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## Building multidisciplinary biomedical research from the ground up

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# Building multidisciplinary biomedical research from the ground up

Wayne State University broke ground on its Multidisciplinary Biomedical Research Building (MBRB) on Oct. 25, 2012. The MBRB will be the university's newest research facility and the largest construction project in its history. The building will encourage interdisciplinary work across a range of scientific areas with the goal of translating new discoveries to improve human health and society.

"The MBRB is about everything we want to be as a research university, with key strengths in the health sciences and a commitment to the community," said Wayne State University President Allan Gilmour. "It's about discovery, it's about teaching and it's about economic growth."

A \$93 million project, the building will feature nearly 200,000 square feet of space for about 500 researchers and staff and 68 principal investigators. It will include wet and dry laboratories, faculty offices and common areas, as well as clinical space.

Faculty members from across the university will populate the MBRB. The School of Medicine, the College of Engineering, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Social Work, and the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences will conduct research at the facility. Ninety-three percent of the structure will be occupied by Wayne State University, with the remaining seven percent housing partners from the Henry Ford Health System, including its bone and joint research program and biomechanics motion laboratory.

The building will be Wayne State's first new biomedical research facility since the opening of

the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences building in 2002 and the first since 1998 with accommodations for researchers from the School of Medicine.

Research in the MBRB will be arranged into thematic areas — cardiovascular disease; metabolic disorders such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity; systems biology; biomedical engineering; bioinformatics and computational biology; and translational behavioral science.

The development of the MBRB will include the reconstruction of the Dalglish Cadillac building on Cass Avenue, a historic Detroit structure designed by renowned architect Albert Kahn. A new 70,000-square-foot addition facing Woodward Avenue will be a companion to the Kahn building.

Wayne State University has commissioned the architecture firm Harley Ellis Devereaux, which also designed the university's A. Paul Schaap Chemistry Building. The contractor is Barton Malow.

To construct the MBRB, Wayne State University will employ a combination of state support, university funding and private investment. The state of Michigan will provide \$30 million for the construction of the building as a part of its capital outlay for colleges and universities. Philanthropy will play an equally important role.

"Over the years, we are fortunate to have



had alumni and friends who contributed to the university's most ambitious projects," Gilmour said. "As we build the MBRB, we will look to our supporters to embrace our vision for the future as a major research institution dedicated to improving human health through innovative scientific discovery."

The MBRB will redevelop 2.75 acres on Woodward Avenue that is currently vacant real estate. Revitalizing this section of Midtown will contribute to the growing strength of the neighborhood and the importance of Wayne State's presence within the community. Once fully operational in early 2015, the MBRB will create both temporary and permanent jobs, and estimates show that it will result in about \$40 million in new earnings annually in Michigan, 98 percent of which will be in metropolitan Detroit.

The site is near TechTown, Wayne State's business incubator, strengthening the university's ultimate vision for the MBRB, which is to move groundbreaking discoveries from the laboratory into practice.