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For Immediate Release:

Transformational expansion underway for NOC Tonkawa library

The Vineyard Library at Northern Oklahoma College Tonkawa is undergoing a transformation into a contemporary NOC Student Learning Commons.

The library remodel is the first significant project emerging from the Building a Better NOC initiative. NOC President Dr. Clark Harris explained the plan for the transformation of the library at the April 27th Board of Regents meeting in Tonkawa.

Harris added, "This will all happen from the efforts of the NOC Foundation and a generous donation from a NOC supporter as well as funding from a government grant."

In regard to the donation, the NOC board of regents approved naming the space the Pickens Learning Commons in recognition of the substantial gift and continued collaborative partnership of Hugh and Dr. S. J. Pickens.

Work began in May in the hopes of the remodel completion for the fall semester.

"The library at NOC Tonkawa is at a pivotal crossroads with rows and rows of outdated books not being used by today's students and the need for individual and small group study areas in a dynamic environment," said Dr. Clark Harris. "The library could greatly benefit from a fresh look. This project is a perfect example of connecting NOC's core values of personalized education, continuous improvement and community and civic engagement into one transforming project."

"The new NOC Student Learning Commons will improve the student and employee quality of life by bringing more access to current technology and increase distributed study areas. The Student Learning Commons will possess the "Wow" factor in student recruitment as well as prospective students and families tour the campus, while the new access to learning spaces will aid in retention and improved graduation rates. The Cultural Engagement Center (CEC) and current library will be blended into one space while retaining the glass dividing walls," he added.

The project will include new technology, study tables and chairs, soft loveseats and chairs, new reception area, shelving, and carpet.

It will also include the addition of two new permanent murals totaling 100'x20' by artist Yatika Starr Fields along with a constant collection of various art works from the Doctor Pickens Museum, Inc. to be on long-term display. Fields has already created two existing murals in the Cultural Engagement Center, commissioned by the Doctor Pickens Museum in November 2020 and completed in June 2021.

“We are so excited to continue to partner with Hugh Pickens and the Doctor Pickens Museum, said NOC Vice President for Development and Executive Director to the NOC Foundation Sheri Snyder. “We are grateful for friends such as the Pickens who have chosen to share their gifts with us.”

When completed, the Pickens Learning Commons will include the Cultural Engagement Center, Testing Center, career and transfer services, library services, enhanced technology, tutoring services, and an art gallery.

Northern Oklahoma College, the state’s first public two-year community college, is a multi-campus, land-grant institution that provides high quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities and services.

NOC-serves nearly 4,000 students through the home campus in Tonkawa, branch in Enid, and NOC/OSU Gateway Program in Stillwater. Of these students about 80% receive financial aid and/or scholarships. 75% of NOC students complete their degree with zero debt.

The college is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and offers associate degrees in three general areas: Arts, Science and Applied Science; the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs; and the Accreditation Commission for Education and Nursing.

For more information about Northern Oklahoma College please call (580) 628-6208 or visit the NOC website at www.noc.edu.