



News Release

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Century Celebrates First Student Center

Century College leaders officially cut the ribbon on the college's first-ever student center at a festive grand opening celebration on Thursday, April 21.

In addition to the student center, the college celebrated the completion of the \$9-million reconstruction of the heart of West Campus, including improvements to all three floors of the building.

"This is one of the biggest accomplishments that has ever taken place at the college," Dr. Mike Bruner, vice president of facilities and student services, said at the event. "Nine years ago, this project was on the planning table. Now we are enjoying improvements that were planned with input from students, faculty and staff members on all three floors of the building. The design of the student center is a result of students sitting with the architect and telling him what was most important to them. This is a student center designed by students. We can take a lot of pride in that."

Bruner praised the work of architect Nate Miller of DLR Architects, Donlar Construction and the Bossard Corp., the project manager. He also thanked Brian Yolitz, vice chancellor of facilities for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, noting that the system's support and advocacy were key to the project's success. Money for the project was allocated by the Minnesota Legislature.

Century President Larry Litecky noted that between 1991 and 2004, no new construction took place at Century. For years, students approached the administration and wondered why other campuses had student centers, but Century did not.

Since that time, with the help of the Legislature and MnSCU, Century has added the Kopp Technology Center, the \$20-million Science/Library Building and now the new student center, plus improvements to all three floors of West Campus. "Now the campus has an airy feel and a welcoming sense that contributes to students being more engaged with the life of the college," said Litecky.

Student speakers at the event, Carren LaBrosseur of the Student Senate and Jimmy Vang of the Asian Student Association, said the new space is a vast improvement over the old space. "I remember in the old game room, there was a mysterious smell that we couldn't distinguish or extinguish," said Vang. The new center includes a game room with ping pong tables and video games, plus areas for studying, socializing and eating.

With the new construction, the West Campus top floor gained a new computer lab, writing lab and reading and study skills labs. The second floor gained a centralized student services area with offices for admissions, financial aid and business. The ground floor now has the new student center with a stage dubbed "The Nest," plus a new bookstore, multicultural center, GPS LifePlan center and veteran's center.

The grand opening celebration caps a year-and-a-half of West Campus renovation projects that began when the library and science functions moved from West Campus into the new Science/Library Building on East Campus.

The celebration event included a complimentary taco lunch for students, faculty and staff, and music by Salsa Brosa.