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PERKINS EASTMAN DESIGNS THREE FIRST-OF-THEIR-KIND COVID-19 CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Clinics in hardest-hit NYC neighborhoods offer post-COVID recovery, providing one-stop comprehensive primary care services



NYC Health + Hospitals: COVID-19 Centers of Excellence (Photos: Andrew Rugge-Perkins Eastman)

New York, NY (March 11, 2021) Perkins Eastman congratulates Mayor Bill de Blasio, NYC Health + Hospitals/Gotham Health, the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC), and members of the community on the recent opening of the second of three COVID-19 Centers of Excellence in New York City. Perkins Eastman is the architect and designer of the three, first-of-their-kind facilities. Gilbane Building Company is the construction manager.

The new community health clinic in Jackson Heights, Queens, joins a similar facility that opened in November 2020 in the Tremont neighborhood of the Bronx. The third site, in Bushwick, Brooklyn, is scheduled to open Spring 2021.

“A Village has come together to create paths of opportunities to not only save lives but help each other live healthy for many years to come,” says Oscar Gonzalez, Assistant Vice President, NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation. “We have realized that the norm can be a privilege; these Centers will be the virtue to get us

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where we need to be. This amazing feat didn't come easily, but working with Perkins Eastman has made this very challenging journey a lot easier considering all the constraints. In the end, with these three Centers the healthcare system has more tools to give back to the community, thanks to Perkins Eastman and all their insight. We will save lives even if it's not directly at the front lines."

Jeff Brand AIA, Healthcare Practice Leader at Perkins Eastman and Principal-in-Charge of the project, says: "Our approach to this important project was to design for the diverse communities that have been hardest hit by the pandemic—to create approachable, supportive, efficient, and dignified settings for patients, and their families, with longer durations of COVID-19 treatment and often with myriad health issues."

The three facilities were designed to meet the unique needs of patients recovering, both in the short and long term, from COVID-19, including specialized services like pulmonary and cardiology care, radiology and diagnostic services, and mental health services. As comprehensive health centers, the community clinics also offer high-quality primary care for additional health conditions, including cancer screenings, dental and vision care, diabetes management, podiatry, adult medicine, pediatrics, and much more.

"Working with Perkins Eastman and Gilbane Building Company under the more flexible contracting rules allowed under New York State's emergency health declaration, the NYC Department of Design and Construction was able to build three COVID-19 Centers of Excellence totaling \$117 million in construction in roughly seven months," said Jamie Torres-Springer, First Deputy Commissioner, NYC Department of Design and Construction. "The team's dedication under difficult conditions is helping neighborhoods in need exactly when they require it most, to manage the long-term effects of the pandemic."

The COVID-19 Centers of Excellence were designed under emergency construction rules allowed during the pandemic, with the endorsement and expedited schedule of the City. For instance, the Bronx center was designed and constructed in less than six months and the Queens center in nine months. This was an incredibly aggressive design, engineering, and construction process, with many moving pieces including the evolving complexity of COVID-19 health impacts, infection control, and protection measures.

Rachel Birnboim AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Associate Principal at Perkins Eastman and Project Manager for the three centers, says: "So many unique factors made this project successful. 24/7 communication, transparency and problem-solving with everyone at the table, all ideas considered, and rapid decision-making allowed us to be flexible and maintain the design intent. These projects could not have been realized within their timeframes and with the results achieved without the immense team effort and collaboration."

It was critical to the success of these centers that they be located conveniently within their respective neighborhoods, which are among the hardest hit in New York City and were the epicenter of the pandemic a year ago. While this follows a larger trend to bring ambulatory services into communities, the Centers of Excellence additionally address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority and underprivileged communities. The ongoing health support provided to these three neighborhoods through these centers aims not only to reduce impacts from COVID-19, but also to address issues of inequity, healthcare advocacy and education, and access to appropriate primary and long-term care.

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ABOUT PERKINS EASTMAN

Perkins Eastman is a global design firm founded on the belief that design can have a direct and positive impact on people's lives. The firm's award-winning practice draws on its 1,000 professionals networked across 19 offices worldwide. By keeping the user's needs foremost in the design process, the firm enhances the human experience across the spectrum of the built environment. For more information visit www.perkinseastman.com.

Photos and data sheet available.

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