



## **Ursuline Academy - Linking the Past and the Future**

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**What strikes you immediately upon entering the front entrance of Ursuline Academy's newly completed Anthony N. Fusco Sr. Student Life Center is dichotomy**

**– a juxtaposition of old and new.**



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In executing the design of ABHA Architects, EDiS Company worked to preserve the century-plus history of this Wilmington institution while simultaneously bringing the space into the future. The results are astounding. ABHA describes the project as preserving the building's historic features in a contemporary, technologically-advanced learning environment, with strategic and sensitive additions to improve the overall layout. We could not agree more.



The new 36,000 square foot, three-story Student Life Center was born from the adaptive reuse of the Ursuline Convent. Ursuline's history spans back to 1893, when the Ursuline Sisters relocated to Wilmington from Bedford Park, New York. In 1926, Ernest DiSabatino & Sons (the predecessor to EDiS) laid the cornerstone for the current campus on Pennsylvania Avenue and Franklin Street. The Convent stood as the center of their campus, and as the school grew, it remained the campus heart. The new Student Life Center takes over that cornerstone position on campus.



Constructed in the middle of Ursuline's compact, urban, and occupied campus, the state-of-the-art center with learning spaces, dining facilities, a library, and student atrium included both renovations and additions. The focus of the project was clear from the very beginning – ***the students***. The new first-floor atrium, a welcoming center-piece of the project, gives students a gathering place to congregate, relax, and spend time together. The new library paid homage to its former use by maintaining the original stained-glass windows, wood beams, and balcony. Showcasing Ursuline's commitment to the arts, the second floor is dedicated to expanding imagination, innovation, and learning. The third floor houses the administrative offices, putting Ursuline's leadership right in the center of campus life.