One year after devastating fire, Hale Library renovation is underway

Just over a year ago, on May 22, 2018, a fire broke out in Hale Library, the flagship building in the Kansas State University Library system in Manhattan.

While the fire was contained to the roof, several hundreds of thousands of gallons of water flowed through the 550,000-square-foot building during the firefighting efforts. In addition, soot and smoke damaged the interior and its contents, including most of the books.

The recovery process took a grueling eight months to complete. An estimated 85 percent of the building was gutted, including wiring, ceiling tiles and carpet. In some places, only the bottom 2 feet of the drywall was damaged by water. In other areas, entire walls were stripped down to the metal studs. Even today, the plaster walls of the bottom two floors of the 1927 historic Farrell Library portion of the building are still drying out.

But now, after months of planning with PGAV Architects, the university's next-generation library is starting to take shape.

"We could not be more excited to see the progress happening inside Hale Library," said Lori Goetsch, dean of K-State Libraries. "Walls are going up, spaces are being reconfigured, and new infrastructure and wiring are coming in."

Hale Library will reopen in phases, with the first floor Dave and Ellie Everitt Learning Commons opening Fall 2019. It is estimated that the entire renovation will be complete by the end of 2020. The last phase to open will be the original 1927 Farrell Library. The Libraries plan to restore historic Farrell Library to its original grandeur, including the Great Room murals, which are stable and currently protected from the surrounding construction work by large wooden boxes that were built around them.

In addition to the building renovations, the entire 1.5 million-item collection was removed from the library and moved into long-term storage. Because of the soot damage, the items are being cleaned one at a time.

"Looking back, it's amazing to think about the ways in which we've been remarkably lucky," Goetsch said. "No one was injured in the fire. Less than 1% of our collection was lost. And even though the fire was on the roof, our most rare and valuable materials in the Morse Department of Special Collections located on the top floor experienced only very minor smoke damage."

The university will continue to work with the insurance companies throughout the rebuilding project. Insurance is expected to cover like-for-like replacement costs. However, while the building is nearly gutted, the Libraries would like to take this opportunity to enhance highly utilized student spaces. Those enhancements will require private donor support.

To date, $6.8 million in private support has been committed to the renovation efforts. Additionally, more than $280,000 has been raised through the Help for Hale campaign that launched after the fire last year. Dave and Ellie Everitt gave the lead $3 million gift for the first-floor learning commons, and several other spaces have received financial support, including a cafe and a two-story innovation lab.

"We've always said that Hale Library is the heart and soul of the K-State campus," said Richard Myers, president of Kansas State University. "There's no denying that our students have felt its absence this year. We are committed to bringing our flagship library building back stronger than ever for our students and for the university's future."
Physician assistant program to begin in 2021 at Kansas State University

The College of Human Ecology, which became the College of Health and Human Sciences on June 1, has received approval from the Kansas Board of Regents to officially begin their Master's of Science in physician assistant studies program.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 37% increase in physician assistant jobs between 2016 and 2026, compared to a 13% increase in physician jobs. Physician assistants are one of the three primary care providers recognized by the Affordable Care Act of 2010, along with physicians and nurse practitioners.

Recognizing the primary care provider shortages in the state of Kansas and the outflow of Kansas State University students to professional schools, the college began to explore launching the physician assistant program in 2017. Currently, Wichita State University has the only physician assistant program in the state.

The 27-month, full-time graduate program, leading to a master's degree in physician assistant studies, consists of three semesters of classroom instruction, followed by 15 months of clinical training. Physician assistant students will complete approximately 2,000 hours of hands-on clinical experiences, through 11 rotations at various clinics and hospitals across the state.

Support agreement between K-State and Fort Riley advances archaeological surveys

A new partnership between Fort Riley and Kansas State University paves the way for archaeological site surveys on the military installation.

Fort Riley Garrison Commander Col. Stephen Shrader and Kansas State University Vice President for Research Peter Dorhout signed an intergovernmental support agreement on May 13. This is the first support agreement between the two government agencies. During the five-year agreement, university archaeologists will evaluate and analyze Fort Riley property never surveyed before as directed by Fort Riley's cultural resources archaeologist.

"The signing of this agreement with Kansas State University is yet another example of the community of partnerships that makes Fort Riley a great place to live, train, deploy from, and return home to," Shrader said. "While Fort Riley and K-State have multiple well-established partnerships, this marks the first time the two organizations are partnering through an intergovernmental support agreement. This partnership is being highlighted as a best-practice to other Army installations, and I am extremely proud of the collaboration between Kansas State University professionals and Fort Riley professionals to perform these mutually beneficial archaeological surveys."

"Our relationship with the Army and Fort Riley continues to be strengthened by partnerships like this intergovernmental support agreement," Dorhout said.

K-State team wins national crops and precision agriculture contests at NACTA event

The Kansas State University Crops Team earned top awards at the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Judging Conference held recently at Murray State University in Kentucky. Six students participated in three events, placing first in both the crops contest and precision agriculture contest, and second in the knowledge bowl.

In the NACTA crops contest, the K-State team placed first over Iowa State University and the University of Nebraska. A total of 25 crops teams competed, 15 in the four-year division and 10 in the two-year division. This is the 13th win in the past 21 years for K-State at the national NACTA crops contest.

Submarine built with help of K-State Polytechnic students unveiled

One of the deepest-diving, privately owned submarines in the world was unveiled on June 1 in Salina - and it was built with the help of Kansas State University Polytechnic Campus students. The Pisces VI is a three-person capacity submarine, able to dive to an operational depth of 7,155 feet and support a minimum of 140 hours underwater with a mission length of up to 14 hours.

Pisces VI, which is owned by Scott Waters of Salina,
"The research we conduct in conjunction with the cultural archeologist will help all people understand more about and honor those who lived in this beautiful Kansas River Valley and the Flint Hills before European settlers came here. This is important work for both K-State and the Army to undertake in a careful and thoughtful manner, and we are honored to be part of it."

Site work will begin next month and is being led by Lauren Ritterbush, K-State professor with the sociology, anthropology, and social work department in the College of Arts and Sciences.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

50 percent of K-State undergraduate students receive scholarships, and 170 new scholarships were created by generous donors in FY18.

partnered with Kansas State Polytechnic to involve students in the building process, furthering the campus's hands-on education style. Students assisted in various aspects of the project, from technical, manual procedural documentation to a slurp gun device fitted specially for the Pisces VI submarine.

The slurp gun is a device, created by a Kansas State Polytechnic sophomore, allows the submarine to take specimen samples while deep below the surface and transport those samples safely and securely back to study. The device essentially operates like an underwater vacuum, operated from inside the submarine, and stores samples in a holding tank until the submarine again reaches the surface.

"This has been a fantastic opportunity for our students to be involved with something really significant," said Kurt Barnhart, associate dean of research at Kansas State Polytechnic. "It's hard to overstate the potential impact of this project has had as Pisces VI partners with explorers around the globe to push the boundaries of deep-sea exploration."