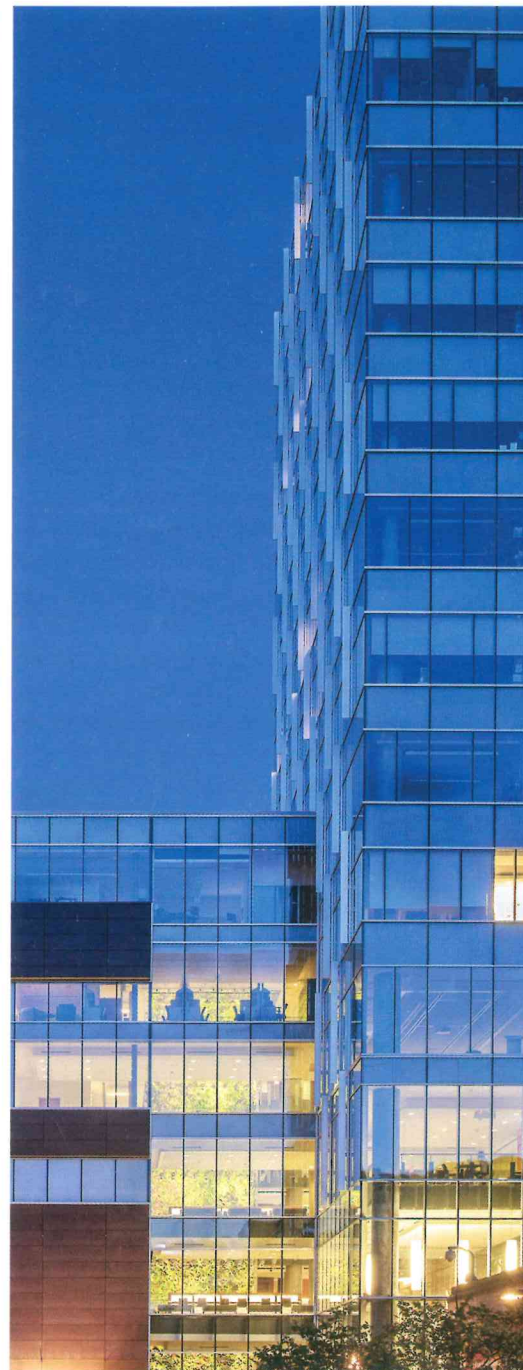
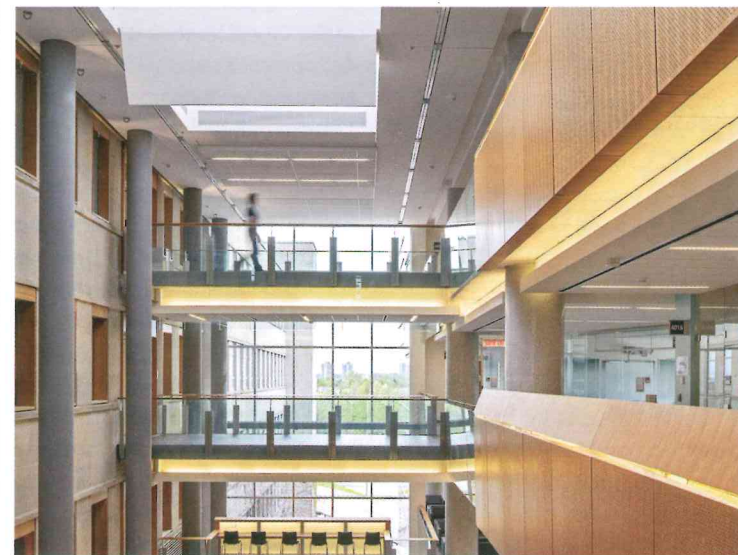
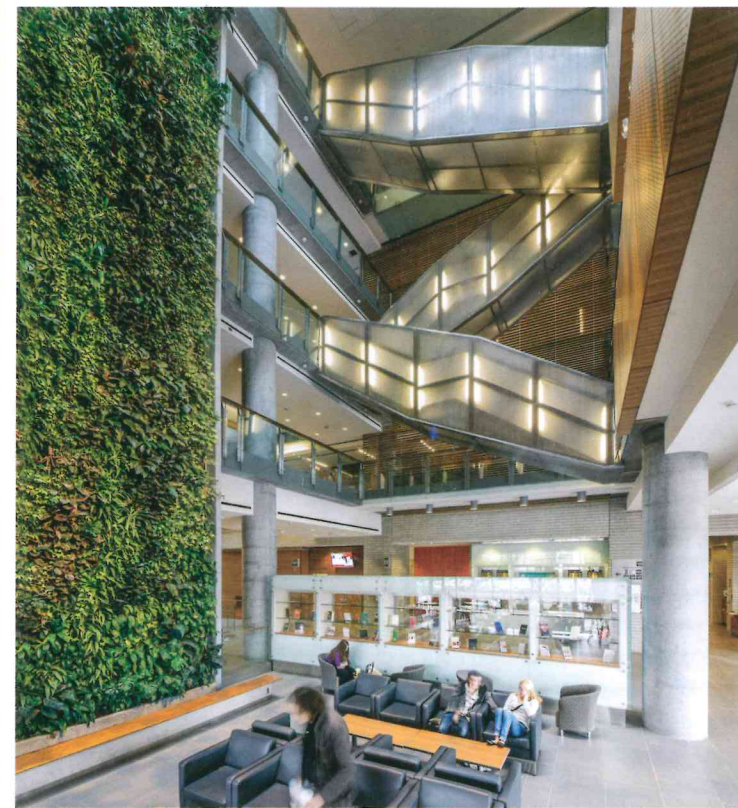


# AWARD TRIO FOR UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA SOCIAL SCIENCES BUILDING

Concrete, Wood Design and Green Wall



**A** new academic facility at the University of Ottawa has garnered three design awards this season. The Faculty of Social Sciences was recognized with the Institutional Building Award on December 3rd at the Ontario Concrete Awards. Diamond Schmitt Architects and KWC Architects designed the building.

The 15-storey tower and adjacent podia form a robust structure with a stepped massing scheme that relates to a varied urban perimeter context. The building also features a glazed prow that tapers to a 'flatiron' to announce a new campus gateway from

the Rideau Canal. To claim an additional 6,000 square feet of educational space that does not impede on the footprint of a future public plaza, a 12-metre cantilever supports a 225-seat theatre, a double-height multi-use hall and a green roof.

The LEED Gold certified facility also received the Interior Wood Design Award from Ontario Wood WORKS! With nine faculties and 10,000 students, the Social Sciences Building provides sizeable circulation and public amenity space. Wood products were specified for many high traffic locations throughout the tower and its connecting components. Cherry wood slatted screens line the

main atrium that links the new facility with the renovated Vanier Hall via multi-level bridges. "In addition to wood panels introducing a warm, rich element that is prominent and welcoming, slatted wood screens provide acoustic absorption, which is essential in the large interconnected spaces," said Donald Schmitt, Principal at Diamond Schmitt Architects.

A second atrium contains North America's largest vertically planted living wall bio-filter at its centre. This giant six-storey green feature is connected to the mechanical system and serves to purify return air. Diamond Schmitt Architects and NEDLAW Living Walls pioneered the energy-saving system a decade ago.

"The living wall is central to the experience of being in the public space of this large 250,000-square-foot building – it positively affects the light, sound, texture, air and colour of the space," said Sarah Low, Associate at Diamond Schmitt Architects. "It is key to making it a place where the university students and faculty want to spend time." The University building won the 2014 Interior Green Wall Award of Excellence at CitiesAlive, the Green Roofs for Healthy Cities conference in November.

Photography by Doublespace Photography