

## ■ As New Year Dawns, Academic Library Construction Booming

It's not quite a New Year's baby, but close enough. On December 22, 2006, construction crews poured the concrete for what will be Utah Valley State College's (UVSC) new addition to the family—a \$48 million, 190,000 square-foot library that will more than double the size of current building, as well as offer 40 group study rooms, an extended hours area, and a café. The UVSC library, in Orem, is expected to be finished in the spring of 2008; according to library and university administrators, it's the anchor of a plan to turn a college into a university. Indeed, the library plans are representative of a larger trend in academic libraries. At the turn of the century, many administrators wondered if the campus library would remain relevant. With a slew of academic library projects like UVSC's now underway, it's clear that campus libraries will not only remain relevant, but are even more vital spaces, places not only to house resources, but for active interaction and instruction.

At the *Library Journal* Design Institute, held last month in Queens, those at one breakout session focused on remodeling a Graduate School of Business library at Purdue University. As with so many brewing library projects, that plan that will remove racks of printed materials and re-imagine the space with more flexible seating, group instruction rooms, and computers for delivery of electronic materials. Two of the nation's largest library projects are also proceeding, with California State University, Fresno's \$91 million library already under construction, and construction set to begin on Ohio State University's (OSU) massive \$108 million expansion and renovation in Columbus. OSU director Joe Branin last week confirmed that construction bids were out to firms, and that the project will soon be fully underway. "We have come a long way in this large and complex project, from feasibility, to design, to construction documents, to relocation of all staff, collections, and services," Branin noted. If all continues according plan, the new library—another milestone in the next incarnation of the academic library—should be open by the summer of 2009.