The Ozarka College Board of Trustees recently approved a Facilities Master Plan that will propel the Melbourne campus into the future with additional building projects and will help transition the campus to a more contemporary community college aesthetic.

The purpose of the Facilities Master Plan is to provide a map for the future of the Ozarka College campus in order to create unity throughout any and all updates of existing facilities and construction of new facilities.

A Master Planning Team, consisting of Ozarka College administration, faculty, staff, and community leaders, worked together, along with Wittenburg, Delony and Davidson Architects, Inc. from Fayetteville, to strategically evaluate the existing campus buildings and layout during the fall semester. The team also established goals and a vision for the direction of the Melbourne campus in the future. WD&D then compiled the final Facilities Master Plan for the College.

The key master plan goals include moving the campus’s appearance to that of a more modern community college, establishing stronger community connections and support, creating a sense of arrival when you drive onto the campus, and developing a central location for student services along with more green space.

“The new master plan does not commit the College at this point but rather serves as an important instrument that was developed by the College community to foresee our future needs,” said Ozarka College President Dr. Richard Dawe. “A ‘College Center’ that will allow us to co-locate all student service activities and support offices in one central location is very important for our students’ success and is expected to be the highest near term priority. I truly appreciate the support and far-reaching involvement that was demonstrated throughout this project.”

It was determined that a facilities master plan was necessary in order to meet the growing needs of students enrolled at Ozarka College. The College has seen tremendous growth over the past ten years and expanding and updating both facilities and curriculum is needed for the future. While this Facilities Master Plan is exclusively for the Melbourne campus, the plans for the remaining three campuses in Ash Flat, Mountain View and Mammoth Spring will also be developed in the future.
Ozarka Kids Academy Expanding, Accepting New Children

The Ozarka Kids Academy, located in Melbourne, is nearing the completion of an expansion and renovation project that will allow the daycares to accommodate additional children.

The Ozarka Kids Academy was awarded a ribbon-cutting in celebration of the expansion and renovation project on Friday, March 2 at 2 p.m. Refreshments will be served and the event is open to the public.

Currently the Ozarka Kids Academy can have 45 children enrolled, but with the completion of the project, they will be licensed to enroll up to 84 children. It is expected that new children will be able to start attending in mid-March.

“The new addition is the result of collaboration between Ozarka, the City of Melbourne and Izard County officials,” said Ozarka College President Dr. Richard Dawe. “We are all very pleased that this grant funded project will allow us to serve many more families and children in the Melbourne area.”

The facility is licensed by the Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. The daycare was established in 1997 and serves children 6 weeks to 5 years of age. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. The Ozarka Kids Academy is operated by a director and licensed child-care providers.

Cheatham Endowment Completed

The Ozarka College Foundation Board recently completed a scholarship endowment in honor of Mr. Charles Cheatham.

In 2007, the Ozarka College Foundation Board developed the scholarship fund to honor Cheatham. With the endowment goal of $10,000 recently met, a new scholarship will be awarded for the fall 2012 semester.

“I am very proud to see the creation of the Charles Cheatham Scholarship,” said Son Lamb, former Ozarka College Board member. “Charles was such an asset to our community and this scholarship in his name will keep his memory and good deeds for our community alive for years to come.”

Cheatham held a civic service position in Izard County for over 45 years. He was active in his church, as well as the Melbourne Lions Club, Izard County Historical Society, several local boards, and he chaired the Izard County Democratic Committee.

“He and his wife, Mildred, raised their four children in Izard County. Their son Ronald resides in Batesville, son Donald resides in Melbourne, son Ronnie resides in Loned Rock, and daughter Connie Moser resides in Calico Rock. Moser also serves on the Ozarka College Foundation Board.”

SCCRC Endows Fifth Ozarka College Scholarship

The Stone County Community Resource Council created its first scholarship endowment in March 2007, and since that time it has endowed four other scholarships. They have also donated an additional $20,000 toward facilities on the new campus, including $10,000 toward the construction of the Student Success Center, which opened in August 2011, and $10,000 toward an amphitheater that is scheduled for completion in 2013.

The Ozarka College Foundation recently received a $10,000 scholarship endowment from the Stone County Community Resource Council. The board approved the donation during their Dec. 13 meeting and presented the donation to Ozarka College President Dr. Richard Dawe on Jan. 9.

St. Charles Moser, council president, said the people in the county are excited to have the opportunity to pursue their higher education goals.

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The Stone County Community Resource Council is a nonprofit organization that offers support to the citizens of Stone County.
I began as Ozarka College’s Public Relations Specialist in August after completing my Bachelor’s degree in journalism with an emphasis in public relations from Arkansas State University. I believe my time spent at ASU prepared me for this position in higher education with an internship with University Communications and serving as Editor-in-Chief of The Herald, ASU’s student newspaper.

Originally being from the Ozarka College service area, I am honored to be back home after graduating from Arkansas State University serving alongside such dedicated and giving individuals who are genuinely working to impact the lives of those in their communities.

A lot has changed since my time at Ozarka College, including the continued growth of the Ash Flat and Mountain View campuses, as well as the introduction of the Mammoth Spring campus. It is remarkable and inspiring to see the great reach of Ozarka College.

I was fortunate enough to be able to complete concurrent hours through Ozarka College before I graduated from high school, allowing me to save time and money in pursuit of my Bachelor’s degree. I think I definitely took for granted how great of an opportunity was being provided to me at the time, but I quickly learned that the one-on-one attention provided by Ozarka College really was a rare quality.

I received help and was encouraged every step of the way in completing my first college courses and I know that same enthusiasm and support is being offered to our many students today. I believe in the mission of Ozarka College and I am excited to be a part of students’ journeys toward higher education goals. I am also excited to share this journey and mission with all of you.

I am only a phone call away and look forward to sharing ideas with all of you about ways to better promote Ozarka College to our communities and future students.