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Join us for the launch of the University Student Center, a major milestone and student achievement

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Taking in the view from the second-floor balcony of the USC.

The University Student Center at USF St. Petersburg marks a major milestone in the evolution of the university and an example of what a determined group of students can accomplish.

The \$21 million, 81,000 sq. ft. facility was partly financed with a special student fee passed by the Florida Legislature and supported by students who saw a need for a central gathering place at USFSP. It took several years to accomplish and today's students are reaping the benefits of that hard work.

The building, 200 Sixth Avenue South, opened Aug. 25 when 200 residential students moved into rooms in the six-story residential tower. Besides student housing, the building also includes a dining hall called The Reef that is open to the public serving breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week. It offers the first full-service meal plans for USFSP, one of the top requests from parents, along with Red Mango frozen yogurt.

The center also includes an atrium lobby, wireless internet, laundry facilities, a student lounge, seating areas and two outdoor basketball courts.

The official launch of the USC will be Thursday Sept. 6 at 4:30 p.m. The event will be led by Student Body President Mark Lombardi-Nelson and include remarks by one of the student lobbyists who successfully lobbied lawmakers to increase student fees to help pay for the building. The primary sponsors of the legislation were state Sen. Dennis Jones and state Rep. Darryl Rouson.

There will also be a short ribbon cutting ceremony and a fun surprise at the end. Free refreshments and tours of the building will follow.

The 75-ft. building was designed by Rowe Architects of Tampa and built by Creative Contractors of Clearwater. Among its architectural features is a 65-ft., multi-colored glass-enclosed circular staircase for the residential tower, and an 8,000 sq. ft. curtain of glass along 6th Avenue South.

The project created about 850 direct and indirect jobs.

The residential tower brings the total number of residential students to nearly 650, a record number in the university's history. Many of the rooms in the residential tower offer views of Tampa Bay and the downtown St. Petersburg skyline.