

Governor Patrick Celebrates Construction Progress at UTEC in Lowell

Topping-off ceremony marks important milestone in state-funded, energy efficient UTEC renovations and expansion

LOWELL - Tuesday, September 20, 2011 - Governor Deval Patrick today joined state and local officials, young people and construction workers to mark an important milestone in the energy efficient expansion of the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC) facility, which provides educational, workforce development and employment opportunities to Lowell's highest-risk youth. The topping-off of the steel structure brings the state and federally-funded project one step closer to completion as the first LEED Platinum certified building in Lowell, and the oldest in the country.

"I support UTEC because of what they do to open young people's eyes to the potential they possess," said Governor Patrick. "Today's construction milestone will lead to countless improvements in their lives through creative education and workforce training."

"This project will create new full-time positions within UTEC so that even greater numbers of disadvantaged young people are able to take advantage of their programs in a new, state-of-the-art green building," said Congresswoman Niki Tsongas. "Better still, UTEC will create 100 construction jobs right here in downtown Lowell with this expansion thanks in part to nearly \$2 million in federal Recovery Act funds. It is an excellent example of local, state and federal partners working cooperatively to create jobs and invest in our community."

"I am incredibly proud of UTEC's dedication and commitment to the teens of Lowell. I believe their partnership with the Administration, through projects like these, is essential to the continued success of their program and the important work they do," said Senator Eileen M. Donoghue.

"It is a great day for the city of Lowell and the youths of the United Teen Equality Center. Today, UTEC is nationally recognized as a model youth development agency, with a mission to ignite and nurture the ambition of Lowell's highest-risk youth in trading violence and poverty for social and economic success," said Representative Thomas Golden, Jr. "As this project comes to fruition and the last beam is placed, it is a true testament under Governor Patrick's Administration of its continued commitment to not only the youth but to the economic growth in the Commonwealth. It is an honor to serve under Governor Patrick's Administration as they keep with their commitment to provide and stimulate the state."

The Patrick-Murray Administration directed a combination of \$1.9 million from President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and \$850,000 from MassDevelopment, the state's finance and development agency, to get the renovation of UTEC's historic building and 7,500 square foot addition off the ground in May 2011. Working with CBT Architects and Shawmut Design and Construction, UTEC's three-story addition will include extensive green design features and systems, and create between 100-120 construction jobs. The project will also feature a commercial kitchen and café

open to the community, a performance center with audio and video production and new classrooms for alternative education programs. When completed, the new building will support 20 new full-time positions for UTEC's older youth population and enable enrollment in alternative education and employment skills programs to double.

"We couldn't be more thrilled with the Commonwealth's support of UTEC's Green Building project. This support has been critical in transforming this historic building into a model high-performance, energy efficient building, setting a great example for our youth, who themselves are building sustainable lives," said UTEC's Executive Director Gregg Croteau.

"This building is important because it provides more space and privacy for programs," said 17-year-old UTEC member Susan Le. "And going green will save a lot of money, which could go to good use like funding for field trips, new vans and supplies we need."

"Just as UTEC's programs help prepare Lowell youth for future employment opportunities, MassDevelopment is pleased to support UTEC's program that promotes job creation, energy efficiency and the Commonwealth's young adults," said MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones.

"Investing in energy efficiency creates local jobs using innovative technology to reduce fossil fuel consumption and lower energy costs," said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Mark Sylvia. "This project will serve as a model of clean energy stewardship for the Lowell community and its youth for years to come."

In addition to its obvious environmental benefits, a LEED Platinum certification will make UTEC's center a site of interest for those outside of the youth development field and beyond greater Lowell. UTEC will build on this interest with a green design education center staffed by young people who will provide guided tours and answer visitors' questions about the facility. The education center will also feature a resource library for residents, contractors and students.

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