

Press Releases

New Research Tower Helps Advance Personalized Health Care Posted 11/1/2006

COLUMBUS, Ohio – A significant symbol of Ohio State University Medical Center's personalized health care emphasis highlights the skyline of West 12th Avenue and is set to open its doors in December to researchers pursuing discoveries that will dramatically advance patient care.

Before that official move-in, the medical center will celebrate the Biomedical Research Tower's completion during a grand opening event from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday (11/3) at the tower, 460 W. 12th. Ave. The 3:30 p.m. official dedication will feature remarks from Mary Woolley, a nationally recognized advocate for science and president of Research!America, a nonprofit alliance working to elevate health research among the nation's priorities.

The new tower will house 10 stories and 264,000 square feet of dedicated research space that is designed in open-lab layouts to promote interdisciplinary interaction among research teams.

"The structure will allow for productive interactions among faculty, students and postdoctoral researchers. It's a very powerful model," said Dr. Caroline Whitacre, vice dean and associate vice president for health sciences research at Ohio State's Medical Center.

"With more interaction, those 'Eureka!' moments can translate basic biomedical discoveries more quickly into tangible benefits to patients. This design allows for faster progression of research. We're constantly looking to progress faster, publish faster, and be more successful at securing external grant funding, and this will only help that process along," Whitacre said.

About 60 faculty scientists and their teams, totaling approximately 500 research staff, will move in to the five research floors that will be opened initially. The first groups to move in will be teams focusing on research in the areas of cancer, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience and infectious diseases.

Three floors of the building are currently shelled and will be built out in a second phase of development over the next several years. Construction on the tower began in 2003.

"More scientists and students want to be here than we have been able to accommodate," noted Dr. Fred Sanfilippo, senior vice president and executive dean of health sciences and CEO of Ohio State's Medical Center. "Just having this building under construction has been a powerful recruitment tool because it has demonstrated a vision for the medical center that really resonates with biomedical scientists.

"Even more importantly, this building represents a major investment in biomedical research



OSU Medical Center celebrates completion of its new 10-story Biomedical Research Tower

that holds promise in identifying mechanisms of disease, which is at the crux of personalized health care,” he said. “These scientific advances will aid us in delivering preventive and diagnostic care and treatments that match individuals’ unique characteristics and needs.”

Eventually, the tower will house over 100 faculty scientists and their teams – a total of 800 researchers – specializing in cancer and cancer genetics, cardiovascular and lung disease and high-field imaging, as well as biology, biotechnology and biomedical informatics programs. It will also expand programs in important emerging fields, such as neurological disorders, heart failure and heart imaging, pharmacogenomics and targeted molecular therapies, microbial pathogenesis and biodefense, and tissue engineering.

The tower is expected to bolster the state’s economy by generating approximately 17,000 new jobs in biomedical technology-related fields and bringing an estimated \$3.7 billion to Ohio over the next 10 years.

Among the building’s special features are linear equipment corridors in which to locate large pieces of equipment that generate noise and heat as well as cause vibrations, such as freezers, refrigerators and centrifuges. The tower features “green” construction efforts, including locating offices on one side of the building and labs on the other so recirculated air in offices is separate from lab air that is exhausted to the outside. Lights throughout the building are equipped with auto-shutoff mechanisms and motion activation.

Bonds have been sold to finance the bulk of the cost of the \$160 million building and will be repaid in large part by grant revenues earned by researchers. Additional funding is provided through private fundraising, federal grants, state capital appropriations and university support.

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Related links:

- [Click here for a jpeg of the new tower](#)
- [Click here for a fact sheet about the BRT](#)

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