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Meritus Medical Center Opened the Door to a New Era

Chicago, IL-Meritus Medical Center, located in Hagerstown, MD, completed its largest construction project in 100 years this month and opened its doors to the community. [Matthei & Colin Associates](#) designed the new 500,000 square foot facility with the latest in digital information and imaging applications and improved patient and work environments with more efficient department adjacencies and internal organization. Meritus Health, which owns the new non-profit hospital, fulfilled its promise to the community.

The new five-story 267 single-bed facility on a new campus represents *progress for the community* especially in a challenging economy. Several new departments meet today's need for the latest services in cardiac care, total joint care, and women's services. "We developed new and improved synergies between departments with the design. The new building offers the staff an opportunity to continue to provide the highest quality care in a new and more efficient facility," said William W. Heun, AIA, partner at [Matthei & Colin Associates](#), a healthcare architecture and planning firm, who has been closely working with the hospital for eight years.

"Designing and providing the best for the hospital and community was always at the top of the list. The new medical center floor plan incorporates strategic placement of departments to ensure patients' privacy and safety, and enhanced efficiency for the care providers. The new facility also has the ability to expand services when the community needs them," added Heun. Programming started in 2002 and the final construction cost is \$160 million for the five-story facility on the 30+acre campus.

The project includes many achievements. Construction was completed in 33 months from notice to proceed to treating patients. Real returns and affordability were top priorities in the new facility. Green building and sustainable design was a major factor in all decisions. The new facility replaces the old hospital called Washington County Hospital.

The current technology includes a digitally-operated HVAC system that can be managed on-site or remotely. When special needs arise, the hospital facility staff can fill a specific environmental request on-line. Advanced telecommunications permit physicians, nurses, and teams to communicate effortlessly in diverse areas of the medical center.

In addition to M&CA, the primary team members are Gilbane Building Company, Leach Wallace Associates, and Fredrick Seibert Associates.

Since 1974, Matthei & Colin Associates(M&CA) specializes in planning and design of healthcare environments. M&CA's architectural services are focused on healthcare and bring an unparalleled depth of experience to every project. Their mission is to deliver imaginative solutions that address both facilities and operational criteria, maximizing staffing, and functional efficiency. Visit their website at www.mca-architecture.com.

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