

Construction begins on much-anticipated Caguas Justice Center

Ramhil Developers hopes to top its success with similar projects in Fajardo, Mayagüez, Bayamón

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The ceremonial placement of the first stone in the construction of the much-anticipated Caguas Justice Center was held Sept. 14. An oak tree was also symbolically planted on the grounds of the new facility.

Featured guests at the event were Caguas Mayor William Miranda Torres, Puerto Rico Supreme Court Chief Justice Federico Hernández Denton, Courts Administration Director Sonia Ivette Vélez Colón, Caguas Judicial District Director Sigfrido Steidel Figueroa, Ramhil Developers Inc. (project developer) President Carlos González, Hilda González and Project Inspector Manuel González Martínez. Ramhil also developed the Fajardo, Mayagüez and Bayamón justice centers.

"Today is an emblematic day for the judicial district of Caguas," Steidel stated. "Some time has passed since we began planning this center, perhaps more than we had hoped, but at least today we begin construction of a facility that will serve the needs of the region for many years to come." In view of the light rain that fell throughout the ceremony, Steidel jokingly commented, "We are glad it rained because we have confirmed the land drains appropriately."

The Caguas Justice Center, designed by architect Jorge Becerra, will be at the intersection of PR-1 and PR-189 at the north entrance to the urban center. It will consist of a total of 353,165 square feet of construction on nine floors, housing 42 courtrooms, a research facility, library, domestic-violence courtroom, drug court, mediation facilities,



cafeteria, and offices for judges and their support staff.

There also will be a five-floor parking structure for 1,300 vehicles, which includes 600 for visitors, and 31,000 square feet for future development. The building is completely financed by Banco Popular.

"I can affirm I am one of the most satisfied people with this inauguration. It culminates many years of effort to fulfill the building of this much-needed space," Vélez said. "This was an arduous process with

a steep learning curve, and we have finally begun construction of this monumental structure, one stone at a time."

The judicial district of Caguas comprises Aguas Buenas, Caguas, Cidra, Gurabo, Juncos and San Lorenzo.

"The existing judicial center was constructed in 1974, and the needs of this judicial district are much different than they were back then. We will be optimizing the output of our human resources by providing the technology and infrastructure they need," Hernández Denton noted. "The center's close proximity to the urban center will produce a multiplier effect for the community."

"One of my first duties as mayor was resurrecting the construction of this iconic building, which had been a dream of my father," Miranda Torres added. ■