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Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled to open new recreation center

The Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled will open its new recreation center Tuesday. The center is funded by a grant from Impact Oklahoma.

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The Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled this month will unveil a new recreation center for developmentally disabled adults.

The 4,000-square-foot recreation center is the first building addition for the foundation since the group opened its doors in the mid-1960s.

The rec center will provide extra space, which the foundation needs, Executive Director Georgia Devening said. Clients will be able to play basketball, use exercise equipment or even have some downtime in a quiet room. It can be used for special events, classes and activities.

“It’s just going to give us the opportunity to serve our clients better,” Devening said.

About 75 clients visit the nonprofit foundation every day, and about 125 come for Thursday night activities, Devening said.

The clients have a broad range of mental and physical abilities, Devening said. Some have the mental abilities of an infant and require continuous care. Others are high-functioning and learn life skills such as folding clothes or making snacks. The goal is to accommodate them all, she said.

The recreation center is named in honor of Impact Oklahoma, a nonprofit women’s group that awarded the foundation a \$100,000 grant for construction, Devening said.

“It was just the spark we needed,” she said.

The center will be dedicated at a free lunch and public ceremony at noon Tuesday at the foundation, 8421 N Walker. To sign up, call 842-6636 by Friday.

The Impact Oklahoma grant kicked off the entire project, said Connie Weber, a retired Putnam City North High School special education teacher and the Oklahoma Foundation for the Disabled board president.

“To get \$100,000 in one lump sum is just amazing,” Weber said. “It’s definitely the biggest grant that the foundation has ever gotten. It just made all of this possible.”

The building cost \$325,000, Devening said. In addition to the \$100,000 Impact Oklahoma grant, the Kirkpatrick Family Fund and individuals also donated. Clients even put pennies into a donation jar at the foundation, Devening said.

The foundation borrowed about \$150,000 to pay the difference. Donations are still needed, she said.

Devening said she hopes to continue to build onto the rec center. She said she’d like for the yard to be improved. The foundation is looking for a landscape architect to help and for some new lawn furniture to replace what was destroyed by the hailstorm in May.



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