FIRST TWO FISHER COLLEGE BUILDINGS DEDICATED

COLUMBUS -- The largest multibuilding project ever undertaken in The Ohio State University’s history is well under way with the completion of the first two buildings of the six-building Fisher College of Business campus.

Fisher Hall, which houses the college’s administrative and faculty offices, and Gerlach Hall, containing graduate program facilities, were dedicated during two days of related events, Oct. 20-21.

The two buildings are the first to be occupied in the 370,000-square-foot, $120 million complex begun in 1996 along Woodruff Avenue on the northern edge of the Columbus campus. When completed in 2001, the Fisher College of Business will be one of the few fully integrated business campuses in the country.

The college will feature full satellite uplink capabilities, video on demand, and nearly 3,000 computer ports. A media room will monitor international financial news and meeting rooms will be equipped with sophisticated instructional technology. An additional feature of the complex is the original artwork created by regional and national artists.

Future buildings include Schoenbaum Hall, the undergraduate program building; the Business Resource Center; Pfahl Hall, the executive education building; and the 120-room Executive Residence.

Ceremonies surrounding the dedication honored Detroit industrialist and noted philanthropist Max M. Fisher, a 1930 graduate of Ohio State, and the late John B. "Bernie" Gerlach, Sr., former Ohio State Foundation Board chair and prominent Columbus businessman. Fisher’s $20 million commitment to Ohio State’s business school as part of the university’s ongoing

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"Affirm Thy Friendship" campaign was the largest gift ever received by the university for an academic unit. In recognition, the college was designated the Max M. Fisher College of Business in 1993.

"We are especially pleased to have Ohio State linked with these two visionary leaders," said university President William E. Kirwan. "Their commitment to business education in the 21st century and to Ohio State's presence among the top business schools in the nation will have far-reaching effects as the university continues to build global partnerships."

The Fisher College of Business will be home to the Fisher Council on Global Trade and Technology, funded by Leslie H. Wexner, emeritus chair of the Ohio State Board of Trustees and chair of The Limited, Inc., and his wife, Abigail, in honor of Fisher. The council, announced during the dedication events, will provide students at the Fisher College with experiences in international trade and technology. World-class experts will offer lectures, seminars and research opportunities to the university in close interaction with students, faculty and business leaders.

"Because of the generosity of business leaders, such as Mr. Fisher, Mr. Gerlach and Mr. Wexner, Ohio State is well on the way to true international distinction in management education," said Joseph A. Alutto, dean of the Fisher College. "We will be able to offer our students, as well as business executives from around the world, the finest state-of-the-art classroom, computer, library and residential facilities."

Gerlach Hall's stock market classroom was showcased Wednesday during the dedication when Fisher, Wexner, Alutto and Kirwan participated in an interactive program with current MBA students and recent Fisher College alumni in international locations. The Columbus participants were able to make a student-recommended stock trade in New York via satellite and Pictel links. The classroom houses the Student Investment Management Class, a program in which Fisher students have successfully invested a portion of the university's endowment fund in the stock market.

An opening symposium featuring keynote addresses by Carla A. Hills, former U.S. trade representative, and Peter Ueberroth, former Major League Baseball commissioner and organizer of the
1984 Los Angeles Olympics, kicked off the ceremonies Tuesday in Mershon Auditorium. Hills, an expert on international trade and investment, spoke on “Global Trade and Investment: the Importance of Open Global Markets.” Ueberroth, now investor and managing director of a business management company called The Contrarian Group, Inc., focused on “The Entrepreneurial Spirit: From Global Business to the Classroom.”

The dedication ceremony on Wednesday, held outdoors between Fisher and Gerlach halls, featured remarks by Gov. George V. Voinovich, President Kirwan, Board of Trustees Chair Ted Celeste, Wexner, and Alutto. Special acknowledgment was made of Fisher and Dareth Gerlach, widow of John B. Gerlach.

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*For more background on the college and its buildings, please call Melissa Lamb Peale, (614) 292-8022.