

UCSD athletic complex opens with series of events

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UCSD ATHLETIC COMPLEX OPENS WITH SERIES OF EVENTS

A \$32 million student-driven athletic and event complex officially opened today at the University of California, San Diego, with a brief ceremony and tours.

The noon ribbon-cutting and open house for the Recreation, Intramural, Athletic and Event Complex (RIMAC) will be followed with several special events in the facility, which was designed according to student guidelines and partially paid for by students.

The opening ceremony includes a performance by the Bomani Drummers, music by the Blacksmith Union, skydivers on the adjacent playing field, and brief remarks by Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson, Vice Chancellor Joseph W. Watson and a RIMAC building advisory representative.

A Martin Luther King commemorative concert featuring the UCSD Gospel Choir and guest choirs totaling some 500 voices will be held at 8 p.m. Jan. 25. The event is open to the public.

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will speak Jan. 26 in the complex arena at 4 p.m. ceremonies marking dedication of UCSD's newly-named Eleanor Roosevelt College.

"Spirit Night" is scheduled Jan. 27, with a UCSD-CSU Northridge men's volleyball game at 2 p.m.; UCSD vs. Occidental College women's basketball at 6 p.m., and UCSD vs. UC Santa Cruz men's basketball at 8 p.m.

Public tours of the facility will be held daily after Jan. 9 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the hour. Free aerobic classes will be offered, and racquetball and squash play will be available.

Five basketball or volleyball games can be ongoing at the same time in the huge main arena, which converts for special events such as concerts to seating for 5,000. The complex also includes an auxiliary gym for two basketball or volleyball courts or six badminton courts, three mirrored multipurpose activity rooms, a 12,000 square foot weight and fitness room, eight racquetball courts, two regulation squash courts, an equipment room and pro shop, men's and women's locker rooms, a wellness center, training room, quarters for visiting teams and conference rooms.

The facility--and a \$70 per quarter per student registration fee to pay for it--were approved by students in a 1990 campus referendum. The fee goes into effect now that the building is completed. From the beginning, students participated on planning and advisory committees for the complex, completed over 4,000 surveys about what they wanted to see inside, and donated thousands of hours to committee service.

According to those surveys, the most important thing to the students was a weight room--so planners provided a 12,000 square foot exercise room with state-of-the-art weight-lifting equipment. Students also wanted dance, martial arts and aerobic rooms, and these are included. Also high on the student list was natural light, so the

building is bright and open. As specified by the students, the main arena is totally separate from the recreation space so users can work out during events if they choose.

RIMAC also will provide a much-needed campus site for large- scale social and cultural events; it will accommodate guest speakers, concerts, conferences, dance and graduation ceremonies. However, the focus will be on open recreation, intramurals and athletic practice and events.

Construction of the 188,000 gross square foot complex began in December, 1992, on a site adjacent to the San Diego Supercomputer Center. The building is four levels, with the exterior a blend of stone, lightly tinted glass and soft colors. Parkin Architects of Los Angeles, designers of the John Wooden Center at UCLA, were

the architects for the facility, described as the prototype recreation building for any campus in the country for several years to come. Construction was headed by Moran Construction Co. of Alhambra, Ca.

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