Kresge grant relies on future gifts

A major challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., has been approved for the college’s science center project, in a way designed to add incentive for future supporters.

Hope will receive the $850,000 grant when the college raises an additional $3.1 million for the new building by March of next year. Hope is both building a new science center and renovating the existing Peale Science Center. The combined facility will house the departments of biology, chemistry, biochemistry, the geological and environmental sciences, nursing and psychology.

The project totals approximately $36 million, including $26.6 million for the new building. The foundation’s grant has been awarded for the new construction. The award will add value to every gift the college obtains in the coming months for the building, according to President James E. Bultman ’63, since each contribution will not only support the facility in its own right but will also help Hope obtain the Kresge funding.

“I am very pleased that we have been approved for a challenge grant for the construction of our science facility,” Dr. Bultman said. “We have about nine months to secure the remaining funds, so this will present for us a considerable challenge,” he said. “But, having said that, we also look at this as a wonderful opportunity to complete funding for the new building and a very strong affirmation of Hope College and the new facility.”

Work on the new facility is underway, even as the fund-raising effort continues through the college’s Legacies: A Vision of Hope campaign. Construction began in March 2002 on the new building, which will open with the start of classes in the fall. Renovation of Peale will follow during the next year.

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The center has been designed to complement the college’s on-going emphasis on collaborative student-faculty research as a teaching model, with the addition of interdisciplinary classroom space reflecting the way that the boundaries between disciplines continue to blur.

The Peale Science Center opened in 1973. In addition to the changes in scientific knowledge and teaching approaches during the past 30 years, the student body at Hope has grown by nearly 50 percent. Hope has consistently ranked at or near the top nationally in science education among the country’s 1,100-1,200 liberal arts institutions. The college’s research-based approach in teaching helped earn Hope a tie for fourth place nationally among all undergraduate institutions for “Academic Programs: Undergraduate research/Creative projects” in the America’s Best Colleges 2003 guide published by U.S. News and World Report. Hope has consistently held more National Science Foundation (NSF) “Research Experiences for Undergraduates” grants than any other liberal arts college in the country. A report from the NSF placed Hope in the top 25 nationally among baccalaureate colleges as a source of future Ph.D. recipients in the natural, physical and social sciences, and engineering—including third nationally in chemistry.

At the time of the March grant announcement, The Kresge Foundation had awarded 38 grants in 2003 for a total of $25,439,000. It will continue to make new grant commitments during the balance of the year.

“In this cycle of grantmaking, our Trustees were pleased to support a range of organizations reflecting almost the entire breadth of the nonprofit sector,” said John E. Marshall III, president and CEO of The Kresge Foundation.

“This diverse group is responding to the new challenges presented by their communities or sustaining activities that have demonstrated their effectiveness.”

In 2002, the Foundation reviewed 565 proposals and awarded grants totaling $109,251,000 to 158 charitable organizations in 33 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and England. Grants are made to institutions operating in the areas of higher education, health and long-term care, arts and humanities, human services, science and the environment, and public affairs.

Grants are made toward projects involving construction or renovation of facilities and the purchase of major capital equipment or real estate. Grant recipients have raised initial funds toward their respective projects before requesting Foundation assistance. Grants are then made on a challenge basis, requiring the raising of the remaining funds, thereby insuring completion of the projects.

The Kresge Foundation is an independent, private foundation created by the personal gifts of Sebastian S. Kresge. It is not affiliated with any corporation or organization.

Since 1960, The Kresge Foundation has awarded Hope College approximately $3.47 million, including the current $850,000 challenge grant, for a variety of projects. A $390,000 challenge grant in 1992 in conjunction with the “Hope in the Future” campaign supported the acquisition and maintenance of equipment in several science disciplines.

Projects supported by The Kresge Foundation have also included the renovation of Van Zoeren and VanderWerf halls from 1988 to 1990; the construction of the Van Wylen Library, dedicated in 1988; the renovation of the Sligh furniture factory as the De Pree Art Center and gallery, dedicated in 1982; and the renovation of the college’s main dining hall in 1979.

Others have included the construction of the Dow Science Center, dedicated in 1973; the construction of the Dow Health and Physical Education Center, dedicated in 1978; the construction of the DeVitt Student and Cultural Center, dedicated in 1971; and the construction of VanderWerf Hall, completed in 1963 as the Physics–Math Building. The Dow Center’s natatorium is named for the Foundation.

Architects for the science center project are Ballinger of Philadelphia, Pa., and Jickling Lyman Powell Associates Inc. of Troy. The construction manager is Granger Construction Company, based in Lansing.

The exterior of the science center is well along as the August opening of the building approaches. A major challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., will help fund the building—but only if other members of the Hope family provide additional support of their own.