Interior development of BCM Medical Center moving forward

Plans to move the first clinical practices into the Baylor College of Medicine Medical Center starting in Fall 2013 took a step forward with the signing of contracts for interior construction as well as for art consulting services that will enhance the patient experience.

The BCM Board of Trustees approved the interior construction contract with Linbeck Group LLC and the art services contract with Skyline Art Services at a recent meeting.

The construction contract encompasses 185,000 square feet, including clinical, surgical and office space, inpatient beds, emergency room and imaging as well as the Bobby R. Alford Educational Center and the Comprehensive Healthcare Clinic for BCM’s corporate wellness program. Linbeck was also the construction contractor for the exterior of the building.

The first clinical practices that will move into the BCM Medical Center will be gastroenterology, orthopedics, pain management, general surgery and urology. See the press release on the launch of the BCM Medical Center.

The Houston-based company is a leader in the construction industry, providing a broad range of services in health care, educational and cultural projects. Linbeck will work cooperatively with architecture firm WHR Architects and engineering firm SSR Inc.

The contract with Skyline Art Services will create the artistic vision for the BCM Medical Center. Skyline, also Houston-based, is an expert in helping to create improved patient outcomes and workplace excellence through the visual arts.

The contract covers creation of the artistic vision as well as commissioning art on BCM’s behalf. There will be a focus on local art from Houston, Texas and the Southwest as well as on high-tech interactive art.

Improving the patient experience is a top priority of the BCM Medical Center. All aspects of the interior space will be developed with patient comfort and convenience in mind while also focusing on efficiency and value.

Additional contracts for signage and landscaping were signed with Formation LLC and the Office of James Burnett, respectively.

Student-initiated run brings together Houston community

The first student-organized BCM Wellness 5k Run/Walk took place in October with more than 500 people from the BCM and Houston communities in attendance.

In addition to the 5k, the event also included a kids 1k race, a costume contest and post-race food, music and activities at the McGovern Commons. Dr. Stephen B. Greenberg, Dean of Medical Education, kicked off the race with opening remarks before signaling the start and participating in the event himself.

“As a future doctor entering the health care environment at a time when the prevalence of chronic preventable diseases is at an all-time high, I think now...
more than ever physicians need to step up and make a point of emphasizing that health is more than just taking your medicine. It’s about taking care of your whole body and mind,” said Rachel Solnick, second-year medical student and one of the organizers of the event. The students raised more than $18,000, which will go to Recipe for Success and BCM’s Wellness Education Fund. Recipe for Success, a non-profit organization based in Houston, promotes healthy eating and nutrition to children in the community. The BCM Wellness Education Fund provides seed funding for student-initiated community health projects.

“As a medical student, I see devastating examples in both children and adults of everything that can go wrong by leading an unhealthy lifestyle,” said Kristy Hamilton, third-year medical student at BCM and one of the organizers for the event. “Alternatively, we see examples of those who really do make a commitment to their health by exercise and eating right, and they inspire us. Medical students and physicians need to work at being healthy too!”

Event organizers expressed their appreciation to all of the student leaders, volunteers and sponsors who made this race possible.

Wellness 5k
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Albert M. Balesh

Second-year physician assistant student

A native of Chicago, Balesh holds a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Rome School of Medicine. He was a general surgeon in Rome who specialized in diseases of the liver and gastrointestinal tract and he lived in Italy for 20 years. After returning to the United States, he directed a diabetes clinic and prenatal health facility in a community health center in El Paso while teaching basic, intermediate and advanced Italian language courses at the University of Texas – El Paso. He then decided to pursue a career as a physician assistant. At age 60, he is currently a second-year physician assistant student at BCM and hopes to practice community medicine in an underserved area of Texas or an indigent community on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Balesh recently published an article in the August 2012 issue of PA Professional, a journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

Class of 1968 holds special lecture with Dr. Robert Liebelt

On Saturday, Oct. 6, 2012, the medical school class of 1968 hosted a lecture by Dr. Robert Liebelt, former BCM professor and chairman of anatomy. Liebelt, now 85, resides in Copley, Ohio and was a favorite of BCM students—he was voted best basic science teacher by the graduating classes of 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965. He was also selected by the students as one of the best teachers in 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971.

Liebelt’s lecture focused on his research on bee pollen, which has been an interest of his for more than 20 years. He came upon this research challenge by chance through an acquaintance. Applying sound scientific experiments in animals, he was able to demonstrate health benefits, and takes the product himself.

Twelve members of the class of 1968 traveled from California, Nevada and several areas throughout Texas to attend the lecture, and they were joined by other graduates from the 1960s: Michael Duncan, Wendell Erwin, Don Griffith, Robert Huff and Don Wukasch.

“It was amazing to feel the years melt away as we sat attentively in our freshman year classroom, Cullen 181 (with theater not wooden seats), learning about something so interesting because of the teacher,” said Carol Baker, BCM class of 1968 and Professor of Pediatrics – Infectious Diseases at Baylor College of Medicine. Baker and Fred Fricke, also BCM class of 1968, organized this special event. After the lecture, many in the group toured the Texas Medical Center, some seeing it for the first time in decades.