

DR. PERCY AND LILEAH HARRIS BUILDING



FACT SHEET

868,000
LBS OF STEEL

ON TIME:
540
DAYS TO
CONSTRUCT

11
COUNTY
DEPARTMENTS
CONTRIBUTED
TO THE
PROJECT

ABOUT

The Dr. Percy and Lileah Harris Building will house Linn County Public Health and Linn County Child and Youth Development Services. The approximately 63,000 square foot building is built on County-owned land near the NewBo and Oakhill Jackson neighborhoods.

In a unanimous decision, the Linn County Board of Supervisors voted to honor Dr. Percy and Lileah Harris posthumously by naming the Linn County Public Health and Child and Youth Development Services building after them in recognition of their lifetime of dedication and service to health and education in Linn County.

As part of Linn County's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainable design, the Harris Building will meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards, a certification program that encourages green and sustainable building practices.

Linn County used a lease-purchase agreement to contract for the construction of the building to maximize the use of local workforce during construction and to help ensure on-time delivery of the completed building.

BUILDING FEATURES

- Middle school regulation size gymnasium for physical development and cooperative learning opportunities
- 12 conference rooms (one named for each of the Harris' children) for program and community partners
- Public health clinic
- Accessible natural playscape that stimulates imagination and creativity
- Community kitchen for children and parents, where they can take nutrition classes and learn other life skills
- Five classrooms with increased capacity to serve more children ages 0 to 5
- Space for parent education classes



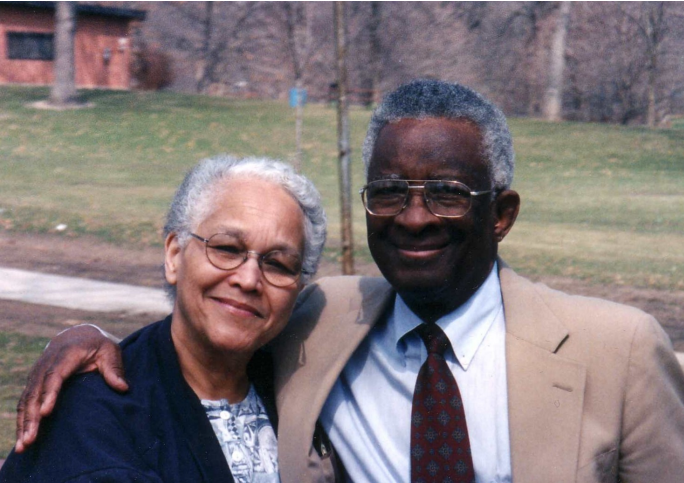
Dr. Percy and Lileah Harris Building

OPN
ARCHITECTS

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LinnCounty.org

DR. PERCY AND LILEAH HARRIS



Dr. Percy and Lileah Harris

Dr. Percy Harris and his wife Lileah were respected community leaders, advocates for the arts and education, and champions of civil rights. The couple moved to Cedar Rapids in 1957 after Dr. Harris accepted an internship at St. Luke's Hospital. Dr. Harris was the first African American physician in Cedar Rapids where he built his medical practice. Dr. Harris also served as Linn County Medical Examiner for nearly 40 years. Some of his other community roles included serving as president of the Cedar Rapids chapter of the NAACP, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jane Boyd Community House, serving on the St. Luke's Hospital Board of Directors and an appointment to the Iowa Board of Regents. He was also the recipient of numerous awards.

Lileah was a pianist, active church member, and an advocate for lifelong learning and education. Lileah earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Russian from the University of Iowa at the age of 62. Some of Lileah's community roles included serving on the board of the NAACP, membership on the Cedar Rapids Human Rights Commission, and serving on the Board of Directors of the Cedar Rapids Symphony Guild.

Married 63 years, the Harris' raised 12 children. Lileah Harris died in 2014. Dr. Percy Harris died in 2017.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS & NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH

The Harris Building provides much-needed and improved space for Linn County Public Health, a critical County department serving all Linn County residents that had outgrown its previous space. It will also greatly improve the classrooms and learning environment for the children served by Linn County's Child Development Center. A playground and gymnasium were constructed as integral to the programming. They will double as essential building elements and as community amenities that will be open to the public after business hours and on weekends.

Linn County held community outreach meetings during the building's design to engage the public in discussion about how the new building can be a neighborhood asset and to help ensure the building's design and function fit the context of the historic neighborhood.

