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## **Walsh Bros. breaks ground on \$48m Salem State residence hall**

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Patricia Meserve, Ph.D., president of Salem State College (SSC), alongside state legislators, collegiate partners, supporters, community members, the Mass. State College Building Authority (MSCBA) and construction manager Walsh Brothers, hosted the groundbreaking ceremony that marked the beginning of construction of a new \$48 million residence hall and dining facility located on Salem State's central campus.

Walsh Bros. was selected by the MSCBA to provide construction management services on this new residence life initiative. This new residence hall project, designed by DiMella Schaeffer, will be the first major step toward achieving this goal. The project maintains an aggressive 18 month schedule which requires detailed logistics planning and phasing to ensure no disruption to the student's day-to-day activities.

During the ceremony many key Salem community supporters spoke of the importance of this project, including mayor, Kimberly Driscoll and congressman John Tierney. Also in attendance were Richard Freeland, commissioner of the Mass. Department of Higher Education and MSCBA commissioner James Morris, both of whom personally recognized Walsh Bros. for their reputation of excellence in construction management. The project will be comprised of a 523-bed new residence hall that includes a new 384-seat dining facility complete with all necessary support functions. The five-story steel and masonry structure is 162,637 s/f. The building shall include common lounge spaces, a fitness room, a laundry room, a game room, a kitchen server area, conference rooms, and faculty apartments.

The residence hall will be constructed to specifically house sophomore students using a collaborative pod design. The design will afford sophomores a more independent living situation while simultaneously being part of a small neighborhood of other students. The project requires working within the confines of the adjacent occupied campus buildings, dorms and businesses. As with any active academic environment the safety of the students, faculty, and employees is paramount. One of the highest priorities will be to avoid the disruption of campus activities. The project schedule will be fast track as the additional beds are required in time for academic year 2010.

Currently, Salem State College houses 1,500 students, roughly 25% of its enrolled undergraduates. However, SSC has set a definitive goal of obtaining 50% on-campus residency within the next ten years.

Walsh Brothers is a fourth generation, family owned construction management firm headquartered in Boston. The firm, founded in 1901, has extensive experience in higher education construction and has worked for many of the leading educational institutions in the Boston area.