



**\$220 Million Medical
Research Building
Focuses on Collaboration**

A Clear Translation

NEW YORK — Officials and community members celebrated the opening of a new facility that will be dedicated to translational medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University with a June ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Michael F. Price Center for Genetic and Translational Medicine and Harold and Muriel Block Research Pavilion will put an emphasis on promoting a closer link between research laboratories and clinicians.

“The biggest challenge — and what I think is the most exciting part about this project — is what it’s going to do for scientific collaboration at Einstein,” says Christopher Baylow, AIA, associate principal at Boston-based project architect Payette. “Historically, the communication between basic scientists and clinical scientists occurs sporadically.”

The 223,000-square-foot facility cost \$220 million and will accommodate 40 research teams composed of 400 scientists. It is the most significant research building to be built in the Bronx in 50 years, according to school officials.

“The opening of the Price Center/Block Research Pavilion heralds the importance of translational research in bringing medical breakthroughs to patients more quickly through a working partnership of scientists and clinicians,” says Steven Safyer, MD, president and chief executive officer of Montefiore Medical Center, the university hospital for Einstein College. “This is great news for patients and families in the communities we serve.”

In addition to its affiliation with Montefiore Medical Center, the campus works with four other hospital centers in the Bronx, Manhattan and Long Island. The college offers the largest post-graduate medical training program in the United States, with about 150 residency programs for more than 2,500 physicians in training, according to school officials.

The center includes programs on genetics, epigenetics, stem cell science, cellular imaging, systems and computational biology, vaccines and drug design. The research topics have the potential to impact cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer’s disease.

The building is separated into research wings that house traditional biomedical research labs and computational and systems biology labs that are

designed to process large amounts of data for genetic and epigenetic studies.

Labs are designed to be open and flexible to accommodate collaborative research and future technology changes.

“I think the challenge was to design a building where basic scientists and clinicians could come together and practice research and share ideas in a very collaborative way,”

Baylow says. “The open labs and shared support spaces have the benefit of inspiring interaction by creating open, flexible spaces.”

Baylow says an equal emphasis was put on informal interaction and dialogue among the building’s occupants. Each floor has a sun-lit common area with a lounge, chalkboards and a conference room.

“The building is working in a way

to create opportunities for interaction and that goes hand-in-glove with the idea of how the lab spaces are designed to enhance collaboration among the basic scientists and clinical scientists,” he says.

A spiral staircase connects the common areas on different floors to encourage occupants to move between floors.

“We try to make those stairs as accessible and inviting as possible by

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PROJECT DATA

Location: *The Bronx, New York*
 Owner: *Yeshiva University*
 Architect: *Payette*
 Construction Manager: *Tishman Construction*
 Cost: *\$220 million*
 Size/Square Footage: *5 floors, 223,000 square feet*
 Ribbon Cutting: *June 2008*

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Photo by Robert Benson Photography

Stairs were designed to be accessible and to encourage movement throughout the building. (Below) Labs were designed to accommodate technology changes.

putting them in nice spaces with lots of natural light, which encourages people to move between floors,” Baylow says.

The facility occupies 10 acres adjacent to existing campus buildings. It is designed to provide a visual reference that emphasizes the college’s long-term research commitment to expand biomedical sciences and medical education, according to the college. It also stands at the gateway of an expanding area of the campus.

“It helps create a more powerful sense of arrival that is achieved by the entrance to the new building and how that entrance is juxtaposed by the entrance to the existing medical school campus across the street,” Baylow says. “Essentially, you have these two entries that bracket both sides of the street. It creates dual

landmark entries for the medical college.”

Glass was used extensively throughout the building’s façade to make a visual impact.

“If you think historically of iconic campus buildings, they are traditionally soft programs — libraries, student centers and things like that,” Baylow says. “The medical college elected to reserve this site for hard research, which promotes its message of scientific discovery. We are really showcasing research.”


The five-story building and research programs are funded by several multi-million dollar donations from the public and private sectors.

“Creative collaboration can help to both prevent disease and develop cures,” says Michael F. Price, who has ties to the mutual funds industry and donated \$25 million

for the project. “The promise of the new center is that it will play a pivotal role in advancing the college of medicine’s tradition of fostering scientific cooperation among its own faculty and with investigators at major medical centers around the world.”

Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University sits on 40 acres and has 2,000 faculty members, 750 M.D. students, 350 Ph.D. students and 380 postdoctoral investigators training at the Belfer Institute for Advanced Biomedical Studies.

The college received more than \$150 million in grant funding in 2007 from the National Institutes of Health, according to officials. The NIH funds research centers at the campus for diabetes, cancer, liver disease and AIDS. ■



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