

First Stone is set for the Natatorium

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The president of the University of Puerto Rico, Antonio García Padilla, and the chancellor of UPRM, Dr. Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho, participated in the ceremony to place the foundation stone for the professional swimming facilities that will be part of the Campus's Central American Games Complex.

The activity was celebrated in the premises of the old campus pool, where the new facility will be built for the Central American and Caribbean Games in 2010. The governor Anibal Acevedo Vilá and the mayor of Mayagüez, José Guillermo Rodríguez, were present among other representatives of the National Olympic Committee.

The executive director of the Authority for the Financing of Infrastructure (AFI), Guillermo Riera, announced that the facility will have three pools: an olympic one, one for diving and another one for warming up at a cost of \$33,422,900. The Central American Complex will also have eight tennis courts and four racquetball courts.

García Padilla, spoke about the need for this kind of facility in Puerto Rico. “These installations that are being built are necessary to stimulate university sports in the Puerto Rico. This will be a victory for all Puerto Ricans, especially university students,” he stated.

Chancellor Vélez Arocho noted that the construction of this complex is the largest investment in sports facilities in UPRM history.

“It’s important to the 12,800 students of our institution and also for the possibilities it will bring to develop collaborative projects that would benefit young people in Mayagüez and the Western area,” said Vélez Arocho.

According to Vélez Arocho, the swimming complex will be one of the best equipped for this sport. It will also serve not only as a site for the Games in 2010, but also for national and international events. In addition, it will be used for institutional sports for the Liga Atlética Interuniversitaria (Interuniversity Athletic League) and for events of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) of the United States, among others.

Finally, AFI Director Guillermo Riera stated that the construction is expected to end on October 2009. In a previous interview, Riera had explained that the design of the facilities will consider the overall campus architecture and bear the traces of the *Colegio* character.