

VANCOUVER

## Clark College launches early learning project

Clark College officials formally broke ground Monday on a new early learning center at its main campus, and welcomed a \$1 million donation to help build it.

The 5,000-square-foot building, a first step in planned expansion and updating of an aging child care facility, should be completed by Summer 2011.

Clark received a \$1 million

Washington state grant for the project, provided the college raises matching funds. As of Monday, that's no problem: An anonymous donor has kicked in the entire \$1 million needed.

"We're very excited," said Clark President Bob Knight after the ceremony. LSW Architects of Vancouver designed the new building, being built north of Gaiser Hall by JWC Construction. It will feature two flexible classrooms, a large multipurpose room, kitchen, and resource center.

The initial project includes

an outdoor play area with a sensory herb garden, live willow hut, rock spiral area for storytelling, bubbling creek bed with hand pump and a tiered hill for climbing and playtime.

A second, unfunded phase estimated to cost \$4 million would see the remodel of two remaining buildings in Clark's Children and Family Services complex. A new outdoor area would feature treehouses, large rocks and downed logs in a forest atmosphere, a grass maze with modular parts, a garden and research space.