Progress continuing on new law enforcement center

Construction on the new Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center is on track, with completion scheduled for June 19.

The 65,000-square-foot center, featuring a partnership between Metropolitan State and Hennepin Technical College (HTC), is slated for a month of outfitting before move-in starts July 20. Classes will begin fall semester for students seeking associate, baccalaureate and graduate education in law enforcement, criminal justice, fire protection and emergency management. The center will conduct applied research on criminal justice issues and offer continuing education for law enforcement and criminal justice professionals.

“Construction is coming along very well. We’re pleased with the progress,” said Ginny Lane, dean of Metropolitan State’s School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice.

Several events, including an open house, are expected to occur this fall to celebrate the center’s launch. A grand opening is set for spring 2011.

The center is located on HTC’s Brooklyn Park campus. The state-of-the-art facility offers classrooms, administrative and faculty offices, computer and forensics labs and skills development space, including firing ranges, a simulation lab and tactical training areas. The skills development area will be operated by HTC.

Among the featured resources at the facility: 12 “smart,” or digital, classrooms; two indoor target ranges that are the first in Minnesota to incorporate “green” elements; and scenario-based training and simulation spaces, enabling students to practice their skills in settings replicating residences and commercial establishments.

“I would venture to say there will be few, if any, other higher education institutions nationally that will have the kind of advanced law enforcement training resources we will offer at the center,” said Lane.

Construction at the center started May 2009 in response to the growing demand for education and training in law enforcement, criminal justice and public safety. About 500 Metropolitan State students currently major in law enforcement and criminal justice, and Lane said the center is expected to attract more students to these degree programs.

“The center will be a wonderful new facility and represents an important expansion for Metropolitan State in the northwestern part of the Twin Cities,” said Lane. “At the same time, it will present a unique opportunity for us to partner with another Minnesota State Colleges and Universities institution.”

Construction photos now available as well as additional location FAQ’s.