

Merced College Unveils New Learning Resources Center During Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

April 26, 2007



About 200 well-wishers were on hand to witness the public dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for Merced College's new Learning Resources Center on April 25. College President

Dr. Benjamin Duran gave opening remarks, acknowledging the local community for its support in 2002 of Measure H, the \$53 million bond measure that made construction of the facility a reality.

"This is a wonderful day for us," Dr. Duran said.

As supporters gathered behind her, Dr. Susan Walsh, the director of the LRC, cut the ribbon supplied by the Merced County Chamber of Commerce. The crowd applauded loudly and entered the building for refreshments and tours.

Replacing the 35-year-old Leshler Library, the 67,000 square foot LRC features more computer stations, more shelves for books, more meeting rooms and conference centers, and more opportunities for students than the older facility was able to accommodate. For example, 127 computers are now available for students, compared with the 20 computers that were available in the Leshler building.

The LRC can hold 700 students. A larger audio-visual department, providing digital resources to instructors, is one of the features that will enhance student learning and instructional support. More space also means that the LRC will be able to add books for many years to come.

Merced College has embarked on an ambitious construction schedule since passage of Measure H. With additional state funding, leveraged against local dollars, the College has completed a new campus in Los Banos. Currently, the College is constructing its Business Resource Center in downtown Merced, and is renovating its Science Building. The College expects to break ground on a new Allied Health Building in the fall.

Robert Haden, the president of the Merced College Board of Trustees, spoke about his days as a student at the College in the 70s. He noted that the old library wasn't built to accommodate disabled students. Those days are over, he said, adding that the new LRC is a facility the entire community can be proud of.

"This facility is friendly to everyone," Haden said.