

Toward Sustainable, Inclusive & Inspiring
FACILITIES



Facilities & Services

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F&S STRATEGIC PLAN:

A Strategy for Service & Stewardship

The Facilities & Services (F&S) Strategic Plan: A Strategy for Service & Stewardship provides a comprehensive roadmap to strengthen our workforce, enhance customer and stakeholder engagement, advance access and belonging, improve resource stewardship, and foster innovative collaboration. Through these initiatives, we are committed to operational excellence and ensuring that our efforts directly support the mission of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

At F&S, we are dedicated to maintaining and enhancing an environment that fosters learning, discovery, engagement, and economic development. These core principles align with the university’s mission to enrich lives across Illinois, the nation, and the world. By focusing on the physical spaces and services that underpin academic and research activities, we create a foundation that enables the success of our students, faculty, and staff.

This plan is also intentionally aligned with Boldly Illinois 2030, the university-wide strategic initiative focused on Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment. By connecting our actions to the broader objectives of the university, F&S ensures that our operations, professional development, and service delivery contribute to achieving campus-wide goals. This alignment reinforces our commitment to advancing the university's mission while positioning F&S as a catalyst for innovation and growth.

To read the rest of the plan, including highlights, definitions, and goals, visit:
<https://go.fs.illinois.edu/StrategicPlan>

Photo by Fred Zwicky / University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



Check it out

or Go To:
<https://go.fs.illinois.edu/StrategicPlan>

OUR ROUND BARN

From Quentin Lusby, F&S Project Manager

The restoration of three round barns situation on a hill on St. Mary's Rd., along with the adjacent manager's house, is a special project for F&S capital delivery because it brings together historic preservation, agricultural legacy, veterinary education, and long-term campus stewardship. These historic pieces of architecture are part of the university's agricultural history, and a visible reminder of the role Illinois has played in advancing farming, dairy science, and veterinary education.

The scope of work focuses on restoring the envelopes of all four buildings to improve weather resistance while using materials consistent with each building's historic features. The barns will be conserved in accordance with their status on the National Register of Historic Places (designated in 1994), supporting the College of Veterinary Medicine's long-term goal of transforming the facilities into future community spaces.

The barns will receive critical structural stabilization, roof and siding replacement, framing repairs, and exterior envelope improvements using historically appropriate methods. The finished project will mean more reliable spaces, improved building conditions, and a renewed environment that supports the College of Veterinary Medicine's ongoing operations, educational mission, and future community engagement.

A REMARKABLE GIFT

Ms. Leah J. Wightman grew up on a farm near Arcola, near a round barn built around the same era as the university's barns. She later studied and worked in Champaign and completed her bachelor's degree at Illinois in 1977. Her connection to farming, barns, and the university came together in a remarkable way when she left an estate valued at \$10 million to name and sustain the historic round barns. The dedication of the Leah J. Wightman Round Barns recognizes both the historic value of the buildings and the life of a donor who cared deeply about them.

Historically, the round barns are notable because they were constructed between 1907 and 1913 as part of the university's Experimental Dairy Farm. Their design was intended to demonstrate the labor-efficient and cost-effective advantages of round barns for dairy operations.

“My role is different but complementary. As part of the project delivery side, my responsibility is to help move the work from vision to execution. That includes coordinating the project scope, budget, schedule, design reviews, procurement, construction coordination, contractor communication, and the many details required to restore historic buildings correctly. On a project like this, the role is not just to manage construction. It is to help protect the intent of the gift, preserve the historic character of the buildings, support the needs of Veterinary Medicine, and make sure the work is coordinated in a way that results in a durable and meaningful finished product.”



Historical images: Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives. Top: Construction of Round Barn Roof Support Structure, circa 1912. Found in RS 39/2/20, Box BUI. Bottom: Dairy Department Wagon in Front of a Round Barn, circa 1905-20. Found in RS 8/8/25, Box 2. Top Photo Courtesy of Fred Zwicky.

CAMPUS IN A QUARTER

Another quarter century has passed at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, so let’s look at new buildings, public art, and landscape and transportation projects that arrived on the campus from 2000-2025.

CAMPUS INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITY

Finished in 2021, CIF quickly became one of the busiest buildings on campus, drawing students from nearly every college to the multi-purpose building. Spacious, inviting public areas, like the giant wooden ‘steps,’ draw students looking to quietly study, in addition to 23 classrooms. The building is certified LEED® Platinum thanks to its geothermal system for heating and cooling, special windows, and sensor monitoring that reduces energy use when nobody is in a room.

SIDNEY LU MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BUILDING ADDITION AND PUBLIC ART “GRASP”

This historic Grainger College of Engineering building was given a second life with 66,000 existing gross square feet (GSF) renovated, and 42,000 GSF of space added. It was developed to give students more study, lab, and gathering space and offer an exciting new look along Green Street. Outside the addition sits *Grasp*, with three metal vertical arms which move back and forth with the power of a simple handle-crank on the base. On the back of the gearbox, glass panels allow the user to see the gears at work.



RED OAK RAIN GARDEN

The garden, featuring two giant trees, a collection area full of grasses, forbs, and native plants, public art, a pathway, and a wooden bridge, is located in an Urbana greenspace between Allen Residence Hall and McKinley Health Center, near Campus Recreation Center East. F&S helped design and shape the land to allow that area to dissipate rainwater, allowing for better pedestrian and bike travel.

MCORE

The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD), City of Champaign, City of Urbana, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign partnered to improve mobility in the campus core through a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. The \$47.2M Multimodal Corridor Enhancement Project (MCore) Project (2017-2021) is unprecedented in our community’s history and made a transformative impact on streets and pathways, including a populated and iconic stretch of Green Street.



A DEEPER LOOK: THE G.R.O.W. PROGRAM

The Great Resource Opportunity Within program (G.R.O.W.) offers a way for F&S team members to switch paths to work in the crafts and trades. The G.R.O.W. program plays an important role in the team member theme in the F&S Strategic Plan: A Strategy for Service & Stewardship.

Improving career advancement opportunities within F&S and fully capitalizing on the capabilities and work ethic of a talented, diverse workforce are top strategic priorities. In the first iteration of the program, two shops have welcomed team members as apprentices: carpenters and mill shop workers.

G.R.O.W. established a structured, equitable, and transparent hiring process, in cooperation with local unions, for internal candidates based on demonstrated performance, successful testing, and interviews.

Jay Santos worked for Central Receiving but felt like his impact could be greater as a mill shop worker.

“I’ve always admired our institution and its global impact. Working in receiving has been fantastic, but I’ve felt like I’ve been warming the bench! After learning about G.R.O.W., I’m eager to learn new skills and solidify my name in the University of Illinois history. I’m excited about the potential to contribute even more!”

G.R.O.W. is open to all qualifying F&S personnel and creates dedicated, long-term apprentice paths in the trades that support the university’s ongoing commitment to access, opportunity, and excellence for all.

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F&S PEOPLE



A reminder of some recent changes to the F&S organization, including an interim Associate Vice Chancellor (AVC).

Morgan White, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Sustainability, was named to serve as the interim AVC. Morgan is a member of the F&S leadership team and has experience serving as interim Associate Vice Chancellor. Within F&S, she has led change management efforts, campuswide sustainability planning and large-scale transportation demand management initiatives. She has been part of the university since 1994, holding roles in the Printing Department and serving as an adjunct instructor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

IN HUMAN RESOURCES, CULTURE & STRATEGY

An organizational re-naming to Human Resources, Culture & Strategy (HRCS) “reflects our evolving focus and the breadth of our work,” said HRCS director Angela Cravens. Additionally, Doni Walker, associate director of Inclusion & Organization Development, will now serve as F&S’ representative on the campus Council for Senior Diversity Leaders, ensuring our unit has a voice in campuswide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts and bringing new ideas and best practices back to F&S.

Jade Swanson joined recently as HRCS’ assistant director of Labor & Employee Relations. In Swanson’s new role within F&S, she will support a range of employee and organizational initiatives. Her background in labor and employee relations on campus, combined with her experience advising units through complex workplace situations, positions her well for this role. Jade will partner closely with supervisors, leaders, and team members to promote consistent, fair, and proactive approaches to employee and labor relations issues.

IN PROJECT DELIVERY

Jon Hasselbring was named the director of Project Delivery, and oversees all aspects of Capital Projects, Construction Services, and Contracts Administration within a division that brings together large- and small-scale construction project delivery activities.

Most recently, Jon served as the interim director of Capital Projects, where he led a team executing over 100 active projects that totaled more than \$1 billion in volume. This portfolio included progress on high-profile projects, such as the Illini Hall Replacement and Altgeld Hall Renovation, the Archives and Special Collections Building, and the Doris Kelley Christopher Illinois Extension Center, among others.

Kevin Short was named associate director of Construction Services. Short will oversee project delivery, contractor coordination, resource planning, budget oversight, and collaboration with campus partners to support small construction projects across the university. He brings more than 25 years of experience in construction management and operations leadership across retail, restaurant, residential, and commercial sectors.



Morgan
White



Angela
Cravens



Jon
Hasselbring

Hall of Fame

COMMENCEMENT EDITION

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. Caps off Commencement Edition!



FOUNTAIN COLORING

Coloring agents are added by the Water Station to the fountain at the Alice Campbell Alumni Center a couple of times per year, including during Commencement week. There are two main pumps that keep the water moving, so once the color is in, it's gonna be vibrant orange for at least a week!



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



ALMA'S GOWN

Representatives from Building Maintenance & Grounds help campus leaders dress Alma Mater during Commencement week. Alma has been draped in several outfits and accessories since 2005. First unveiled 97 years ago in June, Alma underwent a complete conservation process in 2014, including laser cleaning, bolt replacement, and joint filling.



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



BLINKING LIGHTS

Blinking red stop lights at six campus intersections, thanks to a switch by high-voltage electricians, are calming and meditative because one must stop now to go later. The feeling that accompanies those blinking red stoplights—from the Monday after Commencement until mid-August—reminds C-U of the inescapable calendar and soothes the mind, anxious for temporary solitude and serenity.



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

SHOP SPOTLIGHT:

IRONWORKERS

F&S ironworkers are part of a proud tradition of the people who constructed some of the world's tallest and most recognizable buildings in every city in the world. When local students entering the job market visit PPSB for a tour of crafts and trades, ironworkers always note the skills learned as an ironworker can take you anywhere—in this case, into the past.

The Morrow Plots on campus are among the most important square feet in Champaign county as a National Historic Landmark and with a hyper-localized importance. The university long ago recognized the importance of this land, originally started by the first dean of the college, Professor George Espy Morrow. Established in 1876, the plots are the oldest experimental crop field in America and the second oldest in the world.

As a campus 'must-see,' the Morrow Plots are the refinement of a public good done by the university, helping spur the massive growth in agriculture productivity over time. Experiments there led to further knowledge on crop rotation, soil nutrient depletion, and the effects of synthetic and natural fertilizers. In Summer 2026, ACES announced a gift from Bayer's Crop Science division to support the revitalization of the Morrow Plots.

The project delivers a new fence, with impressive foundations and a showpiece entry gate, which requires ironworkers' muscle and planning. The digging site includes a time capsule from not long ago, which had to be dug up and moved to a new location.



It was in 1999 that the College of ACES, with the aid of F&S ironworkers, deposited that large box there, filled with reminders of the time and hope for our future. F&S ironworkers were again on site in 2026 to get the 500-pound box out, in order to move it away from the future fenceline, now cleared of large, visually-obstructing shrubs.

This type of work—moving extremely heavy objects in and out of difficult working conditions—makes up about 20 percent of ironworkers' jobs, according to foreperson Erik "Cable" Davis. This time capsule at the Morrow Plots wasn't too heavy compared to other types of work, but Davis readily recounts tales of lab equipment, tables, furniture, contained mechanical systems, and public art.



Check Out the Morrow Plot's live webcam

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