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UMass Lowell breaks ground on new \$40 million business school - designed to meet LEED Silver-Plus standards

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More than 100 people - including UMass Lowell leaders, students, faculty and staff, along with state legislators and officials - recently broke ground on a new \$40 million home for the university's Manning School of Business that will become a key component in the transformation of its North Campus.

The building, designed by Cambridge Seven Associates of Cambridge, will incorporate high-performance, sustainable and energy-efficient features that will meet or exceed the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver-Plus standards.

The building will be named for UMass Lowell graduate John Pulichino '67 and his wife, Joy Tong, successful entrepreneurs in the travel-goods industry who have donated \$4 million to student scholarships. UMass Lowell leaders envision that the new building will complete an innovation district dedicated to business education and scientific research and development in support of the region's economy.

The Pulichino Tong Business Building is scheduled to open in 2017 and will serve UMass Lowell's growing population of undergraduate and graduate students studying accounting, entrepreneurship, finance, international business, management and operations and information systems.

State legislators praised UMass Lowell for its commitment to advancing high-quality education and making it accessible and affordable to students. The Commonwealth provided \$25 million in bond funding for the Pulichino Tong Business Building, with \$12 million of its total cost raised through private donations to date.

Located at the corner of University Ave. and Riverside St., the Pulichino Tong Business Building will sit adjacent to UMass Lowell's Mark and Elisia Saab Emerging Technologies and Innovation Center, as well as Alumni Hall and the Lydon Library. The area, combined with the academic and laboratory complex across University Ave., will become known as the North Campus Innovation District, marrying the strengths of UMass Lowell's engineering and science programs with its top-notch business school.

The centerpiece of the 52,000 s/f Pulichino Tong Business Building will be a four-story atrium overlooking an outdoor plaza formed by the new and existing buildings, creating more green space on North Campus. Additional renovations to Lydon Library will connect it to the business school building and provide an open area for group projects, meetings and other collaboration.

"Today we not only mark the start of construction on a building expressly designed to promote a sense of community and collaboration, we celebrate the coming generations of students who will learn and work here alongside faculty mentors and researchers, honing the skills that will help them fashion the economy of the future in ways we can only imagine," said UMass Lowell chancellor Marty Meehan.

The new building's other features will include a finance laboratory designed to simulate on-the-job experiences in the business world, such as a trading room with access to real-time stock market information, and technology-enhanced classrooms and seminar rooms that can accommodate more than 400 students.

The groundbreaking ceremony kicked off a weekend of campus events. A record number of students - nearly 3,500 - will graduate during UMass Lowell Commencement exercises tomorrow.

In addition to Pulichino and Meehan, speakers at today's event included state senator Eileen Donoghue; state representative Thomas Golden; Lowell mayor Rodney Elliott; Carole Cornelison, commissioner of the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance; and Kathryn Carter, dean of UMass Lowell's Manning School of Business.

"The state-of-the-art Pulichino Tong Business Building will offer a vital new center for business education on our campus and enhance the high-quality education our faculty provides students to prepare them for success in the ever-changing global economy. This new home will also present opportunities for research and collaboration with industry and entrepreneurs," Carter said.

"This university - and especially, I'm proud to say the Manning School of Business - is making sure that its graduates have all the tools necessary so that they are going to be champions, they are going to be leaders in whatever field they pursue," said Golden, a UMass Lowell alumnus.

The state's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) is managing the building's construction.

"This project is part of the Patrick Administration's commitment to building opportunity through world-class education buildings," said Cornelison. "The Commonwealth's investment and DCAMM's partnership with the University of Massachusetts Lowell will provide students and faculty the resources, through state-of-the-art infrastructure and technology, to succeed in a global economy and secure a brighter future."

Pulichino is the chief executive officer of Group III International Ltd., an industry leader in travel gear products. Group III was founded by Tong, an award-winning designer who is the company's president and creative director. The couple established the Pulichino Tong Family Foundation scholarship fund for UMass Lowell business students and they have provided leadership on several university committees. In 2012, Pulichino received the Distinguished Alumni Award and tomorrow, during UMass Lowell's Commencement exercises, both he and Tong will be presented with honorary degrees.

"While it will be gratifying to one day see our names on this building, the real reward for us is to help deserving UMass Lowell students with their education. Joy and I are excited to play a role in the university's unprecedented growth and are proud to be members of the dynamic UMass Lowell community," Pulichino said.