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Illinois Capital Development Board Announces plans for the Design and Construction of the University of Illinois' New Computer Design, Research and Learning Center

New Center is being constructed on an accelerated schedule to meet the demands of the department, doubling its capacity by 2023.

CHICAGO – The Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB), LMN Architects, and Booth Hansen today announced plans for the design and construction of the new Computer, Design, Research, and Learning Center at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). Located at a unique prominent site on campus, the structure celebrates the garden and elliptical form of the Harry W. Pearce Memorial Grove and establishes a new front door for technology in downtown Chicago.

"Illinois is home to the best universities and research centers in the world and boasts a talented workforce that attracts companies from across the globe," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "This new learning center on the UIC campus, made possible through funding from our historic bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan, will further cement the university's place as a world-class institution that excels in preparing talented students for the careers of tomorrow."

UIC is Chicago's only public research university and one of the most diverse universities in the United States. The new 135,000 square foot Computer Design, Research, and Learning Center (CDRLC) at UIC will consolidate the currently fragmented Computer & Science Department in a new home and co-locate it with a large cluster of university-administered classrooms at the heart of the east campus. The building is designed to be a welcoming, inclusive, and inviting space for the diverse student body. The building will serve research needs with state-of-the-art facilities, accommodate the rapidly increasing undergraduate enrollment in computer science and become a new campus hub.

"This project is a top priority to meet the needs of students in our growing computer science program and helps to strengthen the high-tech boom in Chicago. We are grateful to Governor Pritzker for his support," **said UIC Chancellor Michael D. Amiridis.**

"The new CDRLC represents the future of higher education at UIC and is intended to be a welcoming space to promote innovation, collaboration, and discovery. We placed an intentional emphasis on the public spaces, research labs, and collaborative areas to enhance the experience that each student will have, and it has been a pleasure collaborating with LMN Architects and Booth Hansen," **said Peter Nelson, Dean, UIC College of Engineering.** "Students at UIC will have a new building on campus where they can unleash their curiosity and enjoy a space that is focused on learning, research, and teamwork."

The CDRLC is the third recent academic building to be built on the east campus was originally designed by Walter Netsch in 1965. The building will be delivered on an accelerated schedule to meet the demands of the department, doubling its capacity by 2023. It will create a hub for both engineering and computer science that includes research areas comprised of faculty offices, collaboration areas, dry lab, and specialty lab; administrative and student affairs office spaces; collaborative teaching and learning spaces for undergraduate and graduate students; an undergraduate learning and community center; and a flexible events room; all stitched together by a five-story daylit atrium.

"Together with the department, University, and CDB, our team of LMN and Booth Hansen have designed the building to become a welcoming hub, a building that embraces the old and presents an iconic new presence along Taylor Street," **says LMN Partner Stephen Van Dyck, AIA.** "Throughout the design process, we have been inspired by the convergences that this project represents. At the heart of it, all is the convergence of UIC's mission and the region's growing Tech prominence. For so many in the region, this new building will symbolize opportunity."

Creating a contemporary addition to this iconic brutalist campus, the building is functional, flexible, and respectful of the context. Located at a unique, prominent site on campus, the structure celebrates the natural setting and organic form of the Memorial Grove and establishes a new front door for technology in Chicago.

Together with the existing lab building, the new CDRLC creates a dramatic public atrium for social interactions with visual and physical connections to all floors. The refined precast concrete and terra cotta

façade of the building is inspired by Netsch's late modern architecture and responds to the site conditions and the Memorial Grove.

"The creation of the Computer Design, Research, and Learning Center at UIC is the type of investment Illinois needs to give our students a competitive advantage in the digital age. I'm fortunate to have an incredible research facility like UIC in my district, and I look forward to seeing the output of this building once complete," **stated State Representative Lakesia Collins**.

"The announcement of the new Computer Design, Research, and Learning Center at UIC is crucial in order for the university to keep producing the incredible talent that it does. This state-of-the-art facility will further enhance the research taking place at UIC, while also welcoming prospective students to a unique learning environment," **said State Senator Patricia Van Pelt**. "I look forward to seeing this project completed in such an expedited timeframe, doubling the capacity of the Computer & Science Department in just two years," **added Van Pelt.**

David Mann, Booth Hansen Principal, Comments: "The new building will be located adjacent to one of the original Netsch buildings, near other College of Engineering facilities and Memorial Grove. This unique site allows for an innovative design that is inspired by the context, materiality, and qualities of precast concrete material. The project breaks free from the rigid orthogonal character of the campus with a more organic connected form that reframes this edge of campus and the Grove."

Building on UIC's successes with geo-thermal energy resources, the project will include a substantial new geo-thermal farm in Memorial Grove, and the building has been designed to achieve LEED Gold certification. Reflecting a complex organization of requirements, the building will prompt students to cross paths with one another and enhance intellectual exchange. The atrium will be porous and dynamic with connections to the campus and the community, honoring the past and looking to the future.

The historic Rebuild Illinois capital plan passed with bipartisan super-majorities and will invest $45 billion in roads, bridges, railways, universities, early childhood centers, and state facilities like the new crime lab and veterans' homes, creating, and supporting an estimated 540,000 jobs over the life of the six-year plan and revitalizing local economies across the state.