



Willson Hospice House Is the Only Healthcare Facility in the World To Achieve Audubon Certification

Willson Hospice House, the only inpatient facility of its kind in Southwest Georgia, has become the first Audubon Certified healthcare facility in the world. Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital has received certification from Audubon International for the Willson Hospice House as an Audubon Silver Certified Sanctuary.

Audubon International is a not-for-profit environmental education organization that was established in 1987. Willson Hospice House was part of an Audubon Signature Program, a program for new developments that helps create an environmentally sound project. Completion of this program led to certification as an Audubon Silver International Sanctuary.

In a letter received from Audubon International, Signature Program Director Nancy Richardson said, "Congratulations on a project which gives protection to the natural resources of the state of Georgia by successfully integrating an ecosystem approach to design, construction, and management of the development. Willson Hospice House now joins Audubon International's family of environmentally sensitive properties around the world, demonstrating a commitment to sustainable development."

This certification not only ensures the building is designed to achieve both economic and environmental objectives, but also that sustainable resource management practices are applied in the long-term stewardship of the property.

"The focus of the certification on resource management and education will ensure the continued availability of the property as a resource to learn about the role of nature in our daily lives," said Phoebe Senior Vice President of Facilities and Construction Management John Fischer. "The Audubon International Certification also recognizes Phoebe Putney Health System's commitment to developing world-class excellence in its healing environments."

A Resource Advisory Committee was established to focus on the project goals and was comprised of key individuals from the community, including an ornithologist, a botanist, wildlife organization representatives, a waste management specialist and a county extension agent. A Natural Resources Management Plan was developed and implemented to ensure best practices that include green building, best management and wildlife and habitat enhancement. A case study of the project will also be developed to showcase step by step how the project was completed in an environmentally friendly manner.

The building was structured in a way that minimizes the human footprint on nature caused by construction and also promotes biodiversity. The design of the building, developed on only 12 of the nearly 210 acres, gives much access to the outdoors, promoting Willson Hospice's emphasis on providing a calm and peaceful setting for patients and family members.