



Left: The new CMU eSports arena features an area for casual gamers that includes three Integra Seating Rendezvous sofas.

Below: Integra Seating's Rendezvous sofa – along with its Brighton Chair and poufs – were selected for the different areas of CMU's new eSports arena.

Seating Solutions Help Create Stellar eSports Arena for CMU

By Chandra Putnam

The world of online gaming continues to grow in popularity, especially among a younger generation. So it comes as no surprise that many colleges and universities are looking to upgrade their facilities to accommodate the next generation of competitive eSports players and casual gamers.

One school, Colorado Mesa University (CMU), is at the forefront of this movement. Last fall the school completed the renovation of an existing building at its main campus in Grand Junction. The first floor of Rotary Hall, a two-story building that housed administrative offices, was reimaged to create a permanent home for CMU's fast-growing eSports team. Since its founding in 2015, the team has expanded to more than 55 members and competes against more than 20 teams across the country. Until Rotary Hall's transformation, CMU's eSports team had to use different facilities on campus for their weekly practices and competitions.

To convert the more than 1,800-square-foot space into a hip, modern eSports arena, CMU turned to a local commercial furniture dealer, ProSpace+Interiors. The company has long been a partner to CMU for their entire campus facility needs, helping them with product selection and design services for administrative offices, residential buildings, sports facilities and classrooms.

ProSpace Designer Maria Jorgensen worked closely with CMU's Director of Club Sports Reese Kegans and CMU's Purchasing Manager Suzanne Ellinwood. The vision was to create an open floor plan that could accommodate as many gaming stations as possible for the eSports team. The school also wanted an area for spectators and yet another area where students could come to use the facility with their own personal gaming systems. Functionality and design were high on CMU's list of priorities. But a best-in-class seating solution was also a priority as the seating needed to accommodate the different users in each

space and tie-in to the overall design.

"From an aesthetic standpoint, we wanted to achieve an industrial modern look, while integrating CMU's colors throughout," said Jorgensen. "For functionality, we needed to maximize the space to accommodate the multiple and different designated areas within the space. Selecting the right seating to meet our design and functionality needs was essential."

After the renovation, which included the removal of several walls, a large conference room and traditional office furniture and fixtures, the space was a complete transformation.

Upon entering the facility, students, gamers and fans can easily see each different area and move

seamlessly between them without impediment. A gray muted carpet creates the industrial look. Elements of CMU's logo and its energetic colors of maroon, gold and white are used as accents on the walls to offset the gray flooring. Floor-to-ceiling windows allow for plenty of natural light, while the seating completes the space through its modern and contemporary look.

A reception/check-in area welcomes everyone who enters. An Alpine Bench from Integra Seating provides visitors with a generous seating surface and room to seat two comfortably. Alpine's sleek appearance and its wood side panels and metal bar legs nicely complement the other Integra seating products found throughout the facility.

When the team competes or practices, their dedicated area consists of 32 individual gaming stations. Four long, fixed-height tables, each holding three gaming stations, occupy the center area. Six two-person tables with gaming stations are situated around the perimeter. Each gaming station has their own task chair. CMU chose the OM5 task chair by OM, a PC Gamer magazine award-winning product.

The casual gaming area, unlike the competitive area, is defined by its comfortable, almost home-like feel. Three sofas from Integra Seating are arranged around three large-screen TV monitors. This allows

See **Suppliers** page 22 ➔



Duda|Paine Wins Design Award for Emory Student Center

ATLANTA—International design firm Duda|Paine Architects has won the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) 2020 Facility Design Award honoring Emory Student Center for its achievements in advancing campus community and transformative sustainable design solutions.

The Emory Student Center, which opened on Atlanta's Emory University campus in September 2019, features a balance of energetic indoor and outdoor social spaces and quiet study areas to meet a variety of student needs. Igniting creativity, enthusiasm and engagement, the 118,000-square-foot facility houses an abundance of resources and spaces including a recreation lounge and spacious dining center for to entire campus community.

Duda|Paine Architects, in collaboration with long-time partner for programming and interiors MHTN Architects, was selected by Emory for their inclusive and innovative design approach. The design and planning process included input from Emory students and administration, resulting in spaces to facilitate learning and enrich students' academic experience.

"Our team's focus on sustainability, collaboration and placemaking were driven by Emory University's

vision for an innovative and engaging student center," said Turan Duda, founding principal, Duda|Paine Architects. "The Student Center design has transformed the heart of Emory's exciting and diverse campus community to create a place to study, play, collaborate and socialize."

ACUI is a nonprofit educational organization that brings together college union and student activities professionals from hundreds of schools in seven countries. The annual ACUI Facility Design Awards were created to encourage and recognize excellence in the design of student-centered facilities that support campus community building and student learning.

Duda|Paine Architects provides a full complement



Photo Credit: Duda|Paine

of design, interior design, architectural, planning and master planning services to a diverse array of international and national corporate, academic, wellness and cultural arts clients.

Suppliers, from page 21

up to nine students, three per sofa, to enjoy the space using their own gaming console.

"To achieve the residential-like feel for this area, we selected Integra's Rendezvous sofa," said Jorgensen. "We've used that product at so many other locations around campus. It looks great and holds up extremely well, so I knew it would work well here."

As for the spectator area, it features a large 80-inch TV monitor where friends, family, teammates or fans can watch the games. The space also has a streaming area – two gaming stations where both the gamer and the game can be streamed live on YouTube or other social media platforms. The area is furnished with eight comfortable Integra lounge chairs and three Integra footstools, which can serve as additional seating, if needed. In all, the space can seat 11 people.

"The Brighton Chair was a perfect solution for this space," said Jorgensen. "These chairs are so

comfortable; they can easily accommodate spectators and fans who will be sitting for long periods of time watching all the action. Another great thing: It has the comfort of a spacious lounge piece but does not take up such a large footprint. And, its exposed metal leg gave us that industrial look we wanted. It simply checks all the boxes for us."

The three footstools bring added design and functionality to the space. "Integra is known for highly durable products, including their poufs. Because of this, the poufs can serve as either a footstool, a seat or even a table. We know the upholstered tops will maintain their look and not become misshapen over time. The poufs add a little fun and flexibility because it can be used in so many ways."

Jorgensen added that the easy mobility of the Brighton Chair and the footstools were another benefit. Both pieces can be easily moved to meet different configurations. "A lot of times you'll see the chairs arranged so that people can face each other to have a

conversation. The footstools are placed in the center and used as a small table to hold laptops or other smaller items," said Jorgensen.

Integra Seating has been providing lounge seating products for higher education facilities for more than three decades. Their long-lasting durability – all chairs pass a 1,000 lb. drop test – make them ideal for high-use, 24/7 environments. They also feature practical maintenance advantages; many seats come with a clean-out feature and most have parts that can be replaced quickly if they become worn out. All products come with a lifetime warranty, adding even greater piece of mind.

Since the eSports arena opened, feedback from students and the university has been overwhelming positive. "The university sees this new eSports arena as a very important piece to their overall student experience – and even for recruiting. It's nice to have a seating solution partner like Integra that can meet every different need – from comfort and design to durability and maintenance."

CMU's Kegans agrees: "The Integra Seating pieces make the room inviting and comfortable. The couches provide a locker room feel where teammates can gather and play together. I think the room looks perfect with the Integra pieces. I am looking forward to seeing the room full again with students and competitors."

Chandra Putnam is the Director of Sales and Marketing at Integra Seating.



Photo Credit (All): Maria Jorgensen, ProSpace+Interiors

The new CMU eSports arena area for casual gamers can accommodate up to nine players comfortably in this dedicated space.

ad index

Page # Circle #

Association for Learning		
Environments (A4LE)	2	100
EDspaces (formerly NSSEA)	23	103
Salsbury Industries	5	101
School Construction News	19	102
VS America	24	104