


MEDICAL

Marin Health and Wellness Campus

LEED gold facility serves community

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MARIN COUNTY, SAN RAFAEL –

With a design and ambiance surpassing even the highest-income serving facilities, the Marin County Board of Supervisor's decision to build a centralized wellness center for low-income residents is probably the best possible use of money won from a lawsuit against tobacco.

The \$32 million Marin Health and Wellness Campus is the epitome of state-of-the-art design and green building, offering a host of services for the low-income, uninsured and underinsured. This 2009 BUSINESS JOURNAL Top Projects winner was funded through a \$206 billion settlement between seven tobacco companies and 46 states.

"There was really disbelief by many in the community that this wonderful, beautiful and environmentally friendly health care and social services campus was so accessible to so many – and such a stark difference to what we had before: services spread out in 10 locations, in these dingy, over-crowded basement kind of operations," said Marin Health and Human Services Director Larry Meredith.

The project was the county's largest undertaking since the Marin Civic Center, according to Jeanne Miche, Marin Department of Public Works project manager and lead on the project.

"The fact is the space the programs were operating from before just was not adequate," Ms. Miche said in an interview before the opening Nov. 16 last year.

"At the same time, it will be a great efficiency for the county, moving everything in one location and offering a greater economy of scale."

The 74,000-square-foot center is the result of a massive renovation, completed by Seagate Properties, Dome Construction, Nova Partners and RMW architects. The five buildings in the Canal District of San Rafael were previously the home of Lucasfilm's headquarters, and the 35-year-old infrastructure was nowhere near suited for health care operations.

"The design was a tremendous challenge. We didn't want it to look like a standard office building, and there was an enormous amount of work that went into repositioning these kinds of buildings for medical services," said Seagate Chief Financial Officer Dennis Fisco.

The construction team unveiled the LEED gold-certified property on time and

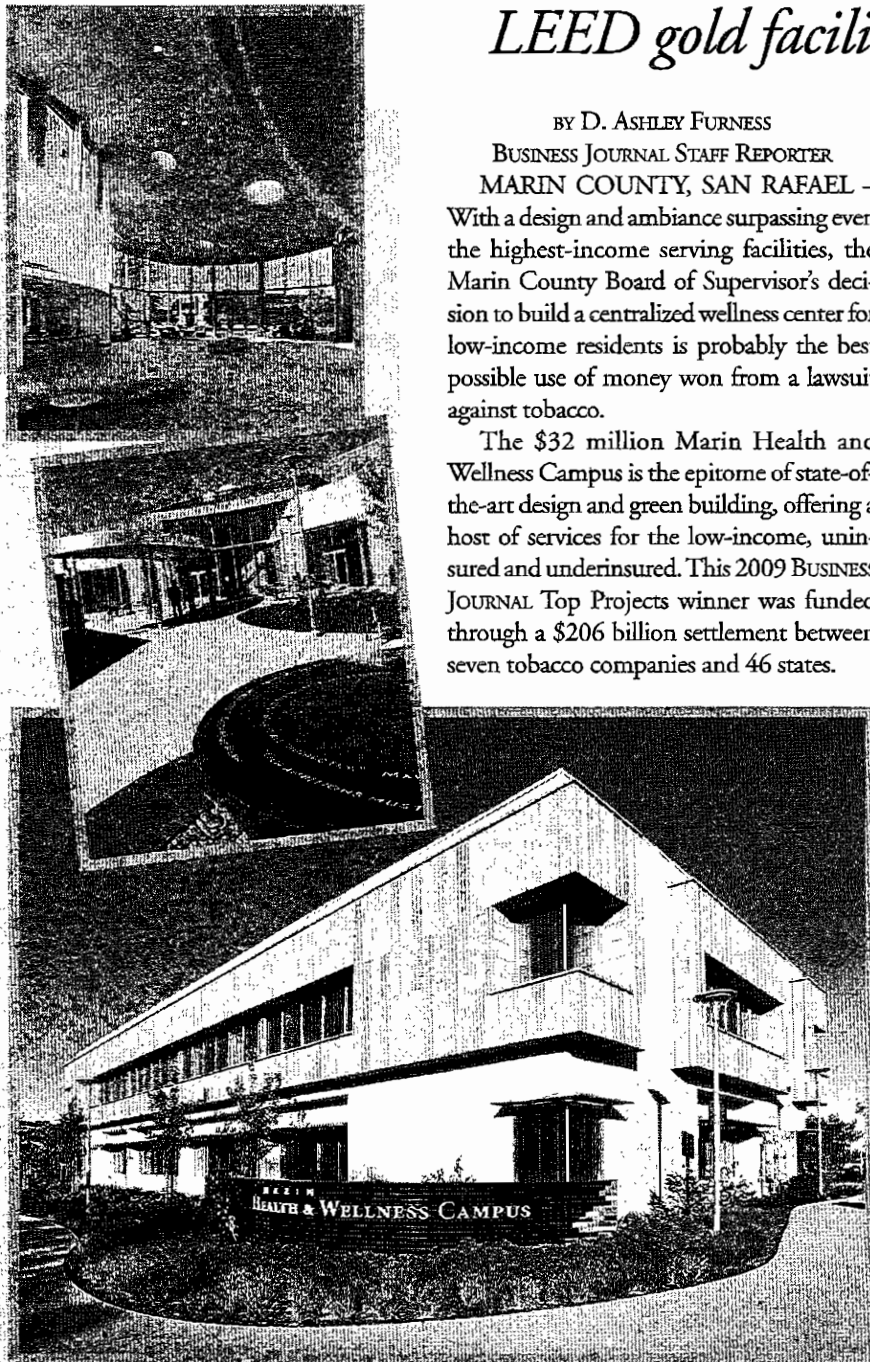
under-budget last November after about year of work. Among many unique design features, a parking lot in the center of the site was transformed into a courtyard, healing garden and social area for the community, and copper-plating thematically runs throughout buildings and rooflines. More than 75 percent of building waste was recycled, and solar panels fuel much of operations. Landscaping is drought-resistant and watered by recycled sources.

"When we actually started purchasing property in 2006, global warming was one of Marin County's goals and objectives for its countywide plan, and we thought why not make an example of this government project and shoot for LEED gold," said Assistant Director of Public Works Saaid Fakharzadeh in an interview earlier this year.

In addition to consolidating a multitude of services into one location, the property is within walking distance to an estimated 40 percent of its clients and connected to others through public transit and bicycle trails. The campus is also connected to the Marin Community Clinics' new site at 3110 Kerner Blvd. through sidewalks and parking.

Programs located in the campus include: youth and family mental health services; WIC; children and family health; the Children's Health Initiative; Medi-Cal billing referral and enrollment; community prevention and health promotion; the Community Advisory Board; volunteering services; outpatient mental health and support and treatment after release; Bucklelew employment and independent living; Community Action Marin; gynecology; family planning; maternity; obstetric; immunization; and STD, Hepatitis, TB and HIV/AIDS testing and treatment.

The space also includes a conference center for community events, which most recently hosted a carbon-reduction planning workshop by the Marin Transportation Authority. In March this year, the Bucklelew program opened the Blue Skies Cafe on the wellness campus, offering employment for the mentally disabled. The coffee and lunch cart offers healthy and sustainably made meals and drinks supplied by local organic roaster Equator Estate Coffee & Teas and San Rafael-based Jessie & Laurent food.



Marin Health and Wellness Campus, 3230, 3240, 3250, 3260, 3270 Kerner Blvd., San Rafael;
www.co.marin.ca.us/campus

Owner: County of Marin

Developers: Seagate Properties Inc.

Description: renovated 35-year-old, 74,000-square-foot former Lucasfilm office buildings; LEED gold rated; consolidated community and county-run health programs formerly located in 12 different locations in the county; paid for by tobacco tax settlement money; serves low-income, uninsured and underinsured; includes community training and conference space

Completion: November 2008

Architecture: RMW architecture & interiors

General contractor: Dome Construction

Engineering: Paradigm Structural Engineers Inc., Nova Partners Inc.

Solar: SolarCraft, 53.4 kW-generating solar panels and five solar hot water systems

Project cost: \$32 million for construction, \$63 million including purchase of buildings