

News Release  
**Thomason Now University**  
**Medical Center of El Paso**  
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R. E. Thomason General Hospital today officially ushered in the start of a new era of healthcare delivery in El Paso when its new name and corporate identity were revealed. Within yards of a \$300 million dollar expansion project, hospital officials solicited the help of a massive construction crane to uncover new signage at the health facility's front entrance.

The unveiling coincided with the first day of classes at the new Paul L. Foster School of Medicine on the UMC El Paso/Texas Tech campus. Faculty physicians, resident physicians and new medical students were among the first to see the hospital's new logo and meet the creative force behind it. University Medical Center of El Paso's logo is the brainchild of local designer Enrique Zaragoza, who describes it as "a tree of life and health, shelter and stability that branches out into a canopy of stars representing hope and a new direction."

That new direction and the higher level of care that it promises includes the largest expansion of medical programs, services and facilities in local history. Among the projects taking shape at University Medical Center of El Paso are:

- the city's first-ever, separately licensed Children's Hospital
- a new Mother/Baby bed tower
- a new Surgery Center to accommodate cardiac catheterizations, orthopedic procedures, general surgery and interventional procedures
- a new high-tech Imaging Center
- doubling the size of the hospital's Emergency Department and Level I Trauma Center
- a new Infusion Center
- and renovation of the current facility, including all-private rooms

The projects being built on the western perimeter of the UMC El Paso campus will be complete late next year. Those under construction on the eastern perimeter are scheduled to open in early 2012. Interior renovation work will conclude in 2012.

In addition to the many physical plant upgrades that are underway, University Medical Center of El Paso is in the midst of a major recruitment initiative that is bringing new physician specialists to the community and additional nursing staff.

El Paso's public hospital was established in the early 1900's when it was known simply as County Hospital. In 1915, it moved to the then far eastern edges of the city (4815 Alameda) and was re-named El Paso General. The current facility opened in 1963 and began operating as R.E. Thomason General Hospital in honor of one of El Paso's most prominent citizens.

Since then, the hospital has continually grown and evolved. It helped bring academic medicine to El Paso when it partnered with Texas Tech University School of Medicine in 1973 to establish a Health Sciences Center in the community. University Medical Center of El Paso is now affiliated with two dozen institutions of higher education offering students from virtually every health profession the opportunity to receive their clinical training on the UMC El Paso/Texas Tech campus. Today, El Paso's public hospital offers many programs and services that are not available elsewhere in the region.

In light of all of the advancements that have occurred over the last four decades, President & CEO Jim Valenti last year appointed a special committee to begin studying the feasibility of updating the hospital's corporate identity to better reflect all that El Paso's public hospital has become. After 14 months of research, including:

- internal polling among Medical Staff members and Associates
- external focus groups with healthcare consumers, including Thomason's own patients
- a scientific, city-wide poll
- six public meetings with community groups and constituents
- discussions with R.E. Thomason's relatives

the committee concluded that there was widespread support for developing a University Medical Center in El Paso. They presented their findings to the Hospital District's Board of Managers and on March 10, 2009, the Board voted unanimously to change Thomason's name to University Medical Center of El Paso, effective on the first day of classes at the city's new four-year Medical School.

From this day forth, El Paso's public hospital will be known as University Medical Center of El Paso and will remain committed to the charitable mission that has guided its 94-year history.

The hospital also plans to honor its former namesake by creating a museum quality exhibit of Judge Robert Ewing Thomason's long and distinguished career in the main lobby of its new bed tower.