

2013 Landmark Awards: The Menninger Epicenter Clinic

Medical Project Winner: The Menninger Epicenter Clinic



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The Menninger Clinic opened last year after breaking ground two years ago. The 46-acre site is southwest of the Texas Medical Center and consists of 161,000 square feet in six buildings.

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright design principles, the prairie-style hospital campus features low-slung roofs and residential-scale buildings that don't look institutional.

Kirksey Architecture designed the campus to evoke calm and order in patients and visitors and to promote healing for the mentally ill.

Every patient room and common area has views of natural light. Other features patients can access include an interfaith chapel, expressive art room, sculpture garden, meditation labyrinth and a wellness center with a weight room, an aerobics room, recreation-size basketball court, an outdoor therapeutic saltwater swimming pool and a sand volleyball court.

The buildings are interconnected by a covered walking path that shields visitors from sun or rain.

The plot of land the \$62 million campus was built on was formerly a soil dumping ground, with not one tree present. As the new hospital was built, more than 1,000 native trees were planted on about 17 acres that will never be built upon.

Menninger moved to Houston from Topeka, Kan., in May 2003 after 78 years to better focus on research collaboration among researchers and scientists at the nearby Texas Medical Center.

However, the move to the new campus from its temporary location in Houston wasn't easy. The recession of 2008 nearly derailed the project, but financial support from the community helped get the project completed on time and within budget.