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NEWS RELEASE

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Wilder Center Celebrates Grand Opening: Community Event Honors Wilder Foundation's Long-Standing Commitment to Greater Saint Paul

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (May 3, 2008) – The Wilder Foundation, a nonprofit health and human services organization that has served the greater Saint Paul area since 1906, today celebrated the grand opening of its new Wilder Center. The event-filled day included family fun, great food, a community services fair, cultural music and entertainment. The celebration was held on the Wilder Center campus located near the southwest corner of University Avenue and Lexington Parkway, at 451 Lexington Parkway N.



The theme of the grand opening program was “Wishes for Peace,” and included Wilder Foundation President Tom Kingston and Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. During the program, members of Wilder’s Youth Leadership Initiative led a procession that included the installation of a peace pole on the grounds. Community members wrote wishes for peace on colorful paper, which were scattered at the base of the pole. The peace pole was originally located at Wilder’s former campus, so it was important to the Foundation to bring this piece of its history to the new site. The program culminated with the release of 30 white doves.

“The dove is the universal symbol of peace in many cultures and traditions,” said Tom Kingston, President of Wilder Foundation. “The release of doves represents the many people who have found safe harbor with the Wilder Foundation during the past century, and a wish for peace for those who seek refuge as we begin this new, exciting chapter in Wilder history.”

New \$37.6 Million Facility Enhances Program Services for Clients

The new 99,953 square-foot, four-story Wilder Center, which was completed earlier this year, houses 350 Wilder Foundation employees from Wilder Programs, Wilder Research, Administration and the Executive Offices. The \$37.6 million project brings together all of the Wilder Foundation’s mental health programs under one roof for the first time, allowing staff members to more effectively serve clients across diverse programs. The building is designed to accommodate more than 22,000 client visits each year.

Enhanced services at the new center include a staffed child care facility where children can play, do homework or socialize during their siblings' or caregivers' appointments. The development also includes a complimentary 400-stall parking ramp for clients and employees.

Another key feature of the building is 300-seat auditorium intended to bring the local community together for training, education and leadership events. The auditorium opens to the Backyard, which honors Wilder Center's location as the historic site of the former Lexington Ballpark, home of the original Saint Paul Saints baseball team. This outdoor space was created using the original retaining walls from right field of the ballpark, and features an abstract pitchers mound in the center.

Approximately half of the Backyard is a grassy play area and half is filled with native and adapted plants to create a habitat for birds and butterflies. This "urban oasis" will be utilized for many staff, client and community purposes and reinforces the concept of human connectivity to the broader environment.



"The Wilder Foundation is in the business of building sustainable families, so it is a natural fit that we must also work to sustain our physical environment for this and future generations," added Kingston.

Gold Level LEED Certification Expected to Set a New Standard for Human Services Organizations

Wilder is on track to achieve Gold Level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification for the new building, making Wilder Center one of the "greenest" buildings in Minnesota. The rating system was developed by the U.S. Building Council and rates a structure on its energy efficiency and environmental impact.

The Wilder Center is the first facility in the Upper Midwest to utilize underflow air displacement ventilation, which greatly improves the air quality inside the building by increasing the capacity to deliver fresh air to occupants by 30 percent with little or no increase in energy use. Over 75 percent of employees have access to natural sunlight and views. Wilder Center reduced energy consumption by approximately 50 percent through highly efficient mechanical and electrical systems. Water consumption was reduced by 50 percent through water faucet aerators, landscaping techniques and other technologies. To create a healthier environment for clients and staff, the entire Wilder Center campus is tobacco-free.

Special Touches Provide a Beacon of Hope and a Family History Set in Stone

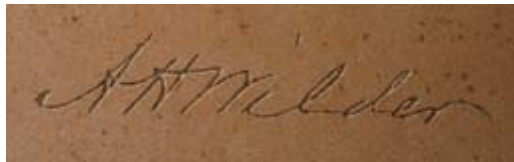
Visitors to the new Wilder Center should be on the look out for a number of small touches that hint at the rich history of the Wilder Foundation and its long-standing commitment to the greater Saint Paul area. An illuminated tower, called a "Beacon of Hope" by Wilder leaders, juts above the roof line of the new building just above the front entrance. Architects included the light feature to both enhance the visibility of the building at night and to create a focal point for clients, visitors and the surrounding community to enjoy for decades to come.

The Wilder Center tower, lit from within, utilizes a combination of traditional stage lighting fixtures capable of casting patterns onto the glass with sophisticated and energy-efficient, computer-controlled LEDs that can display an infinite number of color combinations and transitions.

The concrete word band encircling exterior walls of Wilder Center draws from the original text of the Wilder family wills, the articles of incorporation and mission statement, distilling these important documents into 26 word pairs that exemplify the Wilder Foundation's mission. The band reads like a "ticker tape" as it traverses the main building's bends, starts, turns and stops, inviting the reader to explore the architecture of the site and interpret the meaning of the words.

In addition to the light tower and word band, another special touch is created by the signatures of Wilder Foundation's founders Amherst H. Wilder, Fanny Spencer and Cornelia Day Wilder, which are carved into the pillars between the parking area and the main entrance to Wilder Center. In addition, oversized, transparent images of the Wilder family are affixed to the ground-floor windows overlooking the signatures, further paying tribute to the Foundation's roots.

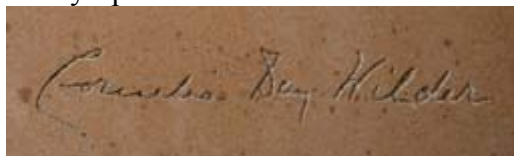
"In the early planning stage of Wilder Center, an internal team charged with creating a welcoming environment in the new building felt it was important to incorporate the founding family's presence into the physical structure," said Kingston. "I believe the signatures, portraits and word band add special touches that uniquely bridge our 21st Century building to Wilder's founding days more than 100 years ago."



Amherst H. Wilder



Fanny Spencer



Cornelia Day Wilder

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About the Wilder Foundation

The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation is a nonprofit health and human services organization that has served the greater Saint Paul, Minnesota, area since 1906. The Foundation operates more than 70 programs and services that help children succeed in school; troubled youth and families; individuals and families maintain long-term housing; older adults remain independent; and organizations and individuals work for positive change in the community. Wilder Research is one of the nation's largest nonprofit research and evaluation groups dedicated to practical research in the field of human services.