



1/3/2011 8:00:00 AM

## Shock opens youth basketball facility

**Lindsey Morehead**  
Real Estate & Construction Editor

After teaching classes and clinics out of borrowed spaces for some time, the Tulsa Shock Basketball Academy has a new home at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 8730 E. Skelly Drive.

The academy has an 18-month lease, but Eric Newendorp, vice president of business development and broadcasting for the WNBA Tulsa Shock, said the team is exploring the possibility of building its own facility.

"We've got good people working on it from all points in Oklahoma City, as well as here, scouting for a permanent location for not only the youth facility, but the (professional) team as well," he said. "Ideally, we would like to find a building, construct a building or retrofit a building where you could have at least two courts in it, one for youth stuff and one for the pro team.

"They don't have a deadline or timeline on it. I think the sooner the better, but something's got to be right."

Built in 2004, the Lutheran church facility offers a full 80-by-50 court where the academy will provide skills classes, clinics, camps and tournaments to youth.

"We're in the buildup phase," Newendorp said. "We have a lot of things we want to do, but it takes time to get there. Hopefully, 1,000 to 2,000 kids will run through here per year."

Three full-time employees will manage the academy, including Bryan Drummond as Tulsa basketball coordinator; Sean Spiva as state tournament director; and Ruben Diaz, former Channel 8 sports anchor, as team director.

"We run what I call a cradle-to-grave model," Newendorp said. "We get them in early; they learn our system; they get better (and) improve. We teach them lots of things — not only in basketball, but character-wise and everything else — that will hopefully help them go to college."



**Lindsey Morehead** / A look inside the new Tulsa Shock Basketball Academy at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 8730 E. Skelly Drive. The academy will conduct all skills classes, clinics, camps and tournaments at the new location beginning this month.