

UMKC UNIVERSITY NEWS

Groundbreaking Library

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The golden shovels dug into the earth and applause broke out among the 150 people present. The Miller Nichols Library expansion was officially under way.

On a joyous and sunny afternoon, Jeannette Nichols, a trustee of The Miller Nichols Charitable Foundation and director of The Miller and Jeanette Nichols Foundation, welcomed the guests.

"This library is this city's only comprehensive research library," Nichols said. "In today's world of technology, it had to grow to keep up with it. It had to add those technologies and the space that they will bring to the campus."

One of these improvements is an Automatic Storage and Retrieval System (ASRS) for books and journals which will take up about 1/7 of the space used by conventional shelving. This will create space for additional classrooms to accommodate the projected 25 percent enrollment increase, according to University Libraries Dean Sharon L. Bostick.

She said roughly 80 percent of the 1 million volumes stored in the library will be handled by the ASRS, delivering books requested by computer entries directly to the circulation desk within three minutes.

The new design for the library was unveiled at the ceremony. The ASRS will be housed in an extension on the south side of the actual structure. It will have glass walls at both ends to permit observation of what Bostick calls "The Robot."

Until last spring, the overall plan for renovation and expansion included a new Student Union to the west of the library. With the relocation of that project, a major redesign was possible, according to Assistant Vice Chancellor Bob Simmons, director of Campus Facilities and Management.

Three terraced levels of underground parking to the north of the building can now be landscaped over, with the view left open in the direction of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The classroom space originally planned to be on top of the parking has been moved to an expansion on the west side.

Also speaking at the ceremony were UMKC Chancellor Dr. Guy Bailey; Dan Bradbury, president of Friends of the Library; Kay Callison, daughter of Miller Nichols, a trustee of The Miller Nichols Charitable Foundation and director of The Miller and Jeannette Nichols Foundation; UMKC Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Gary Ebersole, professor of history and religious studies; Student Government Association Executive Vice President Tara Kloeppel, sophomore, English; and UMKC Trustees Chair Leo Morton.

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Tara Kloeppel, Leo Morton, Henry Bloch, Kay Callison, Dean Sharon Bostick, Jeannette Nichols, Chancellor Guy Bailey. Media Credit: Derek Simons



Architect's rendering, southwest expansion.



Architect's rendering, northeast renovation, view from Volker and Rockhill Road.