

Real Estate Journal

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TISHMAN IS CONSTRUCTION MANAGER; DESIGNED BY POLSHEK PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTS

Weill Cornell Medical College breaks ground on \$650m research building proj.

Weill Cornell Medical College celebrated the start of construction on its new Medical Research Building. The 18-story, \$650 million building is the centerpiece of Weill Cornell's \$1.3 billion Discoveries that Make a Difference Campaign. A total of \$1 billion has been raised toward this goal in a record time of less than four years.

The 480,000 s/f building will include 16 floors of programmed space with initiatives dedicated to translational bench-to bedside research targeting health challenges such as: cancer, cardiovascular disease, children's health, neurodegenerative diseases, and global health and infectious diseases.

"As we celebrate the start of construction, we can be confident that we are building on a solid foundation of research successes and toward a future that will further establish Weill Cornell and New York City as one of the world's leading centers for biomedical research," said Sanford Weill, who is chairman of the board of overseers of Weill Cornell Medical College and a 1955 graduate of Cornell University. "It is here where our physicians and scientists will be working to find the answers to the health challenges of our time, and bring hope and health to people in New York and around the globe."

Monies raised for the Discoveries that Make a Difference Campaign include an impressive 93 gifts of \$1 million or more, of which 33 specifically support the new Medical Research Building. These include \$135 million provided through a challenge gift from Joan and Sanford Weill as part of their historic \$250 million pledge in 2007 — believed to be the single largest gift ever given to a medical school. In addition, the campaign received a \$100 million gift from long-time supporters of Weill Cornell who wish to remain anonymous.

Maurice "Hank" Greenberg, a member of the board of overseers of Weill Cornell Medical College and chairman and CEO of The Starr Foundation, and his wife, Corinne, have been leading supporters of the Campaign as well. The Starr Foundation has given \$75 million, in addition to \$25 million from Corinne and Hank Greenberg — all toward the Medical Research Building.

"This is a historic milestone in the history of the Medical College, and Corinne and I are very proud to be a part of it," said Greenberg. The Greenbergs and the Starr Foundation have been generous and loyal benefactors of Weill Cornell Medical College and New York-Presbyterian Hospital, the College's clinical partner. Greenberg is also the chairman emeritus of New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

"We are forever grateful to Joan and Sandy Weill, Corinne and Hank Greenberg, The Starr Foundation, all our fantastic donors and everyone who has helped make this project possible," said Dr. Antonio Gotto Jr., the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College. "This building will be an enormous boon to our research scientists, who are pursuing translational research across the spectrum of medicine. It will make us highly competitive in terms of available workspace for scientists, allowing the College to recruit more than 30 additional top-tier researchers."

"Academic collaboration is a part of Cornell's DNA, and as such is encoded in every aspect of the Research Building's design and function," said Peter Meinig, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Cornell University. "Research undertaken here will be about breaking new boundaries, sharing resources and successes. The greatest advances happen in places where biomedical disciplines intersect. This is such a place."

"This innovative facility will open numerous opportunities for sharing ideas and technologies and reduce the time it takes research to go from laboratory concept to medical treatments," said Dr. David Skorton, president of Cornell University. "A model for the research enterprise in the 21st century, it promises to expand knowledge while addressing the needs of patients, their families and the communities we serve."

"While we will celebrate the opening of the Medical Research Building in a few short years, what captures our collective imagination is all that will be happening inside: our renowned faculty members and newly recruited researchers working together with the singular purpose and a shared passion to solve the most pressing health care needs of our time," said Robert Appel, Weill Cornell overseer and chairman of the Medical College's Discoveries that Make a Difference Capital Campaign. "In the last year, we have raised more than \$150 million, bringing our campaign total over \$1 billion and enabling the construction of this building — a particularly impressive feat given the current economic climate. We are incredibly grateful to all our donors for helping make this happen."

A groundbreaking ceremony included remarks by mayor Michael Bloomberg; Dr. David Skorton, president of Cornell University; Peter Meinig, chairman of the Cornell University board of trustees; Sanford Weill, chairman of the Weill Cornell Medical College board of overseers; Maurice Greenberg, member of Weill Cornell's board of overseers; Dr. Antonio Gotto Jr., dean of the Medical College; Dr. Herbert Pardes, president and CEO of New York-Presbyterian Hospital; and Robert Appel, chairman of Weill Cornell's Discoveries that Make a Difference Campaign.

Located on East 69th St. between York and First Aves., the building is scheduled to be dedicated in December 2011.

The construction manager for the project is Tishman Construction Corp. For the new research building, Tishman personnel are utilizing Building Information Modeling (BIM) to assist in managing the project. Because it is a lab/research facility, it has much more plumbing, ducts, wiring, and conduits than an office building. Tishman utilized BIM early in the process, during constructability review, to resolve conflicts in the MEP and structural steel design prior to award of contracts, saving time and money.

Designed by Polshek Partnership Architects, the building has open floor plans throughout to facilitate communication and collaboration between scientists.

Its proximity to the Weill Greenberg Center, the Medical College's ambulatory care building, will further enhance communication between investigative researchers and practicing clinicians.

When complete, an array of lab equipment will be made available to partnering medical and academic institutions in the community, helping to attract scientists, physicians, students and patients from around the world.

The facility will also be environmentally friendly, energy efficient, and aesthetically pleasing, with a glass façade that reduces energy consumption and bathes interior areas with natural sunlight.



Shown (from left) are: Gotto, Bloomberg and Weill leaving handprints for the cornerstones of Weill Cornell's new 18-story medical research building.