

Explore UB's New High-Tech \$375 Million Medical School

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The seven-story atrium in the center of UB's new Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

The new home of University at Buffalo's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences blends traditional and team-based learning in a building designed to provide high-tech spaces to teach students in a rapidly changing medical field.

The \$375 million building at the corner of Main and High streets on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus will be dedicated Dec. 12 and open to students early next year. Its exterior, wrapped in nearly 28,000 locally made terra cotta panels, sets it apart from other new campus additions.

More than a decade in the making, the building brings UB's medical school full circle, returning to its downtown roots from long ago – basically across the street from where it first began. Since 1953, the school has been located on the university's South Campus in a somewhat scattered fashion.

When ground was broken four years ago, Dr. Michael E. Cain, medical school dean, called it more than just a new building – but the start of a new era for the medical school, the university and Buffalo.

Now complete, the building is expected to play a role in attracting new talent from the medical world as the school adds more students and expands its faculty over the next three years. Its culmination follows years of careful planning and design work to locate the medical school in the center of a regional, comprehensive medical community.

"Hundreds of people discussed and gave ideas about what the medical school should look like, and what the research and education venues should be and how they should be configured," Cain said.

Students begin classes Jan. 8 in the building, which is an anchor in developing the Medical Campus. The building's new location puts it in proximity to Gates Vascular Institute, UB's Clinical and Translational Research Center, Buffalo General Medical Center, Conventus and the newly opened John R. Oishei Children's Hospital.

"There was a desire to reunite education and research and clinical practice into one campus, and by doing that, it would be strengthening all aspects of the medical community," said Kelly Hayes McAlonie, UB director of campus planning.

Here's a peek inside the school at 955 Main St.

Architecture

Designed by global architectural firm HOK, the building has 628,000 square feet spread over eight floors. A seven-story glass atrium connects two L-shaped sections of the building.

The atrium has 650 ribbon-glass panels along its perimeter and is naturally illuminated by skylights and glass walls along Washington and Allen streets. The building's exterior is wrapped

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Ariel view of Michelson Hall

by nearly 28,000 locally made terra cotta panels and includes a glass rainscreen façade. Architects wanted to reflect the history of Buffalo's craft in woodwork displayed throughout the building. Inside, the building is dominated by natural light and open spaces.

Building Features

An illuminated column that extends from the lobby to the second floor glows in a soft shade of UB "blue." Walking through the school's main interior entrance on the second level is like a step back in time. Two 19th century lanterns, which had illuminated the vestibule of UB's medical school on High Street from 1893 to 1953 as gas lights, are back in their original role after years apart. The lanterns had become separated over time; one was at Farber Hall on UB's South Campus and the other was lost for years, ending up in an Eden barn and subsequently restored.

A sky bridge pedestrian connector will eventually link the school to the nearby Conventus medical office building in late 2018. Beneath the midpoint of the building is a one-block tunnel extending Allen Street as a pedestrian and bicycle path beneath the medical school onto the Medical Campus.

NFTA Station

The remodeled NFTA Allen/Medical Metro Station is integrated into the medical school, with public access to the new building through a street-level entrance at Allen and Main streets that leads to a boarding platform below ground. The station features a colorful public art sculpture called "Gut Flora" by Shasti O'Leary Soudant.

For now, the metro rail brings riders into the first floor of the medical school. When the connecting bridge to Conventus is built, the public can go from the station up to a second-floor public access corridor across to Conventus. A newsstand also will open in January inside the station.

Designed for Collaboration

The school accommodates a big shift in teaching style and instruction and offers classrooms and research labs for departments that include pathology and anatomical sciences, biochemistry, microbiology, pharmacology and toxicology, biophysics and more.

Classroom spaces feature tables, high-end wireless and digital capabilities. The building also has conference rooms and lots of areas for open collaboration and lounge spaces to allow students, faculty and doctors to mingle.

A student commons offers kitchen, dining and recreation spaces for students to unwind. Areas referred to as "Learning Landscapes" on each floor are equipped with whiteboards, sofas, chairs and tables. A medical library features mostly online resources, as well as a reading room area and a learning lab.

Simulation Centers

The building includes a mock hospital setting with simulated training rooms designed to represent realistic patient scenarios, including in operating, emergency and labor and delivery rooms. There is also a simulated pharmacy, home care room and nursing station.

A clinical competency center provides an outpatient setting, which uses scripted volunteers who act out symptoms for medical students. The area resembles doctor offices and examining rooms.

Both areas give students a chance to practice in hospital and clinical settings to foster patient care management, problem-solving, decision making and figuring out crises in a non-threatening environment.

Hands-On Suites

Think big-time hands-on experience. The building features human anatomy, robotics and surgical suites. In addition to the traditional cadavers, students will have access to digitized images of their cadavers. A robust, hands-on experience through dissection is the goal through state-of-the-art work stations, shared video imaging and true color lighting.

Students also get to use robotics to practice remotely-controlled surgical procedures in a simulated setting.