

Thank you for using our printer friendly story page.

[Return to story](#)

\$12.5 million Goodman Community Center opens

Jessica VanEgeren
September 27, 2008

If a sign of an effective community center is its ability to bring together the members of the community it serves, than the east side's newest neighbor, the Goodman Community Center, is off to the right start.

On Saturday, the 100-plus residents, business and community leaders who attended the center's grand opening ceremony were handed plastic scissors for a collective ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"I had a vision, but I never could have done it on my own," said Becky Steinhoff, the center's executive director. "It wasn't just one person, or even a handful of people that made this possible. Donations were made by people from across this country who felt some sort of connection to this building and to this community."

The \$12.5 million renovation project, designed by architects with Eppstein Uhen, transformed an old industrial building that had sat vacant for decades into a green-built building that incorporated many of the industrial features into the modern-day design. With the 50-year-old center now in its new location, it will begin to offer a number of programs geared to residents of all ages.

"This is something we've been anticipating for years," said Brian Lavendel, who attended Saturday's event with his 5-year-old daughter Lea. "Just the opportunity to have a place where the community can come together is a great thing to have in this neighborhood."

He said he is specifically interested in the after-school programs that will be offered as well as a Friday night "parents' night out" program that gives moms and dads a chance to take advantage of a baby-sitting service for a small fee.

"They really have a lot of good things to offer," he said.

The Goodman Community Center, formerly known as the Atwood Center, is expected to serve some 26,000 residents annually. The fundraising effort to make the new center a reality was a massive undertaking, one that many people, including Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz, did not believe could be done.

"I didn't think this could possibly happen," he told the crowd Saturday. "Many other smart people who knew this community said it couldn't be done. When I look at what is happening here today, I've never been happier to have been so wrong."

The grand-opening event continued Saturday with live music, tai chi lessons and other activities for children. The community center is located at 149 Waubesa St. on Madison's east side.

[Return to story](#)

madison.com is operated by Capital Newspapers, publishers of the Wisconsin State Journal, The Capital Times, Agri-View and Apartment Showcase. All contents Copyright ©2008, Capital Newspapers. All rights reserved.