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Haenicke Makes Four Commitments During His Inauguration Speech

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$27.1 million approved for new construction

Gov. James J. Blanchard January 2 signed a capital outlay bill that provides $27.1 million in new construction for Western—$15 million in major modifications and an addition to Waldo Library, and $12.1 million for a new building for the College of Business.

Both houses of the Michigan legislature had passed the bill December 18. January 2 was the deadline for the governor to sign or veto the bill; otherwise, the bill would have become law without the governor’s signature.

In the interim, three members of the Blanchard administration—Phillip J. Jourdan, chief of staff; Robert H. Nathal, director of the Department of Management and Budget; and Lynne C. Schaefer, executive assistant to Nathal—visited the campuses of Western, Ferris State College, and Central Michigan University on December 30. Their fact-finding visits were to personally assess the need for such new construction.

After spending two and a half hours with President Diether H. Haenicke, Board of Trustees Chair Fred W. Adams of Grosse Pointe, and other key administrators, they told local news media that Western had presented “an excellent case” for the two major construction projects. State Rep. Mary Brown, D-Kalamazoo, also joined the campus tour of Waldo Library and East Hall; she had been invited by Nathal.

“I’m delighted. This is a great way to start the new year,” Haenicke said when he learned of the governor’s signing. The bill also includes $370,000 for the McCracken Hall addition that is currently under construction. This figure represents three times the size of the state’s $1.2 million for the paper pilot plant addition.

The bill also includes $500,000 for the Robert A. Welborn Printing Center, $255,000 for the addition to the Haenicke Library, and $500,000 for the new construction.

Western is concentrating on offering classes toward a bachelor’s degree in General Motors plant

WMU administrators saw the opportunity for a joint venture and contacted GM-BOC. “As long as business and industry are indicating a need for training for people, it’s logical that colleges and universities develop linkages,” Vander Weyden said.

Western is concentrating on offering classes toward a bachelor’s degree in General University Studies. “That’s our most flexible curriculum,” Vander Weyden said. “It offers the widest variety of subjects.” Classes and advising sessions are being offered immediately before or after shifts, so employees can easily attend.

Last summer WMU distributed surveys to the 3,500 employees at the plant. About 275 persons responded saying they would like to take WMU courses at the plant toward a bachelor’s degree. Now Western is exploring what kind of degrees interest most employees and how they would like to take classes.

Besides Western, Kalamazoo Valley Community College and the Comstock Community Schools offer classes in the plant. However, WMU’s is the only program that leads directly to a bachelor’s degree.

Hainieck makes four commitments during his inauguration speech

Dr. Diether H. Haenicke accepted the presidency of Western during an inauguration ceremony December 21 that was held in conjunction with December commencement exercises.

“The selection of a president for Western Michigan University is the most important decision that its Board of Trustees ever makes,” Fred W. Adams, chair of the board, said prior to declaring Haenicke Western’s new president.

“It is our sincere desire that you will maintain an administrative environment conducive to the building of a faculty dedicated to truth and the service of mankind, a student body equally concerned with knowledge and moral principles, and a University whose light is unquenchable.”

In accepting the presidency, Haenicke made four commitments to the University.

To the Board of Trustees

“To the board I promise today that I shall do my very best to serve this University well, and that I shall always work to the best of my abilities to promote the interests of all its constituencies,” he said.

To the students

“My second commitment goes to our students. Students are the central concern of this University. Providing a solid academic education is the main reason for the existence of a university like ours.

“In addition to academic learning,” Haenicke said, “we also want to provide an environment in which our students can grow, not only intellectually, but also socially, where they can grow as human beings, sensitive to the needs of others and mindful of their ethical obligations towards the society in which they live.”

As public service to workers and managers

Classes toward bachelor’s degree offered at General Motors plant

WMU classes toward bachelor’s degree offered at General Motors plant

In Western is taking its show on the road.

In a new venture last fall, Western began offering classes toward a bachelor’s degree for employees at the General Motors-Buick Oldsmobile Cadillac (GM-BOC) plant in Kalamazoo.

“Basically, we’re offering the same courses we offer on campus—we’re taking them to the plant,” said Jere H. Vander Weyden, director of Western’s Office of Evening and Weekend Programs, through which the classes are offered.

“The classes are of the same academic quality and students use the same textbooks as on campus.”

According to Vander Weyden, the “classroom in the workplace” is a growing trend in industry. New technology, he said, is creating a greater need for a more educated workforce for retraining workers.

And that’s where Western comes in. “It’s to the industry’s advantage to provide more education to those workers it already employs,” Vander Weyden said. “Many of these people have a long-term investment in the company and really know the ins and outs of the business. It is also to the workers’ advantage to receive more training.”

At GM-BOC, United Auto Workers-GM employees are provided with training dollars through their contract. Salaried employees have a tuition assistance program which provides funds for education.