

## SPECIAL JUDGES' RECOGNITION



CHILDREN'S MERCY EAST - BILL MANGINELLI; HALL TOWER - CONTRIBUTED PHOTO; GENOME CENTER - COLBY LYSNE

Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics is honored for three projects: a new facility in Independence (top), the Hall Tower (right) and a genomic testing center (left).

## Children's Mercy sees healthy growth in projects

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During the past year, Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics has been part of three big projects that not only serve Kansas City's children and communities today, but also create a foundation for helping the children of tomorrow.

The hospital has expanded its downtown presence with the construction of the Hall Tower and extended into Independence by opening its Children's Mercy East Clinic. Those projects totaled more than \$57 million.

The hospital also invested more than \$3.5 million in its Center for Pediatric Genomic Medicine, a one-of-a-kind lab where researchers are able to sequence and interpret human genetics faster than anywhere else in the world.

Melissa Novak, director of media relations, said the projects all reflect the hospital's commitment to creating greater access to pediatric health care services and having a strong effect on the surrounding communities.

"The biggest thing and our No. 1 goal

overall is just access," she said. "We've just got to make sure we can provide access to as many kids as possible. And now we have a little more focus on research, so we're investing in space and recruiting so that we're not just treating the kids of today, but building the capacity to treat the kids of the future, too."

At the Genome Center, scientists work with physicians to decode a patient's DNA, sequence it and spot the cause of underlying disorders, which can lead to lifesaving treatments.

The lab is about 14,500 square feet and was built to focus on flexibility and expandability to provide for the ever-evolving world of science.

The Hall Tower provides additional patient beds, as well as space for the Fetal Health Center in connection with the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, which provide immediate care to at-risk newborns.

Children's Mercy East, a 56,000-square-foot facility, includes a specialty clinic, urgent care, and labo-

ratory and imaging services. The space incorporates sustainable design features and is in pursuit of LEED certification.

Novak stressed that children are not just "little adults," but require specialized diagnostic and treatment tools from trained specialists. So providing an easier way for families to access those services is crucial.

"If these kids have chronic diabetes or need dialysis, traveling (across the city), even though it doesn't seem that far, can be 40 minutes from some places," she said. "So to be there so they don't have to travel so much, so they have access to emergency services where there are pediatric specialists, is very important."

In addition, the projects probably will have ripple effects throughout the community and local economy as jobs are added to staff the facilities.

"That's kind of one of our responsibilities as the only children's hospital in the area and one of the largest employers," Novak said. "We absolutely want to encourage economic development."

### KEY PLAYERS

#### Children's Mercy East Clinic

HMN Architects Inc., Bob D. Campbell and Associates, Brack and Associates Engineers, Turner Construction

#### Hall Tower

HMN Architects, SSR, JE Dunn Construction

#### Center for Pediatric Genomic Medicine

Pulse Design Group, Brack and Associates, McCownGordon Construction