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Sam Marshall Architects *pensacola*

The University of West Florida International Student Center and Japan House, Pensacola, Florida

The University of West Florida (UWF) was already planning a new International Student Center when a donor from Japan asked that a traditional Japanese Teahouse be built on the campus. With its many Asian students and the Japanese Linkage Institute based on its campus, UWF's connection to Japan is

strong. The decision was made to combine the two projects into one building known as "Japan House" that serves as an international student center with classrooms and offices for faculty and staff who work with international programs.

Japan House is a center for Japanese culture, not only for the

University, but for the Pensacola community. Pensacola's sister city in Japan, Hagiwara, contributed financially to the project and donated Tatami mats and cedar, for which the town is known. The project also received a grant from the Japanese government for the promotion of Japanese culture.

Although constructed in a shell that blends with the rest of the university's architectural canvas, the Tatami Room and Tearoom have authentic interior detailing. A stepping stone path leads from the building's main entry through a tea garden - the Nijirguchi - that serves as a small, ceremonial entry to the Tearoom. A viewing garden provides a visual backdrop to the Tatami Room. The stones for the garden were gathered from the same quarry as the stones used at the United Nations Peace Garden in New York City.

The 14,000-square-foot project was completed in May, 2004 at a cost of \$2,104,000.



Above: Tea Master Yamada demonstrates the Tea ceremony in the Tatami Room. All photos by David Birdwell BMP Photography. Below: Reception station Right: Multi-purpose room with display for Japanese articles





Photo, top: Building exterior was designed to blend with campus architecture. Below: Tearoom interior.



Project Credits: Sam Marshall Architects: Architect; Zen Associates: Japanese Garden and Interior Consultants; Samuel Johnson, Inc.: Structural Engineering; Schmidt,

Dell & Associates, Inc.: Mechanical, Plumbing and Telecommunications Engineering; Humber Garick: Electrical Engineering; Baskerville Donovan, Inc.: Civil Engineering

and Landscape Architecture; Larry Hall Construction, Inc.: General Contractor.