



PROJECT PROFILE: Northwest Career College Adopts Green Globes[®] to Transform Its Campus and Student Perspectives

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PATRICK KENNY
Chief Operating Officer,
Northwest Career College

PROJECT RATING:



In early 2019, Northwest Career College (Northwest) established a "Go Green" sustainability initiative that committed the family-owned institution to make substantial changes to its campus environment. It was a commitment the owners took seriously.

"As Northwest began to do research about how to effectively support this initiative, we identified that becoming a Green Globes certified building would fit perfectly into our plans," says Patrick Kenny, Chief Operating Officer at Northwest. "The Green Building Initiative worked for years to encourage sustainable solutions within our community, which made this partnership extremely exciting for us here at Northwest."

The Las Vegas institution is a medical para-professional training facility, and its main two-story college campus building soared to the top percent of the Three Green Globes for Continual Improvement of Existing Buildings certification.

"We are always looking for ways to reduce our environmental footprint," says Leslie Tran, Northwest's VP of Operations. "With the support of GRN Vision, we were able to take our facility to the next level and set the tone in the industry when it comes to sustainability."

Originally, the team thought the project would be certified as an educational institution. "But the facility has labs, patient rooms, and a reception area," explains Dave Ray, Principal of GRN Vision. "GBI was amazing. We worked with them to review the entire package and decided to certify as a medical office building instead."



Northwest's transformations reduced environmental impacts and provide students with a healthy campus:

- Lighting retrofits incorporated LEDs and new occupancy sensors to lower energy loads.
- Tracking energy use under the Energy Star Portfolio Manager helped the facility realize an Energy Star score of 97.
- Photo-voltaic panels installed on available roof surfaces provide approximately 15% of the building's total energy.
- Alterations to the existing building chemical dissolution machine minimize harsh chemicals and improve staff and occupant health.
- Staff implemented an environmental purchasing plan including the use of green cleaning products.

Culture Shift

New to the certification process, Northwest's facility personnel resonated with many items in the Green Globes online questionnaire. "The client was very involved in the process and really incorporated sustainability into their corporate culture," says Ray. "In medicine, you try to create efficiencies so sustainability made sense to them."

In addition to embracing survey items that improved wellness like indoor environmental quality, Northwest found ways to reduce landfill waste and promote resource conservation. For example, when students arrive on campus, they receive metal reusable water bottles with an educational note about conserving water. Because some items are less visible, Northwest actively educates students about its "Go Green" program. "We also have signs on campus that tell students about many of our internal changes," Tran describes. "When the Green Globes Assessor came to the onsite walkthrough, I went through all the changes we've made since the start of the project."

Northwest's college campus was also the first Green Globes project for Rachel Steffen, Associate at GRN Vision. "Our Assessor was so detailed and he helped us find things we might have missed," Steffen recalls. "The onsite walkthrough was really eye opening because it put everything that I'd seen on paper into clear perspective."

Kayla Nix, Operations Manager at Northwest, completed many of the facility's sustainability measures and noticed big improvements in real time. "With the implementation of more energy-efficient technology on-campus, we were able to drastically reduce our energy consumption each month. The changes were incredible to see," Nix says. "Additionally, Northwest was able to incorporate a recycling initiative on-campus that involved both students and employees. We are committed to create a 'green' campus in efforts to support our Las Vegas community."



GREEN GLOBES RATINGS:

After the final assessment is verified by a third party, properties achieving a score of 35% or higher receive a Green Globes rating based on the percentage of total points achieved (up to 1000).



85-100%

FOUR GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates world-class leadership in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



70-84%

THREE GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates outstanding success in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



55-69%

TWO GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates significant achievement in resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.



35-54%

ONE GREEN GLOBES

Demonstrates a strong commitment to resource efficiency, reducing environmental impacts, and improving occupant wellness.