

PORTER HEALTH SYSTEMS

Hospital holds groundbreaking

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LIBERTY TWP. — Servers carried marble slabs of iced prawns and rare filets of beef slowly through the crowd of well wishers at the Porter Hospital official groundbreaking ceremony Wednesday evening.

While the Jeff Brown Trio wrapped up its hard bop rendition of "Some Day My Prince Will Come," Porter officials stood in the wings of the circus-sized white tent, ready to start their own dream: a state-of-the-art medical facility for Porter County.

A warm reception by Porter staffers accompanied Porter food staff's elaborate spread as guests gather around tropical white and avocado green tables in the sultry heat.

"It's pretty amazing," said Nancy Anton of Anton Insurance, Chesterton, of the event.

In his official welcome, Porter Health Systems CEO Jonathan S. Nalli said people have frequently asked him if this day would come.

"My answer has always been, 'Yes.' It's been 'Yes' with excitement," he said. He thanked those who helped overcome obstacles: the Porter Memorial Trustees, the County Council and the County Commissioners as well as the medical staff and the community. "Thank you for your trust," he said.

He particularly thanked the medical staff for their loyalty to the 68-year-old institution.

Outdoors, rows of dignitaries with golden shovels lined up scoops of soil and displayed an undulating row of white teeth to the official photographer. Nearby Dr. William Nowlin commented on the importance of the facility in attracting and maintaining physicians.

"It's huge," he said. "It reaffirms our confidence in health-care in Porter County."



Guests make their way to the groundbreaking site Wednesday evening for the Porter Health Systems hospital at the corner of U.S. 6 and Indiana 49. — PHOTOS BY JEFFREY D. NICHOLLS/POST-TRIBUNE

firmers our confidence in health-care in Porter County."

Gone, he said, will be the backlogs in the recovery room as patients wait for space in the intensive care unit. Arriving, he predicted, will be doctors with practices also in Chicago.

Cardiologist Dr. Sandeep Sehgal said he's looking forward to the hybrid labs that allow one to move from angiograms to surgery if necessary.

"It will be top of the shelf. We can compete with any hospital in Chicago," he said.

Nalli said the hospital at the intersection of Indiana 49 and U.S. 6 will soon employ 600 construction workers with an estimated \$60million-\$65 million payroll.

"This is our own economic stimulus package," he said.



Porter Health Systems CEO Jonathan Nalli welcomes the crowd to the groundbreaking for the new hospital.

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