NEW SCIENCE BUILDING OPENS WITH A BANG

A loud “volcanic” eruption and a ribbon cutting that playfully employed medical gauze instead of the typical material topped off a festive grand opening of the Allan Hancock College science building April 4. The event featured master of ceremonies Superintendent/President Jose Ortiz, and speakers that included registered nursing graduate Victoria Kern, faculty member Mick Bondello and others. Science instructors Rob Meyer and Linda Metaxas wowed the crowd during the ceremony with an experiment using water and liquid nitrogen to mimic a volcanic eruption. The ribbon cutting gave way to a host of activities including scientific and medical lab displays and tours of the $21 million, two-story, 44,302 square foot building. Nine scientific laboratories; a dental lab composed of seven patient operatories, each with computerized patient management software; a nursing skills lab with a $75,000 computerized patient mannequin and eight hospital simulation units; and a new Math Center to provide individual and group study and tutoring were some of the tour highlights.

Completion of the facility was partially funded by Measure I, the $180 million general obligation bond passed by voters in June 2006. The majority of the construction was funded by the state. Other projects under way with Measure I bond funding include a new public safety training facility for fire and police, a new "One Stop" student services building, a multimillion dollar mainframe system for the district and various technology advances and upgrades to support student and operational needs.

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