

## Health & Wellness Center Construction Begins

Shovel brigade breaks ground on building site

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Twenty individuals participated in the shovel brigade at the Health & Wellness Center building site. (Photo by Patricia Spangler, marketing & communication services director, IMC)

By: Gillian Sanner, media communications manager, IMC

On Monday, March 5, Andrews University broke ground for an approximately \$17.5 million, 76,000 square foot Health & Wellness Center scheduled to open in the fall of 2019. Twenty individuals, leaders from on- and off-campus, participated in the shovel brigade, using gold-colored shovels to turn ground at the building site.

The groundbreaking celebration started in the Howard Performing Arts Center Lobby. David Faehner, vice president for University Advancement, and Andrea Luxton, president, shared opening remarks.

Faehner noted the location of the Wellness Center—close to students as well as to the community. “Inadvertently, or maybe on purpose, it [the Wellness Center] will complete the final corner of a square between the Howard Center, Seminary and Pioneer Memorial Church,” he said, “and, in the process, will incorporate the meaning of the concepts that are permanently engraved on the Andrews University seal of Corpus, Mens, Spiritus or body, mind and spirit.”

Andrew von Maur, professor of architecture in the School of Architecture & Interior Design, has served as one of the architects for the project. Addressing attendees, he said, “Former president Dr. Andreasen once told me that the reason we have a school of architecture on our campus is because architecture is about stewardship. Stewardship of God’s blessings: financial resources, land, our natural environment, our built heritage and the time that each student and visitor spend on our campus. So it was very humbling and a real privilege to work on the design of the Health & Wellness Center.”

Dominique Gummelt, director for University Health & Wellness, summarized work already taking place related to the University’s health and wellness initiative. Highlights included the Health & Wellness Council, the approximately 40 campus Wellness Ambassadors, an e-wellness platform for employees, daily wellness themes and the recognition of being selected as a gold level campus by the American College of Sports Medicine for the third year in a row. Gummelt said, “God has created us with phenomenal potential to live our lives to the fullest in every possible way. He has created us extraordinarily, and He wants us to live healthy and happy lives so He can use us best for His sake.”

Artur Stele, chair of the Andrews University Board of Trustees, invited Ted Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to close the program with a prayer of dedication. Attendees then walked to the construction site where the official, ceremonial groundbreaking took place, followed by a reception back in the Howard Center lobby.

“We have been awaiting this moment for several years,” says Luxton, reflecting on the event. “This is not just a new building for the campus; it is one that will be central to our life and our mission. It will show every day how vital we consider health and wellness to be for our campus and our community. This build is now happening only due to the vision of President Emeritus Niels-Erik Andreasen and the generosity of all those who have supported this project with their very significant gifts. Thank you all very much.”

The Health & Wellness Center will have a swimming pool, a recreation and event center with basketball courts, fitness and exercise areas and space for educational programs. The building site is currently under construction, and a web camera will be installed to provide a live view as the center takes shape.

For additional updates on the Health & Wellness Center, visit [andrews.edu/wellnesscenter](https://andrews.edu/wellnesscenter).