

Governor Quinn Breaks Ground on \$37.8 Million State Police Forensic Laboratory in Belleville

Written by Nafia Khan

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New Building Will Create 260 Jobs and Provide State-of-the-Art Forensic Capability for Area Law Enforcement

BELLEVILLE – February 10, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today was joined by state and local officials to break ground on the \$37.8 million State Police Metro-East Forensic Science Laboratory in Belleville, a facility that will provide the Illinois State Police with enhanced crime-solving abilities. As part of the Governor's ongoing commitment to improving public safety in Illinois, the facility will also give police agencies throughout the region a valuable tool for their criminal investigations. The project is creating approximately 260 construction jobs and is expected to be completed in 2013.

"Our law enforcement agencies must keep pace with scientific developments, so that they have all the tools available to investigate crimes and arrest offenders," Governor Quinn said. "This facility gives local authorities access to the very latest tools and technologies to help them conduct investigations more efficiently and put criminals behind bars."

The 64,100 square-foot forensic laboratory funded by Governor Quinn's Illinois Jobs Now! capital construction program will include state-of-the-art space and equipment for crime scene services, trace chemistry, drug chemistry, polygraph, latent prints, firearms and forensic biology/DNA testing. The facility will be located on land purchased in 2007 from Lindenwood University. The project is being administered by the Capital Development Board, which

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oversees all non-road state-funded construction projects.

“As forensic science technology continues to evolve and forensic scientists are able to provide investigators with more information, there is an increased demand for DNA analysis and other highly specialized testing on crime scene evidence,” Illinois State Police Director Hiram Grau said. “With this expertly-designed, state-of-the-art facility, our skilled scientists will be prepared to keep up with technology and demand, enhancing our ability to provide the best possible forensic science and crime scene services on behalf of the victims of southwest Illinois.”

For more than two decades, the Illinois State Police has leased 15,000 square feet of renovated office space as its laboratory in Fairview Heights. The rented space can no longer accommodate the agency’s technological changes, casework growth and staffing needs. Contegra Construction Company of Edwardsville is the general contractor, and began mobilizing for work on the site in November.

Governor Quinn’s \$31 billion Illinois Jobs Now! program is expected to create 439,000 construction jobs while addressing the state’s infrastructure and vital facility needs.

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