A New Beginning

EISENHOWER BREAKS GROUND ON NEW ARGYROS HEALTH CENTER

Eisenhower George and Julia Argyros Health Center groundbreakiing: (from left) Lee Osbourne, Mayor Pro Tem, La Quinta, Harry Goldstein, Chairman of the Board, Eisenhower Medical Center, Julia and George Argyros, and Harry Rinker.

More than 250 VIP guests were in attendance Friday, January 18 in a canvas pavilion built especially for the occasion as Eisenhower Medical Center broke ground on the $40 million George and Julia Argyros Health Center in La Quinta. The event marks the largest off-campus expansion for Eisenhower Medical Center to date.

Named in honor of George and Julia Argyros for their extraordinary $20 million gift to Eisenhower Medical Center, the new Eisenhower Argyros Health Center will be the first of three buildings included in the 195,000-square-foot Eisenhower George and Julia Argyros Medical Plaza on the 13.5 acre La Quinta expanse. Construction of the three-story, 90,000-square-foot facility is expected to begin in March 2008 and will include an urgent care center, physician offices, a diagnostic imaging center, a satellite clinical laboratory, a pharmacy, physical rehabilitation services and radiation oncology services. The facility will also include a health and wellness center featuring a women's health center and a men's health center.

At the event State Assemblyman John Benoit led the guests in the pledge of allegiance followed by Harry M. Goldstein, Chairman of the Board, Eisenhower Medical Center, who opened the groundbreaking event with an introduction of distinguished guests and speakers: Lee Osborne, Mayor Pro Tem, La Quinta; G. Aubrey Serfling, President and Chief Executive Officer; Metropolitan Gerasimos, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco; and Harry Rinker, Eisenhower Medical Center Trustee.

The afternoon's festivities were highlighted with a spectacular performance by master artist Michael Ostaski, internationally renowned for creating stunning seven-foot paintings in under seven minutes. Accompanied by spirited Americana music, Ostaski painted the Statue of Liberty with a backdrop of the American flag, winning the crowd's applause.

Aubrey Serfling then addressed guests, expressing his gratitude and enthusiasm about the future Eisenhower George and Julia Argyros Health Center, before introducing a virtual tour of the future facility.

Former President George H. W. Bush provided remarks via video honoring George and Julia Argyros. "It is truly an honor to be invited to be part of this momentous occasion, George and Julia, as you are honored for your $20 million gift to Eisenhower Medical Center," said President Bush. President Bush went on to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Argyros, referencing a theme he used throughout his presidency to highlight the importance of giving. He continued, "Your gift to Eisenhower Medical Center and commitment to the Coachella Valley community truly exemplifies your words and lifts the two of you as one of the thousand points of light. Barbara joins me in extending our sincere congratulations and we send our best wishes for the coming year."

Trustee Harry S. Rinker introduced his longtime friends George and Julia Argyros who reflected on their role in establishing the Eisenhower Argyros Health Center. Artist Michael Ostaski then returned to the stage to surprise George and Julia with a live portrait painting of the couple, which was then presented to them as a gift.

Following the groundbreaking ceremony and reception, the general public was invited to enjoy refreshments and a final Ostaski painting of an American bald eagle and learn more about the future Eisenhower Argyros Health Center in La Quinta.

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