

11-2-1989

11/02/1989 - Students Administration Express Need For Rec Center

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "11/02/1989 - Students Administration Express Need For Rec Center" (1989). 1989. 790.

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89-622

November 2, 1989

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

STUDENTS, ADMINISTRATION EXPRESS NEED FOR REC CENTER

CHARLESTON, IL.--Following recent surveys and review of recreational statistics that indicated 79 percent of Eastern Illinois University students surveyed are in favor of having an additional recreation facility constructed, a referendum has been placed on Eastern's Nov. 8 student election ballot.

Eastern President Stan Rives agrees with the students. "I believe additional student recreation facilities are needed on this campus, and I believe this largely because the students have presented a well-documented case. Most importantly, I believe this issue is appropriately decided by students in the scheduled Nov. 8 referendum."

Students will be voting on the question, "Do you favor building a student recreation facility at a per semester cost of not more than \$60 to be effective the semester the facility is open for student use?"

Bob Gruber of Champaign, project architect, will answer students' questions about the recreational center from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7, in the University Union Walkway Lounge.

Patty Kennedy, student body president and chairman of a recreation center planning committee, said, "Members of the student senate have been visiting the residence halls showing students a model of the recreational center, explaining its use and answering questions. Overall, the students have responded positively to the project."

She added, "I believe the best thing about the center is the amount of flexible space it will provide students for purely recreational activities. I think more students, who don't participate now in recreational activities because of insufficient facilities and incompatible time schedules, will be more apt to get involved if the addition is built."

The proposed \$6 million facility, if approved, will add approximately 70,000 square feet to Lantz Gymnasium, which currently cannot accommodate the increasing demand from all sources to schedule recreational activities.

The facility would extend directly north from the current Lantz Building fieldhouse, where a gravel parking lot is now located. It would help alleviate overcrowdedness and "prevent the scheduling of recreational and intramural activities late in the evening and early morning hours," according to Eastern's Vice President for Student Affairs Glenn Williams.

"The facilities, built in 1967, were originally designed to serve a student population of 6,500. Student enrollment has since grown to over 10,000," Williams said.

If approved, the addition will be paid for by floating a bond issue which students will repay through a student fee not to exceed \$60, starting when the facility is ready for use.

Rives explained that student recreation facilities, in accordance with State of Illinois procedures, cannot be built and maintained with State of Illinois funding, and thus must be provided through student fees.

"Construction could begin by early Fall 1990 with all areas of the facility completed by August 1991, however, no student fees would be assessed until the new facilities are in use by the students," Rives said.

Williams said, "The new facilities will insure a wide variety of spaces, and activities will be available to students at all times of the day. Currently, there are no rec facilities available to students weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and only a few prior to 7 p.m."