

News Briefs

Law Building Nearing Historic Finish

After several years of planning, the new School of Law building is nearing completion. While construction will not be completed by the initial target date of December 2022, the finishing touches are starting to take shape, and students, faculty, and staff can expect to move into the building in time for the fall 2023 semester.

In part, the \$33 million project has been funded by more than 1,000 alumni and friends of Washburn University School of Law. The current building, which opened in 1969, was determined to be of similar cost to renovate as construction of a new building, resulting in the decision to move forward with construction. The old building will remain open, and the university is working to determine which department(s) will utilize the space in the future.

The new building will also provide new technology which will allow the School of Law to continue distance learning, a crucial piece to the new Third Year Anywhere program. Faculty will now have the capability to engage in distance learning as their class sessions can be automatically recorded and uploaded for students participating in the Third Year Anywhere program, those who were absent, or those who simply want an enhanced understanding of the lesson.

In addition to the upgraded technology, the new building boasts several private study spaces, two new courtrooms, and countless upgrades for the best law education possible.



Photos by Jeremy Wangler

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Diversity Milestone Reached at the School of Law

Each year, Washburn University School of Law eagerly welcomes the incoming class. The class that arrived this August brought with them the most diversity of any incoming class. Out of the 103 new students, 43% self-reported as a member of at least one under-represented population, which includes ethnic identity, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

“At Washburn Law, we believe that representation is incredibly important, and this year’s entering class exemplifies our commitment to creating diversity, equity, and inclusion in the legal profession,” said Dean Jeffrey Jackson.

The School of Law boasts a long history of being committed to diversity, graduating its first female law student in 1912, a time when many states would not allow women to practice law. The law school was also one of the first predominately white public law schools to admit African-Americans and prepare them for the practice of law.

This year’s new class, which includes both spring and fall starters, is made up of 92 traditional first-year juris doctor students, eight master of law students, and three transfer juris doctor students.

University President Update

In Sept. of 2022, Washburn University said farewell to Jerry and Susan Farley after 25 years of service. Following the announcement of Farley’s retirement as president, the university hired recruiting firm, WittKieffer, to begin the

months-long process of identifying a new university president and on Jan. 11, that search came to an end.

The Washburn University board of regents selected Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek as the university’s 15th president, and she began her role Feb. 1, 2023. She is the first woman to lead Washburn University as president since its founding in 1865.

Mazachek is returning to Topeka after serving as president of Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, since last May. Prior to her time at MSU Texas, Mazachek spent 30 years at Washburn University in various leadership roles. Coming home, she said, is an opportunity she could not pass up.

“Washburn University is such an important part of my family,” Mazachek said. “I am incredibly honored to lead this institution as we build on a foundation of academic excellence and on our unwavering commitment to students and their success. Innovation, growth, and collaboration with community partners are among my key priorities as, together, we continue to move Washburn forward toward an even brighter future.”

To learn more about Mazachek and to read the full press release, visit washburn.edu/president.



Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek. Photo by Jeremy Wangler