Warm wishes for the new year from all of us at NCRC.

As one of the newer parts of U-M, the NCRC campus is getting increasingly integrated with the rest of the university. We are happy to start the year with the completion of construction on a green (solar energy) project on our site, as part of a U-M/DTE initiative. Another new beginning is the opening of the NCRC cafeteria "Flavors," run by Opus One. This month we feature the U-M Center for Health Communications Research (CHCR) the one of the groups that is a part of the Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation (IHPI), located at NCRC.

We look forward to a great year ahead and wish you the same!

David Canter, Executive Director, NCRC

NCRC Part of Campus-wide Sustainability Efforts
Solar array construction on NCRC site now complete, landscaping in spring

During the fall of 2012, the University of Michigan partnered with DTE Energy to build a solar array on University of Michigan property. Situated at the North Campus Research Complex, this project is part of DTE Energy's utility-owned solar program.

The beginning stages of construction in November 2012

This construction at the corner of Plymouth Road
The construction work on the solar panels at NCRC was completed in January 2013. Landscaping along Plymouth Road will be undertaken in the spring to complete the project.

Average monthly power consumption for a Michigan home is 683 kWh, for a daily use of 22.77 kWH per day. In September the NCRC site is projected to produce 48,281 kWh. This would mean during the month of September the NCRC site would produce enough power for 71 averaged size Michigan homes.

"Flavors" Comes to NCRC

Long awaited cafeteria opens as NCRC embarks on a unique partnership

This month marks an important milestone in the development of the NCRC campus. There is now a large enough critical mass of people working here that the new dining facility called "Flavors" has just become operational. NCRC has entered a unique partnership with a leading Detroit food service vendor, Opus One, to serve a growing need for quality food options on the site.

According to Mary Trash, the NCRC Center for Health Communications Research (CHCR) at NCRC

Ed Saunders, MS, deputy director of CHCR shares some thoughts

The University of Michigan Center for Health Communications Research (CHCR) is a dedicated team, integrating behavioral science, technology, and art to create and research health interventions that inspire informed health decisions, broaden access to health
According to Mary Tresh, the NCRC Facilities Director, the partnership with Opus One is a model that works for both partners. Providing healthy and superior food options to the community members is a priority for NCRC which inherited a very large and state-of-the-art kitchen from Pfizer. Opus One, with its great reputation and scale of operations, can put this resource to good use by providing meals to the NCRC and the university community, while running catering services from this kitchen. This brings about cost efficiencies that the university eventually benefits from.

Jim Kokas, the president and CEO of Opus One, explains what is exciting about this partnership: "Opus One has been around for 25 years. We have had the same philosophy since the beginning, "always the freshest ingredients, the most creative and tantalizing blends of flavors." Opus One has many good partners but none like the perfect partner, the University of Michigan and the NCRC. Not every facility wants or needs a scratch kitchen but if you want to eat healthy it needs to be. Opus One's "Flavors" is a scratch kitchen and is already MHeathy compliant because of the way it cooks.

Our relationship with the University began more than fifteen years ago and each year it has become stronger. Today we are a strategic supplier and have an Ann Arbor address because we have a partner who appreciates what we do. The kitchen at the NCRC is a dream to work in and it will allow us to be creative not only in the cafeteria setting but also allow us to create superior food for building deliveries, NCRC banquets, and off premise catering."

"Flavors" is open to the NCRC community, the rest of U-M as well as the greater Ann Arbor community. NCRC Administration would like to extend a warm welcome to Opus One.

On what CHCR does
Our multidisciplinary center is entirely grant funded and works with investigators from across the university, the country and occasionally internationally to provide expertise on health communications and the development of individually tailored interventions using advanced media and communications technologies. We are relatively agnostic about the particular health topic, population, research setting or technologies of interest. We have developed 150 interventions over our center’s history and have cultivated a highly skilled team of behavior scientists, creative designers, technologists, and project managers. We exist to collaborate with investigators on health communications, interventions and research.

On working with other groups at IHPI
We are excited about being at NCRC because a number of research groups we work with are already located here. It has allowed us to strengthen the connections with existing collaborators, as well as develop new ones. IHPI is a new entity, but already synergizes are developing. We are one of the early occupants but we have worked with many of the members of IHPI for several years. For example, we have been working with Steven Katz, Sarah Hawley, Susan Goold, Michele Heisler, as well as Fred Blow and Rod Hayward, so it is a natural fit. In fact, we may be the group that is most connected to all the other groups! I see the connections only growing now, with many more groups coming in.

On how the NCRC space is structured
The physical environment at NCRC is much better structured for the way we work, which is highly collaborative. Our offices have been configured in a way that maximizes interaction among our staff members. That, combined with the sheer amount of open collaborative spaces that are available here, is very conducive to how we work. By moving to NCRC from the North Ingalls building we are now away from some of our other collaborators but the ease of parking here mitigates that to a large extent. Collaborators from central campus – Public Health, Nursing, School of Information and the Medical School find it easy and enjoyable to come out here to work with us.