

Digest

► Oct. 13, 2008

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Campus In Action

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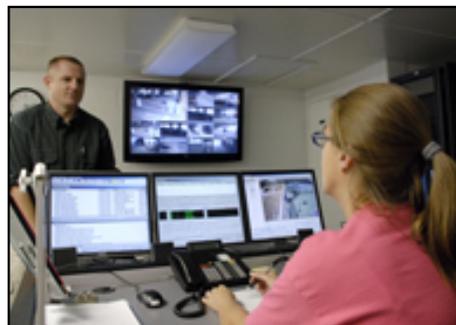


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access to all student residence halls and several campus buildings with after-hours activities, is being brought online this semester.

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Visual arts find life in West Main Hall

By Joshua Preston

Written above the second floor entrance to West Main Hall is the word "Education," but Dr. Pamela Sachant is tempted to have art students paint over it. The university's coordinator of visual arts would even be open to just adding a mural around the word, if only to let people know that a new thriving program is housed there.

The symbolic "doorway to education" is still central to the building's purpose, but the writing above the door is a remnant of an era when education students populated the university's second-oldest building. Now, art majors and faculty occupy the building's second floor, having made it their new home after months of renovations were completed in August.

Though art majors won't have paintbrushes in hand anytime soon to repaint the front entrance, the move into West Main Hall has resulted in a high level of engagement for the university's more than 160 art majors who are taking advantage of dedicated learning spaces and exhibit areas, available, in many cases, for the first time.

"The classrooms are much bigger and are really integrated with technology now," Tonya Kimsey, an art education major, said. "You have more room to actually produce artwork."

Kimsey, one of the first students to have her senior show on exhibit in the new student art gallery, said that classroom space doesn't have to be shared as it was previously. For example, students now have dedicated areas for bringing in models for drawing, and printmaking has its own workspace.



The new art studios in West Main Hall allow seniors to show their work and exchange ideas with peers. (Photo: Joshua Preston)

bring them to life. And, in the enormous art education and drawing studios, the light from large windows washes over tall white walls and ceilings, allowing art students to use the natural light.

"We want students to think of West Main Hall as their work environment and for these learning spaces to reflect that," Sachant said.

"Our expectations are for our students to create work that will start them on a professional career path."

Visual arts program Open House @ West Main Hall
Oct. 25, 2-4 p.m.

Art critic Jerry Cullum
4:30 p.m., Hoag Auditorium
Senior editor of Art Papers Magazine, art critic for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

"Unmarked Pathways: emerging voices in contemporary art"
Exhibit reception, Bob Owens Art Gallery, Hoag Student Center, 5:30 p.m.

Free and open to the public.



Tonya Kimsey

The learning spaces are dynamic environments where computers and artist worktables far outnumber traditional dry-erase boards and desks. The graphic design studio is lit with the glow of computer displays permeating the room, while students guide mouse cursors to create intricate graphic designs. The textile design studio is set up to inspire new creations on the computer where students use specialized software to visualize their patterns before working with cloth and dyes to

That philosophy guided the decision to create the student art gallery and allow it to draw visitors inside the building. With space at a premium on campus, Sachant was questioned why the gallery space was needed, but she believes students must be able to showcase and exhibit their art, just as working artists do.

Kimsey, who is also a first-generation college student, knows how meaningful the experience can be. During the reception for her art show, attendees socialized in the gallery near the entrance and outside on the veranda listening to music late into the evening.

"To have all my friends and family come and see what I've created and to show them that I've succeeded in college, that was something very special for me," she said.



The art gallery in West Main Hall is designed to give students exhibition experience before they graduate.

(Photo: Joshua Preston)

Performing arts take center stage with Nix renovation

By Joshua Preston

The expansion of the fine arts department into West Main Hall has allowed music majors in the university's Nix Mountain Cultural Center to create much needed practice rooms for individual and ensemble performances in the spaces vacated by their visual arts counterparts.



The David Brothers Band, performing Oct. 16 in Shott Hall, will partner with acclaimed saxophonist Chris Potter in April as part of the NGCSU Cultural Events series.

which starts Nov. 5.

Additionally, a dedicated piano lab, designed for classical and contemporary piano studies, has been equipped with ten keyboards and headsets, and a new electronic music lab with Mac computers emphasizes music technology, a growing part of the music field.

One of Nix's largest renovations took place in the Gloria Shott Performance Hall during the summer and totaled \$75,000. The university's largest dedicated performance venue now includes a new 24-track audio system, lights, carpet and seating.

"The new audio equipment is of tremendous benefit, because we can teach students audio techniques and make professional-level recordings now," Andy David, coordinator of performing arts, said.

With the new lighting and sound system also comes the opportunity to showcase professional groups in Shott, including small chamber groups as part of the Nix Living Heritage Series, this year's Cultural Events Series, and other musicians. The university's small theater program will benefit from Shott and practice on its stage to prepare for the first theater production this year, "Life is a Dream,"

"We have the opportunity to bring in high-level artists and tie performing arts to the life of the university," said David, chair of the Nix and Cultural Events series.

The former Army Band director helped to book one of the most acclaimed saxophonists in the country, Chris Potter, who will perform on campus next spring with the David Brothers Super Big Band. A recent headline event, the Latin Concert and Food Festival, featured a 12-piece salsa band on Oct. 8.

"For us, as a relatively unknown music school, this is a sign of the interest in and quality of the music program," David said. "These are the types of events we want to continue to bring to the university."

While the local community benefits from an enriched musical culture on campus, North Georgia's more than 70 music majors are using Nix's new performance spaces to prepare for the time when they'll enter the spotlight.

"Music is a lifestyle choice," David said. "You spend a lot of time by yourself in a practice room becoming a pro musician."



The Sept. 25 grand "reopening" of the Gloria Shott Performance Hall was attended by fine and performing arts donors, students and other invited guests. During the program, which included a concert featuring NGCSU faculty and students, jazz musicians were interrupted by dueling pirates from the theater program.

(Photo: Marilyn McKinnon)

With new practice and performance facilities, North Georgia's performing art students will almost certainly be ready when their professional debuts do arrive.

Building security goes hi-tech with card access and live video

By Joshua Preston

New security measures this semester are improving campus safety and enabling campus police and first-responders to react more quickly to emergencies. The integrated security system, which monitors and controls access to all student residence halls and several campus buildings with after-hours activities, is being brought online this semester.

Cameras with live feeds have been installed in several public areas, allowing campus police to view the external entrances, stairwells and commons areas of student residence halls as well as the Library Technology

Center, West Main Hall and, once it opens, the Recreation Center. The new parking deck is also populated on all levels with real-time video cameras and at least 15 emergency call boxes, Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety Mike Stapleton said.



Officer James Wright talks with Jan Tolbert in the command center for the new campus video camera and access-control security system, which is staffed around the clock.

(Photo: Joshua Preston)

Students will be able to use their identification cards to gain access to buildings that are open later than 5 p.m. for academic and recreational use, and their cards will allow them to gain entry only to their own residence hall.

"We can see where individual students have swiped in and what time of day they entered buildings," Stapleton said.

Additional cameras at the Yahooola Creek tennis courts bring the total for the university's network of security cameras to more than 200. Real-time footage from all 200 can be accessed from the Department of Public Safety at a new command-and-control center monitored by communications officers on duty 24/7. A big-screen monitor displays multiple video feeds simultaneously and several smaller screens show data on activity at the locations.

"Public safety can push a button and remotely open a door if people are having a problem with card access," Stapleton said. "We can see who is on the video and let them in and even see if someone tries to 'piggyback' off of them to gain entrance."

Stapleton said video footage, which is archived for 30 days, has already allowed police officers to resolve some incidents and potential criminal activity on campus. The system also includes a "prop alarm" that alerts officials if an external doorway is open or won't close completely. Existing emergency systems have also been integrated into the security network so that fire alarms and panic alarms that are triggered will alert public safety and provide more immediate response times.

"We're making better use of our manpower by automating some functions," Stapleton said. "It's like giving you more eyes. When you're trying to keep students safe you need all the eyes you can get."

Stapleton hopes to expand the new security network to the Nix Center, the Health and Natural Sciences Building and other academic buildings where there are activities specific to those facilities and require after-hours access.

Library Technology Center use expands

Grand opening on Nov. 7

By Kate Maine

Open barely more than a month, the new Library Technology Center saw more than 26,500 visitors during September, an increase of nearly 80 percent from the same period in 2007, when library services occupied the Stewart Library.

In fact, demand has increased so much, particularly in the late evening, that the staff has already expanded operating hours. Previously, the Library Technology Center closed at 11 p.m., but effective Oct. 1, extended its hours to 1 a.m., Monday through Thursday. Shawn Tonner, director of library services, said they are looking at the possibility of longer operating hours on Sunday evenings, too.



(Photo: Kate Maine)

As a high-traffic area, the Library Technology Center is a natural space for a crossroads of information and community-building.

"We try to tie-in to existing programs and activities to make the library relevant to campus life," Tonner said. "That way, we can help extend and promote other campus projects to create more awareness of the opportunities available here and the work being done by students, faculty and staff."

As examples of this, Tonner referenced a recent book-signing by alumna and author Anne Dismukes

Amerson and an exhibit on the history of political cartooning that supports a presentation this month by Pulitzer Prize-winning, Atlanta-Journal Constitution political cartoonist Mike Luckovich.

While the dust is still settling a bit and some shelving is still being assembled, employees and students alike are making good use the facility's classroom, group study rooms, distance learning and presentation areas. The group study rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis, but other instructional and meeting areas may be reserved by contacting Bonnie Morris.



(Photo: Kate Maine)

The library is available to employees for personal use, too. Tonner said that many faculty and staff members enjoy the resources available in the leisure reading and media collections.

"Also, people often use the library to seek information on investments, to research healthcare concerns, and to enhance professional and career skills," she said.

In the next few months, the Library Technology Center will host several showcase events, including a meeting of the NGCSU Foundation board of trustees, a donor reception, an admissions open house for prospective students, and a traveling exhibit

from the Smithsonian Institute.

If you haven't yet visited the new Library Technology Center, be sure to attend the grand opening celebration at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 7.

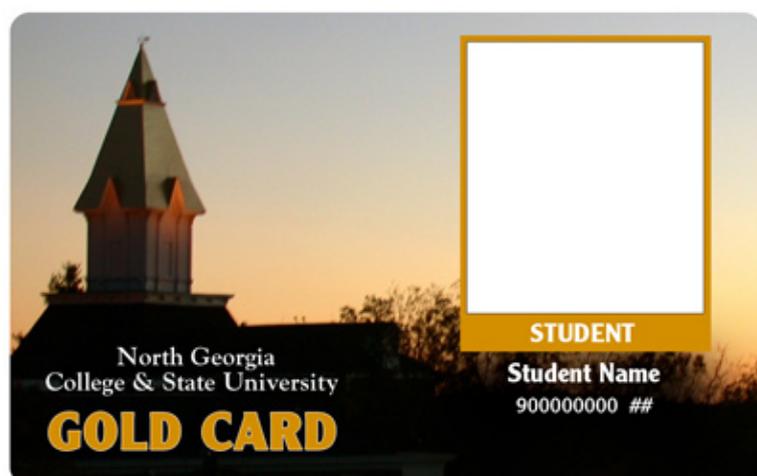
What is Tonner's favorite feature of the new facility? It doesn't involve books, computers or even the contemporary library fixtures. It is the windows.

"The architecture of building creates such a transparent space with an expansive view of campus," she said. "It is unlike any other building on campus."

New campus cards not just for students

By Kate Maine

This fall, North Georgia began implementation of a new "one card" identification system that manages student access to university facilities as well as accounts for dining plans and library services. However, it's not just for students – faculty and staff will soon be getting the new campus card, too.



The card design will be determined through a student vote. One of the design options is the Gold Card.

As part of the project, the campus card office will be introducing a newly designed card very soon to replace existing identification cards and to coordinate with the university's new access control system and other services. The card design will be determined through a student vote, and new cards will be issued to all employees and students.

"Similar to students' access to their residence halls, if an employee's building features the university's new access control system, the new card will provide access to their building," Jackie

Barnaby, manager of the campus card office, said.

"Like students, employees may also use the cards to check out books from the library, purchase a meal plan to use at the dining hall, or establish a CampusCash account, which they can use anywhere on campus that takes CampusCash."

The card operates much like a debit card by providing convenient access to services, without the need to carry actual cash.

Currently, CampusCash may be used at the bookstore, print shop, and all the ARAMARK locations. Barnaby said that in the near future, snack machines and certain off-campus merchants will also accept CampusCash.

Employees can set up a CampusCash account or purchase a meal plan by visiting the campus card office, located in the Hoag Student Center. You must have your current identification card with you to create the accounts. In the near future, employees and students will be able to manage those accounts online as well.

"We already have sold several Faculty/Staff meal plans," Barnaby said. "When the new cards are issued, the money automatically will be transferred to the new card."

Campus in Action

Dr. Timothy May, history and philosophy, gave a lecture on "Tactics and Strategies in the Mongol Art of War" at the Mongolian Embassy in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 20. He also had two chapters (Chingiz Khan and Timur) published in the new book, "Great Military Leaders and Their Campaigns," edited by Jeremy Black.