

## **Project Background**

The department of Art and Visual Technology at George Mason University began in 1972 when George Mason College obtained its university status. During the 1990's, a nationwide increase in enrollment among fine and performing arts degrees led to increased enrollment at GMU from 200 to about 500 students. In the early 2000's the digital arts and graphic design programs at GMU had grown into among the nation's best, helping to increase enrollment into the department. This put GMU on the map nationally as a significant visual arts program. The increased success and strength of the Art and Visual Technology department has led to the design and construction of a new building for the department which will feature state of the art technology. The new building represents the promising and dynamic future of the department.

Expected to open in 2009, the Art & Visual Technology building is a new three-story building to be built on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University. Innovation Hall is located to the North of the site, while Patriot Circle encloses the site to the South and West. A newly constructed campus quadrangle and Research I building are located to the east. This new building is to manly house the needs of the different disciplines within the department including drawing, digital arts, graphic design, printmaking, photography, art education, sculpture, and painting. It also consists of a prominent gallery off the main entrance to host both student and professional venues. The future addition, also three stories, is to be located at the NW corner of the site and will be connected with the original building to function as one building.