



**Paper: St. Louis Post-Dispatch (MO)**

**Title: HAVING ITS OWN LIBRARY OPENS NEW PAGE FOR WEBSTER UNIVERSITY - GROWTH BRINGS NEED FOR \$14 MILLION BUILDING**

**Date: October 29, 2001**

Here's one for the books: This Tuesday, Oct. 30, Webster University was scheduled to break ground for a **new library**, the first one it will be able to call all its own.

At 71,500 square feet, it will be a statement - the largest building so far on the university's campus in Webster Groves.

It also will be a centerpiece - right in the middle of the campus.

Until now, the university has been sharing a **library** at Eden Seminary across Lockwood Avenue. Webster officials say the joint arrangement, in effect since 1969, has been congenial. It's just that there comes a time when a growing university needs its own space.

As President Richard G. Meyers says, the university is "in growth mode" with 97 locations, double the number of the mid-1990s and including nine overseas. More growth is to come. So in a **library**, the university has to have "something on our home campus that serves every other," he says.

For students that means remote access to as much of the **library's** collection as possible - and the faster the better. Under Director Laura Rein, the Eden-Webster **library** has been moving in that direction, building a collection of more than 100 electronic databases. These make it possible for Webster students anywhere in the world to use their computers to call up reference books, more than 500 e-books and about 8,000 journals.

Rein says the **new library**, with the flexibility to add **new** servers, will allow the university to expand its electronic collections even further.

In addition to the usual stacks for books and a traditional reading room, the **library** has been designed with several up-to-the-minute features. These include a two-level cyber cafe with round-the-clock card-swipe entree, a media production lab and a variety of computer-equipped places for study and research.

An especially unusual component will be an "instructional technology center," set up to teach faculty members how to use technology in their classes.

The **library**, long a dream at Webster, began taking on reality in 1995 when the idea was included in the university's master plan. Then came focus groups with students, faculty members and others on campus to help decide what the building should include. The university also hired a consultant to help shape plans.

And finally - and perhaps most importantly - came the money. The building will cost about \$14 million, most of it raised from the university's \$30 million capital campaign, which began four years ago and will continue through next year.

Perry Dean Rogers and Partners Architects of Boston has designed a five-level structure, to be built into a slope, to replace a parking lot. A curve here and an unexpected angle there add visual interest to a basically rectangular shape. Where the exterior isn't brick and stone, it will be windows, bathing the interior in natural light.

Paric Corp. will manage construction, with Kwame Building Group Inc. serving as subcontractor. The schedule calls for completion in April 2003 and move-in two months later.

With Webster collections accounting for about four-fifths of the joint **library's** holdings, Eden Seminary will be left with vacant space sufficient to be renovated into a coffee shop, a bookstore, classrooms and an auditorium.

But this is by no means the **library** world's equivalent of divorce. Instead, the seminary and university will remain **library** partners. Rein will continue as director of both **libraries**. And instead of one **library**, students from both campuses will share two.

For a college **library**, the old one has been unusually welcoming to the general public. Anyone may browse or, for \$50 a year, get a borrower's card. That will be the policy at Webster's **new library** and will continue at Eden's.

Caption:

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Caption:

Color photo - Architect's rendering of Webster University's **new** five-level **library** that will serve students at 97 locations.

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