Dedication ceremonies are set for Thursday (Oct. 19) for The University of Texas at Austin's new Applied Computational Engineering and Sciences (ACES) Building, billed as a world-class setting for interdisciplinary research and graduate study in computer sciences, electrical and computer engineering, and computational and applied mathematics.

The six-story structure, at 24th and Speedway, will be formally dedicated with a ribbon cutting at 11 a.m. on the 24th street side of the building. Representatives from the UT System Board of Regents and the UT System will be on hand to participate in the ceremony.

Calling the structure "a facility of incalculable value," UT Austin President Larry R. Faulkner said the ACES Building will be "a highly visible symbol of the University's leading-edge computing-intensive activity."

Featuring state-of-the-art equipment and systems, the 180,000-square-foot building offers a highly flexible infrastructure that can efficiently handle advances in technology. Its feature attraction is the Visualization Research Laboratory, a 2,900-square-foot high-performance interactive facility that uses a 10-foot, 180-degree cylindrical projection screen with images generated by an SGI Onyx2 supercomputer.

The O'Donnell Foundation of Dallas donated funds for the building, which cost more than $30 million to construct and equip.

According to O'Donnell Foundation President Peter O'Donnell Jr., research conducted in the ACES Building "will be important to the University, to the state of Texas and to the nation. The graduate students they educate will be our future faculty members, industry researchers and high-tech entrepreneurs.

'Taken all together, the ACES faculty and graduate students will contribute to our economic well-being by creating jobs for the citizens of Texas," O'Donnell said.

The ACES Building was constructed under an unusual arrangement in which the O'Donnell Foundation leased the one-story Taylor Hall Annex and the land underneath.

The foundation hired contractors to tear the annex down and build the new structure in its place.
place, with hands-on supervision by O'Donnell.

Located in the heart of the University's engineering and natural sciences complex, the building boasts a 196-seat auditorium with Ethernet ports at every chair and a Dolby digital sound system.

The telecommunications infrastructure has 5,500 connection points and 1.3 million feet of Avaya (formerly Lucent) gigaspeed copper cabling. There are eight seminar rooms with leading edge, user-friendly audio / visual equipment.

"This building is an invaluable asset to the University of Texas," said Johnnie Ray, vice president for development. "Its extraordinary physical assets give us a critical competitive edge as technology shapes the world of the future."

When fully occupied, the building will accommodate 300 graduate students and 70 faculty members from the department of computer sciences, the department of electrical and computer engineering, and the Texas Institute for Computational and Applied Mathematics.

In addition, it has offices for 36 visitors from academia and industry, with the goal of attracting world leaders in science and engineering.