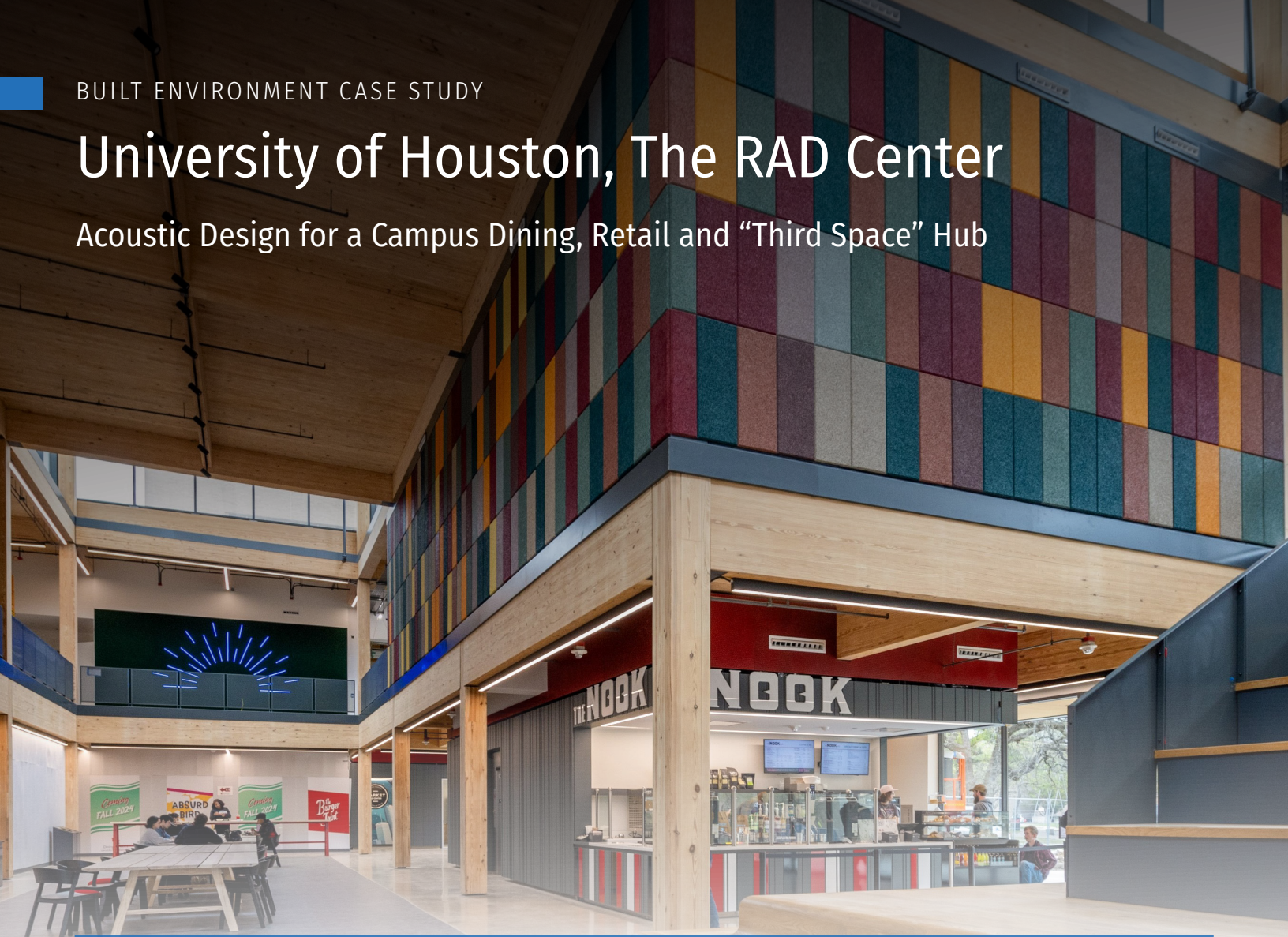


University of Houston, The RAD Center

Acoustic Design for a Campus Dining, Retail and “Third Space” Hub



VISION

A lively, open dining hall with exposed mass timber and glass walls, plus flexible “third spaces” where students gather, study, and socialize.

PARTNERSHIP

Jaffe Holden, a Trinity Consultants team, partnered with Perkins+Will and Turner Construction to balance acoustic comfort with the mass timber aesthetic.

VALUE-ADD

Sustainable, sound-absorptive finishes control reverberation and kiosk noise while preserving the timber design the University envisioned.

ARCHITECT
Perkins+Will

CONTRACTOR
Turner Construction

ACOUSTICS
Jaffe Holden, a Trinity Consultants team

The RAD Center brings a distinctive retail and dining environment to the University of Houston campus in Houston, TX. The 40,000-square-foot facility centers on an open, double-height dining hall featuring a diverse mix of local and international food concepts, along with flexible meeting and conference spaces designed as adaptable “third spaces” for studying, gathering, and events. Jaffe Holden provided acoustic design services for the \$40 million project, completed in 2024, working alongside Perkins+Will and Turner Construction.

VISION

The University of Houston set out to bring a distinctive retail and dining environment to campus with The RAD Center—a 40,000-square-foot facility built around a diverse mix of local and international food concepts, including Nook Café, The Burger Joint, The Taco Stand, Paper Lantern, and Absurd Bird, alongside meeting and conference spaces designed as flexible “third spaces.” At the heart of the building is an open, double-height dining hall meant to encourage students to linger well after their meals—a space defined by polished concrete floors, glass exterior walls, and an exposed mass timber structure. The challenge was to shape a controlled acoustic environment that supports everyday conversation among students while preserving the liveliness and energy the design team wanted the space to carry.

PARTNERSHIP

Jaffe Holden worked closely with the University of Houston, Perkins+Will, and Turner Construction from design through completion, identifying opportunities to introduce sound-absorptive finishes without compromising the exposed mass timber aesthetic that anchors the building’s identity.

VALUE-ADD

By balancing sound-absorptive treatments with the architectural intent of an exposed mass timber structure, the acoustics program allowed The RAD Center’s dining hall to feel lively and energetic without becoming overwhelming—supporting the University’s vision of a “third space” where students can study, meet, and socialize well beyond mealtimes. The result is an acoustically comfortable, sustainably minded environment that reinforces the RAD Center’s role as a new campus hub.

ABOUT TRINITY CONSULTANTS

Trinity Consultants, a leading global environmental consulting firm, provides services and solutions in the EHS Regulatory Compliance, Built Environment, Life Sciences, and Water & Ecology markets. Founded in 1974, Trinity has the technical expertise, industry depth, and capabilities to help clients achieve their goals across the natural and built environments.