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Cuyamaca College breaks ground on student services facility

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Cuyamaca College held a groundbreaking ceremony Feb. 4 for its three-story, 36,374-square-foot student services building.

Gafcon, Inc., which is overseeing construction for the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, estimates the facility will be complete by the middle of next year.

The architecture firm HMC designed the building while Soltek Pacific Construction is the general contractor. Other firms working on the project will include civil engineer Snipes Dye, mechanical engineer MA Engineers and fire alarm firm Johnson Controls.

The new building is designed to modernize student services operations with a location that brings it next to other student services offered on campus. It will serve as a welcome center and provide access to financial aid, admissions, cashier, counseling, and special programs. It will have a CalWorks office as well.

The project will include extensive site work, a sophisticated subterranean storm water system, accessible pathways, and collaborative outdoor gathering spaces.

"Our team worked extensively with the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District's scheduling department to develop an effective, efficient schedule that reflected the budget constraints that the project was under," Gafcon project manager Mark Lawrence said in a statement.

Sustainability was also a priority, according to a news release. The new student services building will rely on natural ventilation and passive cooling, electric water heating, energy-efficient lighting, drought-tolerant landscaping and a variety of other green building strategies.

Gafcon's team for the student services building includes Jim Bray as program manager, Brian Browning as campus project manager, Mark Lawrence as project manager, Gaby Arana as assistant project manager, Jami McArdle as project engineer, Brent Bishop as CBA project manager, Christine Cole as FF&E project manager, and Stephen Johnson as communications and contractor outreach specialist.

Gafcon, Inc. has been the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District's chosen program manager since 2003, providing a wide range of services to the bond program for more than 15 years.