Learning center gets a name

Sentinel staff report

WATSONVILLE — Cabrillo College’s new downtown classroom building will be named in honor of Mary Solari and her late husband, Dick Solari.

The Solaris Green Technology Center will open in the fall, and is designed to serve as a regional resource for preparing students for jobs in energy conservation and sustainable design, practices and technology in the construction and energy management fields.

In 2008, the Solaris donated $500,000 to the college for an endowment to support the development and enhancement of operations at the center.

“This generous donation underscores the Solaris’ long-standing commitment to Cabrillo and the community,” said Cabrillo President Brian King, announcing the name Tuesday.

The Solaris also donated $500,000 for the creation of the Cabrillo College Computer Technology Center in Aptos in 1994.

After graduating from Watsonville High School in 1945, Dick Solari started work at Granite Construction doing manual labor and craft work. He eventually rose to lead the company as president, chief executive officer and chairman of the board.

“He wanted to provide opportunities for the next generation to follow in his career path,” King said.

The recently completed 14,000-square-foot center at Union and Maple streets was built to the highest environmental standards. A grand opening celebration will be held Sept. 7.