VISION/GOALS:
• Program/pedagogy drives space needs - highlight importance of STEM at Valpo.
• High quality faculty / student research space to improve research outcomes.
• Facility design should aid recruitment and retention of faculty and students.
• Building location & design to promote synergy with the College of Engineering.
• Embrace modern AV & IT technologies.
• Incorporate smart sustainable practices.
• Promote efficiency of space utilization through appropriate sharing.
• Provide ample spaces for student study and collaboration throughout building.
• Create an open, transparent design to encourage connections, activate the building, and promote interdisciplinary interactions / collaborations.

PROCESS: Inclusive, iterative, consensus-building process with active participation by science faculty, staff, administrators, students, development office, and other non-science constituents on campus throughout the planning, programming and design phases of the project.

LESSONS LEARNED: Planning process reinforced that broad based input from all stakeholders on campus is essential. In particular, vocal faculty proved to be critical in enhancing the original project budget to create a facility with ‘critical mass’ to form a viable STEM community.

OUTCOMES:
• Pedagogical initiatives had a positive impact on the program & facility design.
• Modern faculty / student research lab space has greatly enhanced undergraduate research opportunities.
• The new facility has spiked interest in STEM programs among student recruits.
• Building is located adjacent to College of Engineering. Planned future phase may physically connect to Engineering.
• AV / IT technologies were successfully utilized throughout the building.
• Facility features some shared teaching labs, research labs, and support spaces to create efficient utilization.
• Open study spaces & interior windows create a welcoming environment and promote a true STEM community.

TAKE-AWAY RECOMMENDATIONS:
• Encourage input from a broad base of stakeholders on campus in an iterative, participatory, consensus-building process for optimal satisfaction / results.
• Ensure that your academic planning process precedes any facility programming and design decisions. Allow the time it takes to ‘get it right’.
• Learn from others through facility tours with your planning team. There are lots of great examples and it is a good ‘team-building’ experience.