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CSUF breaks ground on rec center

\$42 million project is one of several on campus tied to major expansion.

By MARLA JO FISHER
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FULLERTON • Cal State Fullerton has broken ground on a \$42 million student recreation center as part of an evolution that includes hiring 60 faculty members and expansion plans so ambitious they require leasing off-campus space.

Officials hope the new recreation center, scheduled to open in 2008, will help bring vitality to a commuter campus that has been virtually an after-hours ghost town.

The size of two Home Depot stores, or 95,000 square feet, the center will feature a fitness center, game courts, a swimming pool, an indoor jogging track, a gymnasium and a climbing wall.

Other campus projects finished in the past six months include a new performing arts center, a 1,400-space parking structure and a visitor center for the arboretum.

A new 195,000-square-foot business college is under con-



COURTESY OF CAL STATE FULLERTON

ARTIST RENDERING: The new Cal State Fullerton student recreation center is expected to open in 2008.

struction, along with a new child-care center. The student health-care center is being remodeled.

"The big story right now is the wave of new faculty," campus facilities planner Kim Apel said. "They are coming in right now, and there is a scramble to find space for them."

Apel said the university has hired about 60 faculty members, requiring that some staff

operations move to temporary quarters off-campus in rented space to provide space on campus for the new faculty.

The university is recruiting fervently as its enrollment grows and older professors retire in droves.

Students voted in a 2000 campus referendum to increase their own fees to pay for the recreation center. Last week, California State Univer-

sity trustees approved the sale of bonds for its construction.

Students will be able to use the center free; alumni may join for a fee. It will be on the northwest part of the campus.

A similar project at UC Irvine has been so successful that it is set to expand, UCI Vice Chancellor Manuel Gomez said.

Organizers, including student leaders and campus offi-

cials, hope the new center will become one of the activities "that act as magnets for student social life," according to promotional materials.

"The center will promote a sense of campus community and energy," the center's Web site reads.

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