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New Building for J. David Gladstone Institutes Opens

San Francisco, CA – The J. David Gladstone Institutes will hold a dedication ceremony today for the opening of its new biomedical research building in Mission Bay.

The new building, designed by NBBJ, will provide approximately 200,000 sf of space for laboratories, offices, and a 150-seat lecture hall. It will house the three distinct Gladstone institutes: the Gladstone Institute of Cardiovascular Disease, the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology, and the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease.

Primary research efforts at the J. David Gladstone Institutes focus on three of the most important clinical problems of modern times: cardiovascular disease, AIDS and neurodegenerative disorders.

The project features several "firsts" in San Francisco's annals of large-scale building projects. The structure is the first privately financed life-sciences research facility to be approved by the city's building department.

It is the first major steel-frame building to use an un-bonded brace-frame system. The Japanese-made, diagonal braces act like automobile shock absorbers during a quake, and absorb most of the lateral forces of a temblor.

It is also the first major nonresidential, non-UCSF enterprise to move into Mission Bay. For years, the Institute's 300 staff members have been scattered in several buildings at San Francisco General Hospital. In the late 1990s, Gladstone trustees purchased land at Mission Bay to build new laboratories.

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While independent, Gladstone is formally affiliated with UCSF, and Gladstone investigators hold university appointments and participate in many university activities, including the teaching and training of graduate students.

"We never had enough space to realize our full potential," Dr. Robert Mahley, Gladstone's president said. "Now we'll have a new lab building where all three institutes can be together."

The idea of synergy is important in biomedical research, and the new structure is designed to promote interaction. Each Gladstone institute has its own floor with approximately 100 workstations, or bench spaces, stretching in rows from one end of the building to the other. Offices and specialized lab space are arrayed in horizontal blocks, with lounge areas next to the bench spaces to encourage collaboration.

The interior layouts are designed to maximize the productivity of the research spaces by increasing the scientists' interaction in four zones: laboratory, equipment support, office and shared core laboratory spaces. The laboratory, office and write-up areas are open and can be easily reconfigured to suit the changing needs of researchers.

"The project breaks new ground for life-science buildings which used to be mostly wet labs," says Steve Ryder, NBBJ project manager. "The amount of computer modeling that goes on here brought up intriguing questions from city planners and environmental officials about how to classify the building."

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About NBBJ

NBBJ is a leading architecture, design and planning practice with five offices in the United States and offices in London, Beijing, and Dubai. NBBJ has planned and designed many of the world's leading research facilities including The Salk Institute, The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, and the Novartis Research Foundation. NBBJ's San Francisco office has been serving a diverse corporate and institutional client base for over 20 years. Recent projects include the design of new headquarters for BioMarin and The Body Shop, law offices for Gunderson Dettmer, and master planning for Kaiser Permanente's new flagship hospital in downtown Oakland.