

## ***Excitement Building for Mason Inn Conference Center and Hotel***

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Scheduled to open in July 2010, the new conference center and hotel will have 148 guest rooms, restaurant, lounge, two ballrooms and 10 other meeting rooms of various sizes. So you're thinking about hosting an upcoming event at the new Mason Inn Conference Center and Hotel? Better get in line. Even though the Mason Inn will not be open for business until July 2010, that hasn't stopped dozens of Mason groups, regional organizations and local residents from scheduling their events well in advance.



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The Mason Inn is a 148-room hotel with a restaurant and lounge, large conference center that includes two ballrooms, as well as 10 other meeting rooms of varied sizes. The complex is based at Mason's Fairfax Campus just off Route 123 near Braddock Road and is convenient to major interstates, public transportation and airports.

"We're very excited about how this outstanding facility will provide our university with the means to better accommodate the many visitors and organizations that travel here to attend events, use our facilities and enjoy the surrounding region," says Mason President Alan Merten. "It gives a new dimension to the overall university that only adds to the excellence we seek to achieve inside the classroom and beyond."



Mason President and Mrs. Allen Merten, left, recently toured the construction site. Andrew Klamon, vice president of development for Concord Eastridge, the project's development company, pointed out some of the facility's features. Creative Services photo

The Mason Inn's ideal location will serve a variety of campus groups and functions. Being situated near the Center for Performing Arts, the Recreation and Athletic Complex and the Patriot Center will prove to be advantageous, especially when notable performances come to campus. As for local bookings, the Mason Inn has already scheduled more than a dozen events, including church group activities, association conferences, a bat mitzvah and, yes, even a wedding.

"I'm really overwhelmed with the positive response we've received from the Mason community," says Tim Loughman, general manager of the Mason Inn. "The level of excitement, level of acceptance, level of pride that people have shown is very reassuring of the Mason Inn's future success."

Fueling the excitement for the Mason Inn, Loughman's team of marketers is frequently coordinating hard hat tours for Mason administrators, donors and local business leaders. Not only are they given an opportunity to see the inn's progress, but they also get a glimpse of the finished product when they walk through a stylish model room. Designers of the Mason Inn have incorporated their own unique designs while maintaining a traditional collegiate ambiance. The facade has a look similar to many of the other buildings on campus, but it's what's inside that really catches the eye. The overall color scheme for the Mason Inn "reflects a pride in Mason's green and gold colors as well as draws from the beautiful wooded landscape of the campus," says Ann-Marie Lima, senior designer at Gensler architecture group.



A model guest room shows off the hotel's color scheme and decor. Photos of campus scenes will be placed throughout the building.

Lima says the main colors of the inn will evoke nature, using deep olive greens, bright oranges and reds and rich golds. To add to the scheme, cedar will be used as the main wood throughout the building, as cedar trees already dominate the campus landscape. "Our concept is to blur the line between interior and exterior to pull the outdoors inside."

But the design of the Mason Inn not only focuses on Mason the institution, it also finds inspiration from Mason the man. One of the most striking elements of the design is the carpet planned for the hotel corridor. The print is replicated from one of George Mason's handwritten letters, and the carpet in the elevator lobbies will feature Mason's signature.

Between now and the grand opening this summer, Mason Inn staff will continue to lead hard-hat tours and display the model room (the room is being dismantled and reassembled in the Science and Tech II Building for easier access). To schedule an event or walk-through, contact Vicki Galindo at 703-993-6055.