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Howard Community College Breaks Ground on New Mathematics and Athletics Complex



Howard Community College held a groundbreaking celebration today for its planned Mathematics and Athletics Complex. The fused facility will be an innovative and creative approach to serving students and the community. Construction will begin later this summer with an estimated completion in 2024.

"It is a momentous day, as we prepare to build a new future for the college, one that brings together academics and athletics," said Felicitá Solá-Carter, chair of the Howard Community College Board of Trustees.

Planned for the south side of the Howard Community College campus in Columbia, the Mathematics and Athletics Complex will be four floors, situated on the site of the current athletics and fitness center. Once built, the Mathematics and Athletics Complex will stand at 193,000 square feet, at a cost of \$101.7 million. This capital project is funded by Howard County and the state of Maryland.

"I appreciate your support of the college and our future Mathematics and Athletics Complex, which – when finished – will be the next gem in the crown of our beautiful campus," said Dr. Kathleen Hetherington, president of Howard Community College.

The new facility will address space challenges on campus. The mathematics division is currently housed in a former office building with inflexible instructional spaces. The existing athletics and fitness center was constructed in 1969 and is operating far beyond its structural life. The future Mathematics and Athletics Complex will better serve credit and noncredit programs; faculty, staff, and students; and the broader Howard County community.

"Math and physical fitness are not only important for the mind, body, and soul, but bringing these topics together is an innovative academic approach at Howard Community College. Math underpins much of the science behind athletics, physical agility, and fitness, and this new Mathematics and Athletics Complex will allow HCC students to study velocity, balance, force, and strength as it relates to their bodies and their physical environment," said Maryland Senator Clarence Lam, co-chair of the Howard County Delegation. "This new building will help ensure that HCC students are able to learn math in an innovative environment so that they are prepared with the necessary skills and knowledge for the jobs of tomorrow."

"On behalf of the Howard County Delegation, we are honored to be part of this critical partnership and proud to have contributed to making the new Mathematics and Athletics Complex a reality," said Delegate Jessica Feldmark, co-chair of the Howard County Delegation. "We know that investing in our community colleges delivers tremendous returns, improving the quality of life for so many Maryland families and strengthening our economy."

The Mathematics and Athletics Complex will feature a math learning center, class labs, study lounge, maker space, and a research area. The athletics area will include a competition gym, multipurpose gym, locker rooms, classroom, fitness center, and strength and conditioning room. Student-athletes at Howard Community College currently compete in five men's sports (basketball, track and field, cross country, lacrosse, and soccer), six women's sports (basketball, track and field, cross country, softball, soccer, volleyball, and the newest – softball), and three co-ed esports teams (League of Legends, Overwatch, and Rocket League).

"Today marks a major turning point for innovation, hope and revitalization for our entire community," said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball. "This space will provide a home for both mental and physical exercise, a place to break down barriers and provide opportunity for the future. We were proud to invest in a place where learners of all ages have the resources to thrive."

"As a mathematics professor, and former athlete, today brought me great joy, pride, and honor to represent our County Council to witness the groundbreaking the new mathematics and athletics complex," said Howard County Council Vice Chair Opel Jones. "This essential complex is a nod to highlighting and celebrating the vitality of this institutional jewel, nestled in Columbia. The opportunities rooted in these future halls will continue to build upon our students' academic edge. I look forward to our continued partnership working to enrich future leaders of tomorrow, for as the HCC slogan states, "You Can Get There from Here!"

In alignment with its value of sustainability, the college anticipates that it will receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for such features as the green roof and outdoor spaces.

The architectural firm for the Mathematics and Athletics Complex is Ayers Saint Gross, and the construction manager is Gilbane Building Company.

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