

# Design of UCSD's Cardio Center Includes Full-Scale Models to Save Time, Money

## *Groundbreaking Set for Sept. 27*

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Plans for the Sulpizio Family Cardiovascular Center at UC San Diego call for a 128,000-square-foot, \$171 million "complement" to the existing Thornton Hospital.

But, more than that, the center will provide state-of-the-art education and research facilities exclusive to the region, said Dr. Tony DeMaria, who will direct the center. He said the completed project will unify the UCSD Medical Center's cardiovascular ambulatory, clinical and inpatient care under one roof for the first time.

"It's absolutely unique to San Diego," DeMaria said. He added that although there are similar educational institutions across the United States, such as an under-construction center at the University of Michigan, that house these three cardiovascular services in one location, this will be the first in San Diego.



Tony DeMaria

The four-story structure will be built adjacent to Thornton Hospital, a 119-bed general medical-surgical hospital on the campus, and "is designed to complement but not expand (the hospital)," said Randy Leopold, the university's principal architect for the project. "It will have a separate physical identity, although with similar materials."

Leopold previously worked on hospital upgrades and renovations for UCSD Medical Center's Hillcrest and Thornton hospitals that range from projects costing several hundred thousand dollars to \$20 million.

## A Decade Of Work

Though groundbreaking is scheduled for Sept. 27 and construction is set to start in May, the project has been in the works for 10 years. Hospital officials expect to receive the center's first patient in late 2010.



"The groundbreaking is the culmination of a vision of over a decade ago," DeMaria said. "It's wonderful for the patient with it all under one roof. It's wonderful for education, for those individuals willing to study almost every aspect of cardiovascular disease."

As part of the planning and to reduce construction costs, designers from the university leased space in Clairemont Mesa to build mock-ups, or full-scale prototypes, of an intensive care room, exam room, day room (a private room for patients in need of a hospital stay for less than

24 hours) and echocardiogram room (a private room for patients to undergo cardiac ultrasounds). The mock-ups will most likely remain in use until construction begins next year, Leopold said.

The finished center will feature 24 intensive care and intermediate care rooms, 22 day rooms, 18 emergency department exam rooms, 21 clinic exams rooms and seven echocardiogram rooms, Leopold said.

It will also have four cardiac-catheterization labs, four cardiac-sized operating rooms, imaging labs and research facilities, said Jackie Carr, communications officer for UCSD Medical Center.

## Vital Input

In the past several months, doctors and nurses affiliated with the center visited the mock rooms, offering feedback on everything from lighting to the color schematic to the type of door proposed for the ICU rooms.