

Monday, April 12, 2010

OU breaks ground on state-of-the-art Human Health Building

Oakland University officials welcomed state and community leaders, faculty, staff, students and other OU supporters in celebrating the official groundbreaking of the university's new 160,000-square-foot Human Health Building on Monday.

The \$62 million facility is planned for construction on the northwest corner of OU's 1,441-acre campus and is targeted for completion in 2012. The building, which will house both the School of Nursing and the School of Health Sciences, is part of Oakland's goal to transform health education and research in southeastern Michigan.

"The Oakland University Human Health Building is a part of OU's larger effort to address the looming shortages in the health care industry and widen Oakland's economic impact in the region," said Oakland University President Gary Russi.

"This facility will help cement OU's reputation as one of the leading public universities in the state and foster efforts to position the region as a premier destination for health education."

The five-story building will enable both schools to coordinate the multidisciplinary expertise of academic and clinical faculty under one roof, which will in turn enhance the learning environment. Both schools have outgrown their current facilities because of steadily increasing enrollment.

Designed by the Detroit office of the SmithGroup architectural firm, the new structure will house state-of-the-art classrooms and seminar facilities, an interactive media center, physical therapy clinics and learning labs.

The new Human Health Building also will use cutting-edge technology to incorporate green design. For example, the university recently was awarded a \$2.7 million federal grant to install a geothermal heating and cooling system in the facility, which will reduce energy-related carbon emissions and significantly reduce energy costs.

OU will receive \$40 million in state funding to support construction of the new building. The remaining costs will be financed with university general revenue bonds.

Construction of the new Human Health Building continues a trend of campus expansion that has included the addition of four new academic buildings in the past 13 years. During that time, student enrollment has increased roughly 32 percent.

SUMMARY

OU officials and community leaders celebrated the official groundbreaking of the university's new 160,000-square-foot Human Health Building on Monday.

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