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J. Craig Venter Institute Breaks Ground on New Facility on Campus

The J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI), a not-for-profit genomics research institute, held an official groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday for their new facility on the UC San Diego campus. The JCVI building, designed by ZGF Architects, will be a state-of-the-art, "ultra-green" 45,000-square-foot, highly adaptable wet laboratory and computational laboratory building. The building, slated to be completed in 2013, will support 125 scientists and staff.



The J. Craig Venter Institute

"We are thrilled to be embarking on this new building project here on the campus of UCSD. The building is a unique design that will meld the environmental philosophies of our genomics research with the sustainability goals that I believe must be part of all of our lives," said J. Craig Venter, founder and president of JCVI. "I am also excited to be back on the UCSD campus, my alma mater, to partake in the rich academic research and clinical environment here. We look forward to continued and strengthened collaborations with all here at UCSD and in the greater San Diego research and biotech community."

In addition to Venter, speakers at the event included: UC San Diego Chancellor Marye Anne Fox; San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders; Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine Dr. David Brenner, and Director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography Tony Haymet.

Important features of the new JCVI building include:

One of the first, if not the first, true "net-zero energy" biological research laboratories in the world, generating 100% of its power on site (solar power).

Use of natural day lighting and views, natural ventilation/passive cooling, rainwater harvesting, native low-water landscaping, use of regional materials, green roofs, recycled content, sustainably harvested wood.



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Rainfall runoff from the building rooftop will be stored in cisterns to provide water for irrigation, cooling towers, and washing photovoltaic panels.

Roof gardens featuring flowering trees, shrubs, grasses and succulents will be installed on the three terraces to help shade and cool the building.

Researchers in the facility will be engaged in some of the most exciting areas of genomic research including: human genomic sequencing and analysis, synthetic genomics, and environmental genomics. Specific programs currently

underway (both by JCVI researchers alone and in collaboration with UCSD, SIO, Salk, and other area researchers/research organizations) are: environmental metagenomics research to find, catalogue and better understand the microbes in the oceans, soil, and the human body; research applying synthetic biology advances to microbes to help solve environmental and human health problems; improving techniques developed at JCVI to sequence the genomes of individual cells; human genomics research building on the historic sequencing of Venter's complete diploid genome, stem cell genomics, as well as continued work on the African genome project.

The JCVI currently has two facilities—a temporary facility near the UCSD campus with 60 researchers and the east coast headquarters in Rockville, Md. with approximately 240 scientists and staff.

McCarthy Building Companies is the general contractor. Other companies involved in the design and construction of the JCVI building are: Integral Group / IDeAs, KPFF Consulting Engineers, Jacobs Consultancy, Andropogon Associates with David Reed, Landscape Architects, David Nelson & Associates, SC Engineers, Inc., and Sustainable SoCal, Inc.

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