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College Sport Sciences Center Scores NMTCs

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ilmington College of Ohio recently closed a new markets tax credit (NMTC) transaction for an addition to its campus that could bring a welcomed infusion of revenue and jobs to the college and to the rural community of Wilmington, Ohio. Once the \$8.4 million Wilmington College Center for Sport Sciences opens in August 2015, the new medical office complex and educational facility will serve members of the public and the school's nationally recognized athletic training program.

The 41,000-square-foot sport sciences center will offer a variety of orthopedic and physical therapy services under one roof through tenants Beacon Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, Drayer Physical Therapy Institute and Clinton

Memorial Hospital. The space will feature 12 patient examination rooms, an X-ray room, an exam room, a nurse's station, an open rehabilitation area and a doctor's office. Planned amenities include hydrotherapy pools, electrical muscle stimulators and state-of-the-art imaging equipment.

Project partners say the building will also be a game-changer for Wilmington College's growing athletic training program. The number of students in the course of study increased by 10 percent over the past five years, and the possibility of continued growth had been impeded by limited space at its current facility—an aging building with no air conditioning. "The program was achieving at a super high level, but the facilities were not reflective of

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Rendering: Courtesy of MSA Architects + MSA Sport
The athletic training room includes physical therapy space.





Rendering: Courtesy of MSA Architects + MSA Sport
The \$8.4 million Wilmington College Center for Sports Sciences in Wilmington, Ohio is scheduled to open in August 2015.

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that," said Alex Stillpass of Ross, Sinclaire & Associates, who helped structure the deal.

The new facility will give Wilmington College expanded classroom space, 15,000 square feet of indoor training space and a 6,500-square-foot athletic training suite. The additional space will allow the college to add exercise science as a major and will double the number of students in its sport management, athletic training and exercise science majors combined, said Brad Mitchell, Wilmington College's chief financial officer.

"They've definitely grown a lot through the years, and they've made do with a small facility, but it's going to be wonderful for the community to have this sports center," said Diana Turoff, executive vice president and chief financial officer of Finance Fund, the community development entity (CDE) that provided the project with an NMTC allocation.

Community Impact

Project supporters say the new facility could be instrumental in stimulating the struggling local economy, which has been left with a 22 percent poverty rate after shipping company DHL closed its Wilmington hub and laid off 8,000 employees in 2008. "This is in a highly distressed non-metro area that suffered tremendous job losses when DHL closed its facilities," said Turoff. "Jobs [available at the sport center] will attract high-income professionals who will contribute to the economic growth of the community." Partners estimate construction will

bring \$1.5 million to the local economy from construction costs alone and will create approximately 80 construction jobs and 33 full-time jobs.

Mitchell said that job creation goes beyond the immediate positions created and that the project is also an investment in the future careers of Wilmington's students. The athletic training program requires clinical observation experience, for which many students commute to clinics in Cincinnati or Dayton. Mitchell said that students next year will be able to complete all training on-site, in partnership with the new building's orthopedic and physical therapy clinic tenants.

Financing

The Wilmington College Center for Sport Sciences was funded in part by the NMTC structure, which Stillpass said provided both equity and favorable loan terms to the project. Wilmington-based National Bank and Trust provided the college with a \$7 million loan, allowing the school to become the leveraged lender. Wilmington College Holdings Inc., the nonprofit qualified active low-income community business (QALICB) that was formed to benefit from the NMTC structure, will be the ultimate borrower. Stillpass said that even though the loan was outside the NMTC structure, the college received favorable loan terms as if it were part of the NMTC.

Finance Fund provided \$10 million in NMTC allocation and Capital One Commercial Banking provided \$3.3 million in tax credit equity to the deal. "[The new center]

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will allow the college to increase enrollment and continue to separate itself as one of the premier providers of athletic training in the country," said Hamilton Blanton, a senior vice president in Capital One Commercial Banking. "It will also allow over 20 orthopedic and physical therapy professionals to join the Wilmington community and provide access to that part of Ohio; it'll be an economic engine and service provider for years to come."

Mitchell agreed. "In this instance, the tax structure did what it was intended to do: Drive investment to this area," he said. "It's a win for the college and for the community."

WILMINGTON COLLEGE CENTER FOR SPORT SCIENCES **FINANCING**

- \$10 million new markets tax credit (NMTC) allocation from Finance Fund
- \$7 million leveraged loan from Wilmington College of Ohio through National Bank and Trust [outside NMTC structure]
- \$3.3 million in NMTC equity from Capital One Commercial Banking

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