



The first of three phases for the new Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research (WIMR) at the University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health has been completed. Phase One of the project included master planning and building design by HOK of a 469,000-square-foot East Tower at the center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison health sciences campus. Milwaukee-based Zimmerman Architectural Studios, Inc. (ZAS) served as architect of record.

The new seven-story tower houses the UW Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center – one of the leading cancer research facilities in the U.S. It also accommodates Radiation and Imaging Sciences, Orthopedics and Regenerative Medicine Research, Medical Physics, and a Vivarium.

The building's research floors feature state-of-the-art, open-plan laboratory benches located adjacent to principal investigator office suites. Light-filled, two-story conference rooms, lounges, and meeting spaces are situated throughout each research laboratory floor.

A suspended multi-story, aluminum sculpture, created by artist Cliff Garten of California, spans a portion of the two-story lounges included at the end of each corridor. The sculpture's twisting spirals suggest the underlying DNA strands controlling life while visually connecting the lab floors and enhancing the view of the main lobby at night from the entrance court.□

University administrators asked the HOK project team to design a building that would enhance connectivity between the UW Hospital and Clinics and the Health Sciences Learning Center and serve as a catalyst for interdisciplinary and translational medicine.

The new building allows scientists and clinicians from varying disciplines to work in close proximity and quickly translate research discoveries "from the bench to the bedside and back again." Circulation paths were woven vertically and horizontally to create opportunities for collaboration and interaction between researchers, faculty and clinicians. The translational nature of the complex is symbolized by a "healing garden," where the research tower, the hospital and the learning center converge. □

According to Todd Halamka, Director of Design and Group Vice President at HOK in Chicago, "The design team was also challenged to create amenities that would attract talent and accommodate the changing needs of occupants over time. Efficiency and flexibility are critical to supporting the important research that will be done within this new complex." Sustainable design was an important project component as well. The building features elements such high-efficiency ventilation, heat recovery of laboratory exhausts, and extensive use of day-lighting strategies that maximize and capture natural light to increase productivity and discovery. □

"HOK's ability to understand and support our goals for this project was instrumental in seeing our vision become reality," said Mark Wells, AIA, Assistant Dean for Facilities of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health.□

When all phases are complete, the WIMR project will total nearly 1.2 million square feet and will feature three research towers that radiate around a center point. The Center Tower, now in design with HOK, will serve as the main scientific building in the complex, housing Neuroscience and Molecular Genomic Medicine departments, among others. Construction for the Center Tower (Phase Two) is expected to begin in 2011. The final phase will be the West Tower, a multi-disciplinary "incubator" facility, which is slated for completion in 2015.