

## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Earth Day Brings Groundbreaking for \$130 Million, Sustainably Designed Interdisciplinary Research Facility at University of Utah**

*First building on Interdisciplinary Quad – funded by state's USTAR investment and private gifts – will attract world-class research teams*

*Building design represents dialog between contemporary science and ancient imagery of regional structures*

SALT LAKE CITY, April 22, 2009 – In a nod to Earth Day, the University of Utah today broke ground for a \$130 million, sustainably designed interdisciplinary research facility, the first of four buildings that will create a new Interdisciplinary Quadrangle, attract some of the world's most internationally recognized faculty researchers, and fuel Utah's economic development activity.

The James L. Sorenson Molecular Biotechnology Building – A USTAR Innovation Center, is being funded through a \$100 million commitment from the State of Utah along with private gifts, among them \$15 million from the Sorenson Legacy Foundation and \$1.25 million from the Micron Technology Foundation. State funding comes from the USTAR (Utah Science Technology and Research) initiative, a long-term economic development initiative that promotes world-class research facilities and research teams. USTAR will create new technologies that can be commercialized, thus generating more technology-based start-up firms, higher paying jobs and additional business activity leading to a statewide expansion of Utah's tax base.

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The Sorenson Molecular Biotechnology building, which is targeting LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, has been designed by architecture firm Lord, Aeck & Sargent's Atlanta office in association with Prescott Muir Architects in Salt Lake City. Lord, Aeck & Sargent, in association with Salt Lake City-based Architectural Nexus, developed the building's program and also created the Master Plan for the Interdisciplinary Quad.

**The charge for sustainable design and a distinct look**

“We charged the design team to create a building that will set a high standard for sustainable design as well as one that will be the cornerstone of an entirely new Interdisciplinary Quad,” said Lorris Betz, senior vice president for health sciences and executive dean of the School of Medicine. “The new Quad will be situated on 11 acres located between the main and health sciences campuses. Although a new pedestrian corridor will connect the two campuses, we want the Interdisciplinary Quad to have a look all its own, one that people will identify with the USTAR initiative and one in which scientific enterprises in a broad variety of disciplines can operate in a collaborative, integrated way.”

According to Jerry Percifield, Lord, Aeck & Sargent principal in charge of the project, the design team met the charge for sustainability by creating an energy efficient building that will reduce both energy use and energy cost from current laboratory code requirements by a minimum of 40 percent. Some of the strategies used to achieve this include daylighting that will allow natural light to reach at least 75 percent of the building's occupied spaces, and the use of sunshades to modulate the quality and intensity of light as it enters the building at different times of day and from different angles throughout the year.

Some other key sustainable design strategies incorporated into the building and the site include:

- Use of multi-stage evaporative cooling systems that include energy recovery
- Construction of vegetated bioswales to help capture and retain surface runoff to mitigate storm water quality and quantity
- Harvesting of rain water for use in site irrigation and sewage conveyance
- Use of local stone and copper construction materials, both mined within 100 miles of the site, as well as other renewable resourced materials
- Use of high fly ash content concrete
- Low VOC (volatile organic compound) finishes

To meet the charge for a distinct look, the building envelope, which will be clad in sandstone combined with a glass curtain wall, was designed to represent a dialog between contemporary science and the ancient imagery of regional Native American structures. “The selection of this local stone as a major material grounds the building in the region, while the masonry construction technique grows out of a tradition of building that reaches all the way back to ancient Native American customs specific to southern Utah,” said Randal Vaughan, Lord, Aeck & Sargent lead designer on the project. “At the same time, the contemporary glass curtain wall is recognized for its universal appeal as a construction technique and will be supplemented by sunscreens designed to filter and, at times, block the Utah sunlight.”

When completed in fall 2011, the 200,000-square-foot building will comprise five levels – one below grade – plus a mechanical penthouse level. Vaughan noted that each building elevation will respond to the requirements presented by its particular environmental and site conditions. “While the repetitious use of stone and glass at each elevation provides continuity, sunscreens of varying types respond to the particular position of the sun as it moves around the

building throughout the day. This variation in sunscreens as they respond to the sun's movement through the sky produces a singular expression to each side of the building.”

Vaughan also noted that the building's organization was shaped in response to several desirable views from the site. For example, a linear undulating block of offices faces south toward the Wasatch Mountains, while the main glass sheathed laboratory mass offers views of the city to the west, and of the Wasatch foothills to the north and east.

### **Inside the facility**

Important to achieving the goals for the interdisciplinary research facility is the building's internal design, which creates a setting for researchers from a wide range of disciplines – engineering, bio-engineering, neurosciences, molecular biology, medical device development and drug development – to interact and collaborate.

Percifield, who also serves as the project's lead lab planner, said that interaction and collaboration were addressed in both the laboratories and public spaces.

The building will house both flexible, open bench research laboratories as well as four specialty core research facilities for small animal imaging; biomedical microscopy; engineering microscopy; and nano-fabrication. Open lab space will have adjacent closed equipment rooms and nearby office space for the principal investigators.

“The flexible laboratories and their core support labs are all designed to support the collaboration of a broad range of disciplines with the most sophisticated scientific tools and equipment,” Percifield said.

### **Underground and on-grade corridors**

The four buildings that eventually will comprise the Interdisciplinary Quad will contain more than a million square feet of advanced interdisciplinary research facilities supported by an

underground network of core facilities, service areas, parking and interconnecting corridors.

This will allow on-grade development to focus on public courtyards, landscape plazas and exterior collaboration areas.

In addition, Lord, Aeck & Sargent has designed the new pedestrian corridor that eventually will connect the main and health sciences campuses. “The new corridor also will contain one of the key elements in our sustainable design concept, that of managing and reusing the storm water collected from this and adjacent sites,” Percifield said.

### **The project team**

The James L. Sorenson Molecular Biotechnology Building project team includes:

- Lord, Aeck & Sargent – architect (architectural and laboratory design)
- Prescott Muir Architects – associate architect
- Van Boerum Frank Associates – mechanical, plumbing, fire protection and civil engineer
- Ken Garner Engineering – electrical engineer
- Reaveley Engineers & Associates – structural engineer
- M+W Zander – nano-fab consultant
- Layton Construction – construction manager
- EDAW – landscape architect

### **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. In 2003, The Construction Specifications Institute awarded Lord, Aeck & Sargent its Environmental Sensitivity Award for showing exceptional devotion to the use of sustainable and environmentally friendly materials, and for striving to create functional, sensitive and healthy buildings for clients. In 2007, Lord, Aeck & Sargent was one of the first architecture firms to adopt The 2030 Challenge, an initiative whose ultimate goal is the design of carbon-neutral buildings, or buildings that use no fossil-fuel greenhouse gas-emitting energy to operate, by the year 2030. 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](http://www.lordaecksargent.com).

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