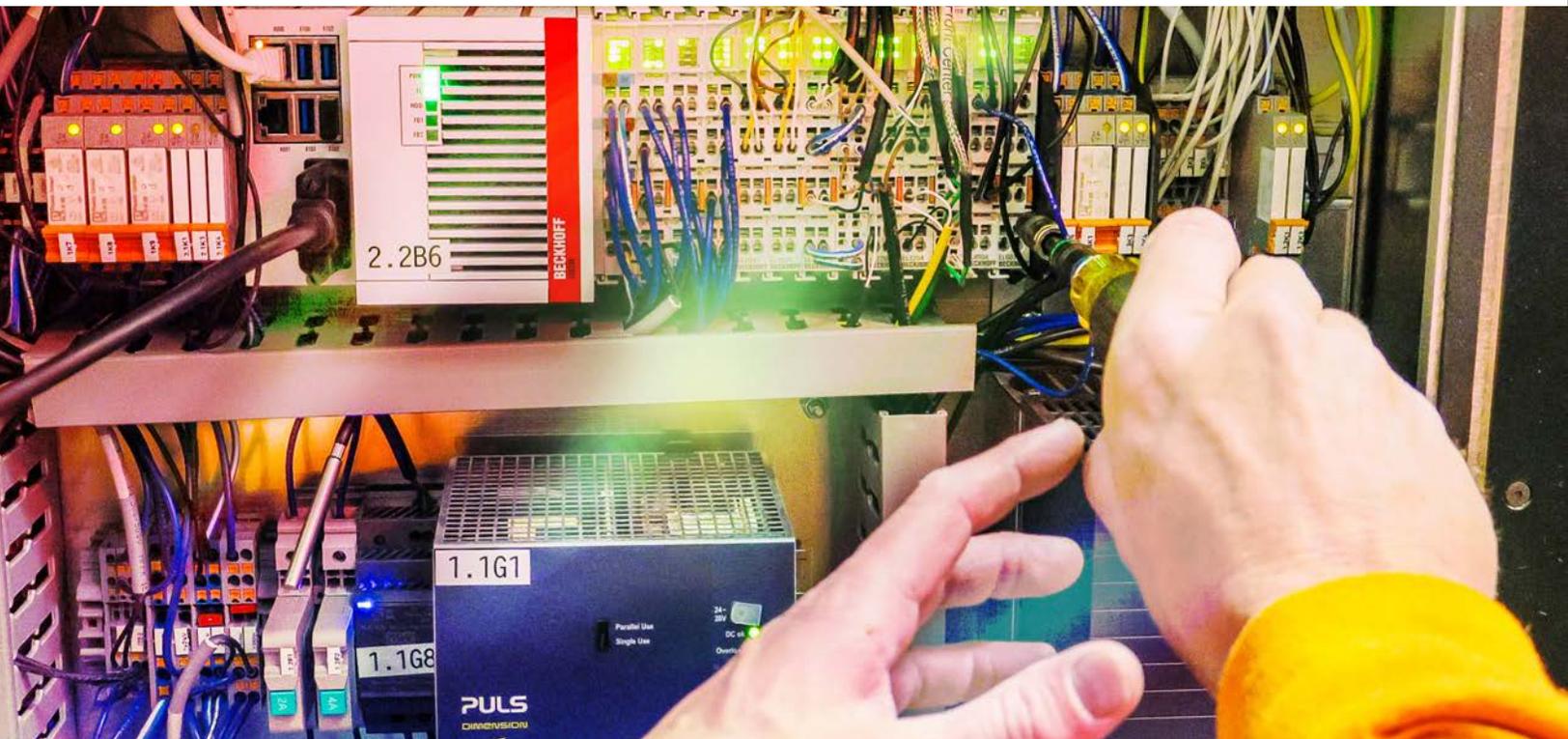
Refrigeration mechanics had to call an audible. With the clock ticking down before Illini football recruiting visits, someone had to "figure it out" at the Henry Dale and Betty Smith Football Center. The need was a real puzzler: how do you build and install two 8-foot-tall cryo freeze chambers, outfitted with neon striping glowing lights and able to hit -110 F wind chill thanks to three powerful fans without an instruction manual or expert oversight? It's not too different from a typical "-80" freezer used in research labs, but it looks like a TRON version of a phone booth that will leave you shivering in seconds. Football players last three minutes, 30 seconds inside.

### Game plan: call F&S.

Klint Schmidt, refrigeration mechanic, led the effort and refrigeration mechanics worked to put the pieces together, quite literally.

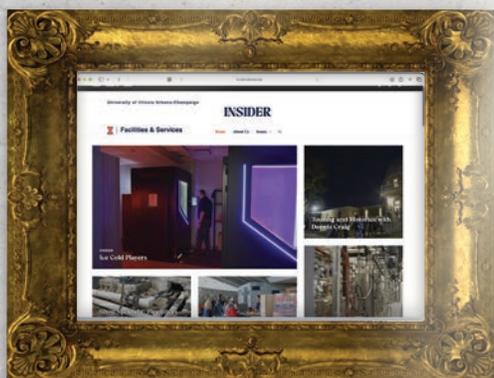
There's lots of benefits to the cold, according to trainers, and players sign up early in the morning. This aligns perfectly with how the freezers are to operate. Once they are done cooling — often operating from 3 a.m. until 6 p.m. — they actually completely reverse their operations and move around air in an attempt to dry out for 7 hours, because as cool air warms, that can cause condensation.

Said Schmidt: "We're always called on. I'm a guy that, I'll do anything. I like the challenge. We'll figure it out. We were here within a couple hours and started right away. It's cool to be a part of it. It's cool to come work here."



# Hall of Fame

F&S provides all physical plant, operational, and essential services for sustaining an environment that fosters the research, teaching, and public engagement activities of the university. This includes a wide variety of efforts and services vital to all on campus and in the community. Welcome to our Hall of Fame.



## INSIDER MAGAZINE

F&S Insider is an online and printed magazine produced by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Facilities & Services (F&S) unit highlighting projects, team members, and research. Online stories range from the tops of buildings to the underground; planning and operations; stories of humanity, the natural world, and sometimes, what it takes to just keep the lights on.



<https://fs.web.illinois.edu/Insider/>



## QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

Each quarter, F&S Customer Relations & Communications, prepares a digital and print publication which highlights recent work and future planning of activities on campus. This typically includes a shop spotlight, topical subjects like how weather change impacts our operations, updates on recent events led by F&S, and information on commonly-used services.



<https://fs.illinois.edu/quarterly-publication/>



## TOURS

F&S offers tours to the campus community of Solar Farm 2.0, the Waste Transfer Station, and Abbott Power Plant. Visitors are asked to fill out forms for tours of each location, which includes information regarding directions or arrival procedures, safety rules, and policies.



<https://fs.illinois.edu/tours/>

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Questions, ideas, or comments?  
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