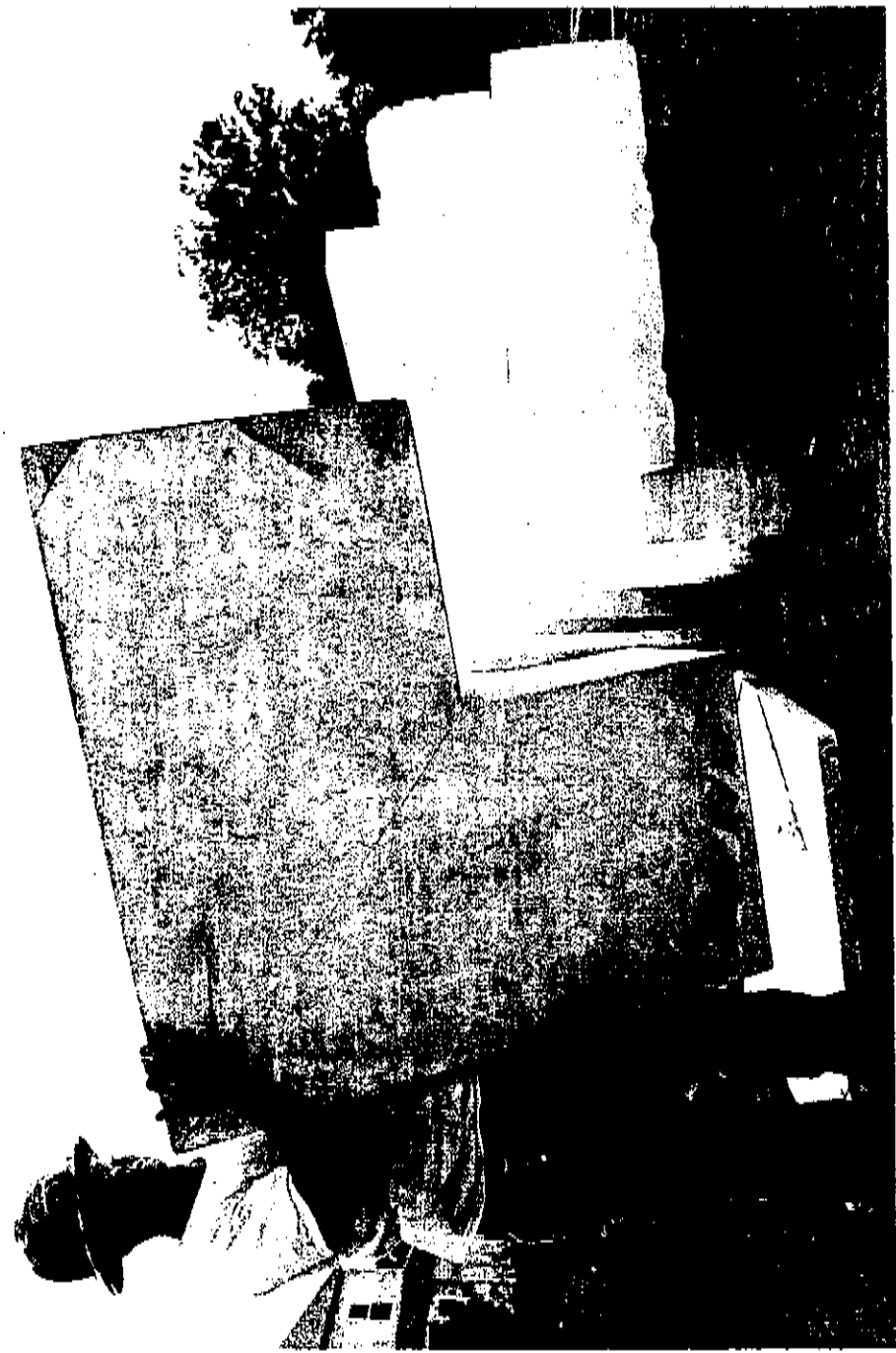


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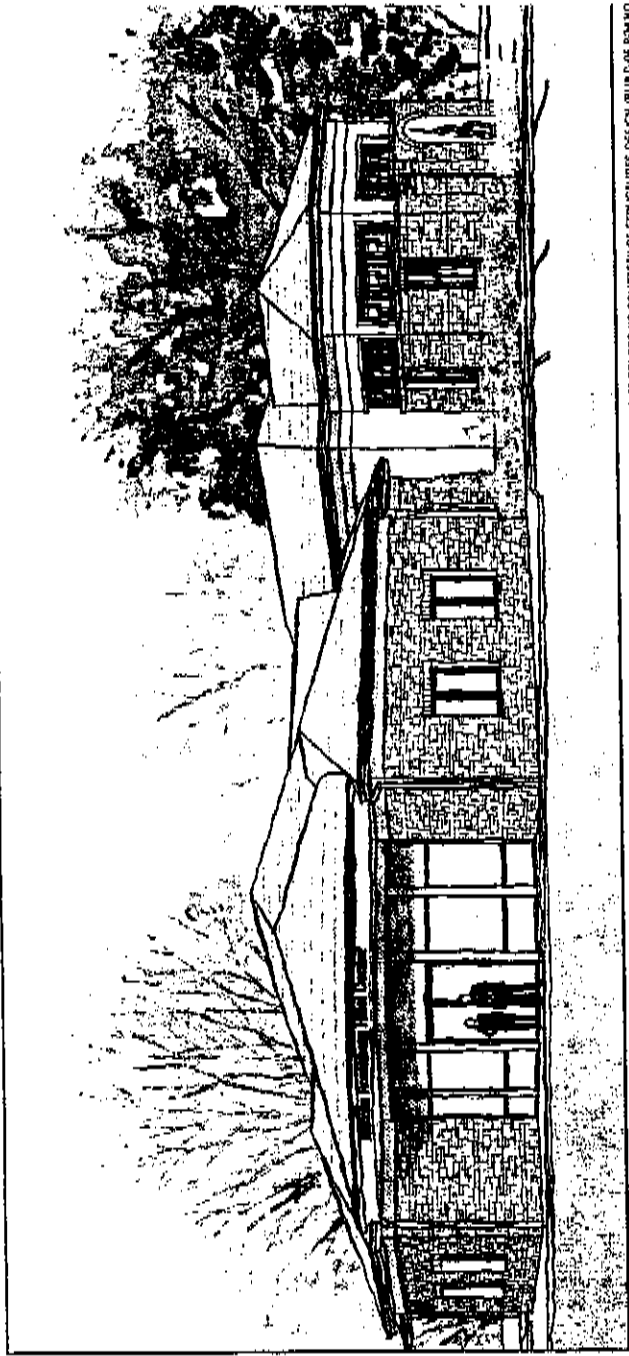


## Investing in green growth

The new Jewish center for Virginia Tech students is being built with environmentally-sound technology from Europe that will save heating and cooling bills by 90 percent. **PAGE 6**

**ALSO INSIDE** Virginia Tech plans open house to show off new residence hall.

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ARTIST RENDERING COURTESY OF STRUCTURES DESIGN BUILD ROANOKE  
 The Malcolim Rosenberg Hillel Center for Jewish Life at Virginia Tech will be constructed using passive house technology, which is an extremely energy-efficient European model that on average reduces heating and cooling bills by 90 percent and overall energy by 70 percent.

# Strong growth, green building

The new Jewish center for Virginia Tech students is being built with environmentally-sound technology from Europe.

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With active membership increasing from eight to 800 students in the past eight years, officials at Virginia Tech's Hillel wanted a building that would give the group a visible presence on campus, serve the needs of the students and be good for the environment.

Once completed, the Malcolim Rosenberg Hillel Center for Jewish Life will be the first religious building and the largest commercial building in the country constructed with an increasingly popular, energy-efficient technology called passive house, according to project officials.

Based on German technology, passive house is a cost-effective, low-energy building system that reduces heating and cooling bills by up to 90

percent and overall energy use by up to 70 percent. The well-insulated and virtually airtight buildings are primarily heated by passive solar gain and internal gains such as electrical equipment, according to the Passive House Institute U.S.

More than 30,000 passive house projects have been completed in Europe since 1990. There are fewer than 100 projects completed or under construction in the United States, up from 13 last year. The Malcolim Rosenberg Hillel Center will be the first religious building made with the technology.

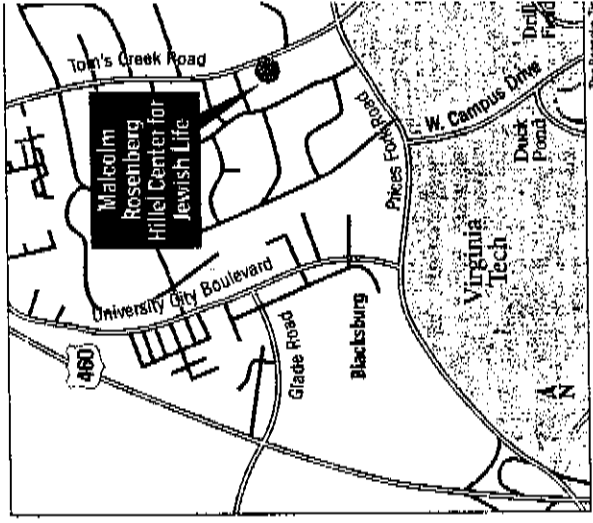
Adam Cohen is the co-owner of Structures Design Build of Roanoke, the firm assigned to the project. Structures also designed and built the Gereau Center in Rocky Mount using passive house, making it the first public school of its kind. After collecting data for

seven months, Cohen said the school's heating and cooling bill dropped by 90 percent and the overall energy was reduced by 70 percent.

The Hillel center will be named for Malcolim Rosenberg, a businessman from Roanoke who ran his family's cap and gown business, Oak Hall, for decades. He was also an entrepreneur and a philanthropist, contributing time and money to primarily Jewish causes, but his actions affected the whole community.

"He didn't just say things—he did them," Hillel Executive Director Sue Kurtz said. "He forced you to ... stretch yourself to do things that make the world a better place, even though it was hard."

After discussing plans for a new center with Kurtz and advisory board member Ed Gralla in 2007, Rosenberg became ill and died. His wife,



Diane Rosenberg, donated a \$1 million matching gift to have the building named in his memory.

In the past three years, Hillel has raised \$2.5 million toward the construction.

Continued on next page

money for the building since no campus funds were provided, though the university recognized gifts over \$50,000. She estimated that the group needs \$500,000 to complete the project, \$100,000 of which will go toward building two kosher kitchens to keep meat and dairy separate.

The Hillel at Virginia Tech Founding Board voted to build the center with passive house technology despite the additional cost, saying they felt it was important to implement.

Though the startup cost is greater, Cohen said it takes about 7.6 years for the technology to pay off. Reduced energy bills and lower operating expenses will allow more money to go toward programs and activities, he said. He also said the interior air quality will improve because fresh air will circulate constantly through the building.

At the end of the day, Cohen said, the performance of the building is what matters.

"The most important part is putting buildings on the ground that actually perform as their model."

The design falls in line



**CONCRETE CENTER** The Roanoke Farms Mount carries a piece of heavily condensed foam core at the site of the Virginia Tech Hillel Center on Ioms Creek Road in Blacksburg Thursday. Miller works for Procon of Rocky Mount and is a subcontractor of Structures Design /Build of Roanoke.

possibility of timed trips to help students keep Shabbat.

As a core value of Judaism, Hillel at Virginia Tech holds several programs and community service trips that focus on the environment. Members have volunteered on organic farms, held learning programs about sustainability efforts and helped clean up environmental damage after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, student Lauren Eialkow said.

Hillel members such as Vice President of Tzedek (Social Justice) Rachel Adell have said that the new center will further their environmental efforts through saving energy and reducing waste.

For Kurtz, the building doesn't matter as much as what goes on inside of it.

"We aren't just bringing a building; we're adding value and a contribution to the university," she said.

She said the building will serve as a facility for Hillel to continue its programming, which aims to educate, incorporate and include members of the Virginia Tech community, both Jewish and non-Jewish.

"It really benefits everybody," Kurtz said.

Concrete specialist Grant Miller works for Procon of Rocky Mount and is a subcontractor of Structures Design /Build of Roanoke. The discovery of expansive soil and underground rock further delayed the project, with blasting as recent as last week.

The new center will contain amenities for daily operation such as staff offices, a library resource center and a student project room. The project also calls for religious additions, including an outdoor biblical garden and the

located in the Multicultural Center in the Squires Student Center on campus.

The discovery of expansive soil and underground rock further delayed the project, with blasting as recent as last week. The founders are in place and the concrete should be poured this week, Kurtz said. The building is expected to be complete this spring, weather permitting. Hillel is currently



Construction began in October 2010 after years of planning, finding a space, fundraising and searching for contractors. The discovery of expansive soil and underground rock further delayed the project, with blasting as recent as last week.