

Ivy Tech groundbreaking ‘the future of college’

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The Journal Gazette

Before an outdoor groundbreaking ceremony began this Wednesday morning at the local Ivy Tech Community College campus, the institution’s president used a restroom in the

aging Harshman Hall and said the experience underscored the need for the new nursing and health sciences facility.

“The future of college is Ivy Tech, and we will continue to grow,” Marty Pollio told more than 50 people gathered for the event. “However, we have to

have the facilities that look like the future of college.”

The new 50,000-square-foot building is part of a nearly \$70 million makeover to Ivy Tech Fort Wayne. Other improvements include renovations to the Student Life Center and the demolition of Harshman

and Carroll halls, which date to the 1960s.

This phase of the project represents more than adding a building to campus. The college anticipates the facility will boost health sciences enrollment

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by 21% and increase specialty lab spaces by 48%, local Chancellor Kim Barnett-Johnson said.

“It’s a workforce development engine, an innovation hub and a direct investment in our long-term health and economic vitality,” she said.

Surgical technology student Eratee Tsakas looks forward to the hands-on training the nursing and health sciences facility will provide.

“With these new labs, I’ll be able to learn in spaces that look and feel like operating rooms I’ll eventually be working in,” Tsakas said. “That kind of experience builds confidence, and confidence is everything when you’re starting a new career.”

Many students enroll in Ivy Tech after a break in their schooling, which isn’t easy, Tsakas said. She noted some students are parents, some have full-time jobs and others, like her, are choosing a new direction.

“This building shows that our community believes in us,” Tsakas said. “It’s a real chance: A chance to learn, a chance to grow, a chance to step into a field where we can make a difference.”

Most of Ivy Tech’s projects are funded through the Indiana General Assembly, Pollio said, but the Fort Wayne improvements were supported by the college’s State Board of Trustees.

The college is funding \$60 million and seeks to raise \$7 million in private contributions, bringing the total to \$67 million, officials said.



Tsakas

TLA GRAD, ERATEE TSAKAS!



Photos by Stan Sussina | The Journal Gazette

Ivy Tech Community College President Marty Pollio speaks Wednesday morning during a groundbreaking ceremony for Ivy Tech Community College Fort Wayne’s new Nursing and Health Sciences building.

“Private philanthropy is the support that is the difference between making the building adequate or exceptional, which is what our students deserve,” said Stephanie Bailey, the Ivy Tech Foundation president. “It’s the difference between a facility that functions versus one that truly prepares students for their careers



Bailey

and what comes next for healthcare.”

Donations are accepted virtually at engage.ivytech.edu/s/giving by selecting “Fort Wayne Restructure Project” from the menu.

The new facility is planned for the college’s north campus, an area near St. Joe and Stellhorn roads that includes Harshman Hall, the Student



A rendering displayed at the ceremony shows the 50,000-square-foot building, part of a major makeover at Ivy Tech Fort Wayne.

Life Center and the Steel Dynamics Inc. Keith E. Busse Technology Center.

The contractor is Shiel Sexton, and CSO is the architect.

Pollio is confident the new building will benefit Fort Wayne and the broader community. About 95% of Ivy Tech students are state residents, he said, and 95%

of students stay in Indiana after graduating.

“You can count on the students that will be benefiting from these facilities are Fort Wayne residents,” Pollio said. “They will remain in this area as well, and I think that’s so important to the development of this community.”

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