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Dexter Firm Awarded \$2.2 M Project At TRC

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POPLAR BLUFF – A Dexter construction firm has been awarded the contract for a \$2.2 million project at Three Rivers College.

C.A. Walker Construction in Dexter was awarded the contract for the renovation of the Three Rivers College's Academic Resource Commons. The Academic Resource Commons (ARC) will provide a centralized location for all the campus' academic support services.

The Three Rivers Board of Trustees awarded the renovation contract C.A. Walker Construction at its June meeting.

The ARC currently includes the Rutland Library and the Public Computing Center. The renovated ARC will also house all academic assistance programs, with spaces for tutoring, Student Support Services, the TRIO program, study rooms and more.

The renovation project will be paid for with funds received several years ago from the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority for building projects, said college president Dr. Devin Stephenson.

"This cost will not come out of college reserves and is not included in the FY13 budget," Stephenson said.

"The renovated ARC will be that one-stop academic support center that will really be the hub for non-classroom learning and student interaction," said Dr. Wesley Payne, Vice President for Learning at Three Rivers. "We've designed this with a very friendly and welcoming environment that is very holistic in the way that it approaches student need."

The new ARC will also be the home of the re-designed Remedial Developmental Education Program, which Payne describes as "a federally funded effort to find a more effective way to bring students up to college readiness standards."

"A number of students that we admit need basic instruction in English, math and reading," said Payne. "Traditionally, it takes them a long time to get through it. By redesigning how we instruct these students, and by moving to a competency-based model, we hope to increase the success of the students and decrease the time it takes them to become ready to take college-level classes."

The ARC also is the genesis for the more traditional architecture the college is moving forward within the campus' master plan designed by Dille and Traxel architecture firm, Stephenson said. It will be the first building to receive this new look.

“I feel confident about this decision,” said Board Chair Randy Winston. “With Walker Construction located in Dexter, we’re still taking a ‘local’ bid and utilizing our local workforce. We’ve all been very pleased with the work Mr. Walker did at our Center in Dexter, and I think we can expect more of the same.”

“This is the launch of the future Academic Resource Commons is a priority on campus. The Commons will be a key element in our effort to improve student academic achievement. It will be a key element in our effort to help students realize their dreams for a brighter future. We’ve been working for over a year and a half to get to this point. I’m overwhelmed to see this approval vote today.”

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