



# Streamlining Student Services

CAMPUS CENTER NOW OPEN

by Rachel Rose

For Joliet Junior College, the completion and opening of the Campus Center is the realization of a goal many years in the making.

The hallmark building of JJC's Master Plan, it not only creates a visitor-friendly front door for Main Campus, it meets some of the college's most critical student service needs by streamlining key functions and putting student service departments together in a central, easily accessible location.





“Relocation to the Campus Center is a major step for the plan and students’ completion of their academic agendas,” said Susan Paddock, interim vice president of student development. “The move provides us greater ability to serve students with a convenient one-stop shop.”

Previously, service departments were scattered throughout the campus and were often difficult to find. Now, vital services such as admissions, financial aid and counseling are located along the corridor of the ground floor of the Campus Center, which is also known as the Student Street.

Paddock explained that now, for example, a continuing student can meet with a counselor to determine their appropriate class schedule, and then go right across the student street to register and pay their bill in an area known as the Enrollment Center.

“Having Student Accounts and Payments as a partner within the Enrollment Center for personal contact has been a great benefit for assisting our students,” she added.

On the first floor of the Campus Center students will find career services, counseling, the new Enrollment Center (which includes admissions, financial aid, registration and records, and student accounts and payments), Academic Skills,

Student Accommodations and Resources, Project Achieve, the bookstore, Multicultural Student Affairs, photo ID services, and the dean of students, in addition to the new cafeteria that is situated in the space adjoining the Campus Center to the C- and S-Buildings.

The entire second floor of the building is devoted to the library, which offers a wide variety of print and digital learning resources, individual and group study space, computers, and laptop plugins, among many other services.

“The students that have come in have been really excited to see what the new space has to offer,” said Susan Prokopeak, library department chair. “There are so many resources here in the new space that they didn’t have before.”

The third floor is home to administrative offices such as the president and vice president offices, institutional research, marketing and creative services, foundation and alumni relations, financial services, human resources, business and auxiliary services, and the board room.

Meeting the needs of JJC students and developing the space and resources JJC needed to serve them was a priority for late president Gena Proulx, who recognized the college’s

need for centralized student services. Since she began her tenure at JJC in 2006, she worked tirelessly to see the Master Plan, the physical articulation of those needs, come to fruition.

In addition to presiding over several groundbreaking and several smaller construction projects, and seeing the Greenhouse Facility and the Facility Services buildings completed, Proulx saw the Campus Center through to completion in July 2011; but shortly thereafter, she passed away following a courageous battle against cancer.

In a 2008 interview, Proulx talked about how she was excited that JJC’s Master Plan was alive and being put into action as opposed to collecting dust on a shelf as sometimes happens at other institutions; and that she enjoyed working together with her JJC team to see it carried out.

Board of Trustees Chairwoman Barbara DeLaney reflected on this aspect of Proulx’s legacy at JJC.

“As an alumnus of the college, it was clear to me that the Campus Center, as the one-stop shop for student services, was always much needed at JJC, even 20 years ago,” she said.

“But it wasn’t until Dr. Proulx came to JJC that the Master Plan was taken off the shelf and put into action,” Delaney added. “It was under her guidance that the college was able to move forward on several



## Key features of the building:

- **Built to LEED Silver standards\***
- **114,000 sq. ft. total, for student services, academic support and administrative offices**
- **A highly efficient geothermal system comprised of 90,000 ft. of pipe and 84 wells buried 500 ft. deep in the earth maintains the building temperature, using ground temperature for heating and cooling**
- **Carbon-neutral green roofs help reduce the heat island effect and also reduce storm water runoff by 50 percent**
- **Most of the building has access to daylight through windows and skylights, minimizing electricity consumption**
- **Energy-efficient LED lighting is used throughout the building**
- **Over 40 percent of the building is comprised of regional (produced within 500 miles) and recycled materials**

\*Pending certification. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, an internationally recognized green building certification system.

critical projects outlined in the Master Plan, which included the Campus Center. The institution now has a true front door, and we have Dr. Proulx's strong vision and leadership to thank for that."

Proulx's dreams of seeing JJC undergo the changes and growth necessary to meet the needs of its burgeoning, changing district are evident on Main Campus and especially in the Campus Center, now a bustling hub of activity as students return and fall classes are underway.

Sitting on a bench and taking in all the activity and sights of the building, Arisa Tocwish, a second semester student, said how much she liked how easy everything was to find on the first floor.

"After visiting StAR (Student Accommodations and Resources), I was able to go right across the hall to the bookstore, where a guy helped me find the books I needed for my classes right away. It was so easy!"

As a busy fall semester begins, staff and faculty are now settling in to the Campus Center and students are familiarizing themselves with the new buildings and changes on Main Campus. But the college continues to look to the future and remains focused on its mission of providing affordable, accessible, and quality programs and services to its students.

"It's a very exciting time of change to be in this beautiful new building, but what has not changed is our commitment to helping our students succeed in their goals," said Paddock. "In our new spaces we are now better equipped than ever to serve students and provide them with the resources they need, and I'm looking forward to seeing what a positive impact that will have on their academic success."