

News Release

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QualTex Laboratories Expands With Opening of Second Testing Lab *Design-build team completes project in 13 months*

NORCROSS, Ga., Feb. 15, 2011 – San Antonio, Texas-based [QualTex Laboratories](#), the country's largest, independent non-profit testing laboratory for blood and plasma products, has opened its second testing laboratory. The \$5.8 million lab, designed for workflow efficiency, is located in Norcross, Georgia.

The design/build team of architecture firm [Lord, Aeck & Sargent](#) and construction firm [DPR Construction](#) completed the project over a period of only 13 months, including assisting QualTex in test fits of three potential properties, site and infrastructure analysis, programming, design, demolition of the existing interior space, and construction.

The one-story, 57,000-square-foot facility includes 15,500 square feet of laboratory spaces for:

- sample receipt and triage, where samples are unpacked and organized;
- accessioning where paperwork and samples are prepared for testing;
- sample testing; and
- quality assurance, where review and release of test results is completed.

The lab space also includes multiple cold storage areas for samples and the reagents used in the testing process.

“The space is all about creating an efficient workflow process and paperwork chain of command that begins the moment samples arrive at the loading dock, continues through accessioning, testing and biohazardous waste disposal, and ends when QualTex clients receive data that is both accurate and representative of the correct sample,” said Mark Tinsley, a Lord, Aeck & Sargent associate who served as laboratory designer on the project. “We worked closely with QualTex to design a lab that will help the company meet federal CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments) requirements for accuracy, reliability and timeliness of client test results.”

“We challenged Lord, Aeck & Sargent to design a laboratory that would provide maximum efficiency for the workflow,” said Dr. Norman Kalmin, QualTex president, chief executive officer and medical director. “The team responded by creating a lab that is a wonderful example of form following function and where we can continue to offer competitive turnaround times and fulfill our mission of providing quality, worldwide testing services.”

The lab was designed with both change and growth in mind. It features mobile casework and overhead service panels that provide for flexibility and additional equipment as processes change and as QualTex continues to grow.

Because the building had previously been used as high-bay space, Lord, Aeck & Sargent was able to design a 2,000-square-foot mechanical mezzanine for an energy-efficient HVAC system. Other built-out areas include offices and support space; conference, training and break rooms; and a data center. There is an additional 9,500 square feet of unbuilt space for the rapidly growing organization’s future expansion.

The QualTex laboratory opened in the fourth quarter of 2010 with 16 employees. Plans are to hire 35 additional employees in 2011 and to have 110 employees over the next five years.

The project team

The QualTex Laboratories project team included:

- QualTex Laboratories (San Antonio) – owner
- DPR Construction (Atlanta office) – construction manager
- Lord, Aeck & Sargent (Atlanta office) – architect
- KSi Structural Engineers (Atlanta office) – structural engineer
- AHA Consulting Engineers (Atlanta) – MEP/FP engineer
- Jacobs Engineering (Atlanta office) – civil engineer

About Lord, Aeck & Sargent

Lord, Aeck & Sargent is an award-winning architectural firm serving clients in scientific, academic, historic preservation, arts and cultural, and multi-family housing and mixed-use markets. The firm's core values are responsive design, technological expertise and exceptional service. Lord, Aeck & Sargent has offices in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Atlanta, Georgia; and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For more information, visit the firm at www.lordaecksargent.com.

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