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The S/L/A/M Collaborative designs 75,000 s/f Middlesex Hospital Shoreline Medical Center

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The newly completed Middlesex Hospital Shoreline Medical Center designed by The S/L/A/M Collaborative, Inc. (SLAM) officially opened its doors on April 28th. According to hospital leaders, the facility represents a rebirth of a beloved existing facility that has provided emergency care and outpatient services to residents of the shoreline community for four decades. Originally established in 1970, the center is widely recognized as one of the first free-standing emergency departments in the country.

Having outgrown its previous location in Essex, the new center addresses projected growth and new technologies. The 75,000 s/f freestanding facility features a 24-bed emergency department, expanded radiology services with dedicated women's imaging, a lab, and infusion therapy suite; all carefully arranged to enhance the delivery of the already great service for which the Center is known. "This brand new shoreline medical facility is a shining example of the next phase of this longstanding community partnership," Vincent Capece, Middlesex Hospital president and chief executive officer, said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Situated immediately along I-95, the center benefits from greater community visibility, and provides a branding opportunity for the hospital and convenient access for patients. To address the needs of the area's significant geriatric population, a closely coordinated site and building planning effort resulted in senior-friendly access and amenities, and distinctive gardens provide memorable reference points for clear wayfinding.

According to SLAM project designer, Douglas Mayne, AIA, The facility is "...a distinctive architecture, derived from a blend of elements. Brick panels and precast concrete banding established at the Main Hospital Campus are combined with local shoreline influences, such as natural stone, sea glass, native planting, define the new center and reinforce an identifiable, system-wide aesthetic."

Facing the realities of today's tight budgets, SLAM, working in partnership with Middlesex Hospital and Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, dispensed with a traditional project approach and pursued an "IPD-lite" methodology that allowed for a more cost-effective delivery of the new Center. "IPD-lite is a non-contractual project delivery method that features "open-book collaborative decision-making and an early partnership with project subcontractors. Decisions involve input from all stakeholders early in design to understand and refine project goals, which are actively and accurately tested against budget. Subcontractors are engaged to bring their latest expertise and techniques to bear on the actual design and documentation, resulting in a construction-ready project in step with the budget. The cross-disciplinary interaction creates a greater overall level of project awareness and interest among stakeholders, resulting in a better product and refreshing team spirit," Mayne said.

Cost savings realized early in the project resulted in the inclusion of a 25,000 s/f second floor shell space, allowing for future expansion.

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