

# **UW-Green Bay: Governor Evers visits to tour library and discuss replacement of deteriorating building**

Posted on Wednesday, Apr 7, 2021

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Green Bay, Wis.— Governor Tony Evers visited UW-Green Bay today, getting a behind-the-scenes tour of the Cofrin Library and need for replacement of the 50-year-old building. He joined UW-Green Bay Chancellor Michael Alexander, UW-Green Bay's Council of Trustees Chairman and Managing Director of Titletown Tech Craig Dickman and Student Government Association President Guillermo Gomez.

"The UW Campuses are the economic drivers of the state," Evers said. "As we come out of the pandemic, we need to Build Back Better with a major investment in technology and higher education."

"Investing in both is critically important and will help us bounce back faster and better."

Chancellor Alexander spoke specifically to the need for a new facility.

"Not only is the aging Cofrin Library in major disrepair, it does not reflect the current view of how our future students will receive higher education. With a cost to renovate nearly as much as the cost to replace, the time is right to look to the future and provide the experience we need to serve a growing University."

According to University leaders, the age of the facility has undermined the effectiveness of the programs housed within and the cumulative effects of time and use, as well as changes in pedagogy, information services, technology, and mission

have resulted in a building that is at or past its utility. Consider:

- Primary mechanical and electrical systems are failing.
- The exterior cladding, glazing, sealants and roof are in need of extensive repair and in many instances, replacement.
- Overall energy consumption is high, maintenance is frequent and expensive.
- There are numerous safety concerns in the building including no fire suppression system, asbestos in features and a failing brick façade that has risk of pieces of the façade falling off the building.
- There are significant ADA compliance issues.
- The University anticipates that a new building will have a smaller footprint on campus, less administrative space and more space for student, faculty and community collaboration.

Evers noted that his budget proposal contains the largest investment in the UW System in 20 years, including funding the tuition freeze and expanding the Bucky's promise program for students.

“In addition to our students, our campuses need a whole lot of support, too.”

The building was included in Governor Evers 2021-23 Capital Budget presented to the Wisconsin State Legislature. The Wisconsin State Legislature is considering the building as part of the final 2021-23 Biennial Budget. If approved, the University anticipates that final design will begin immediately.

Dickman said the community is supportive of this “transformational journey” and it is an important step in “repositioning for the future.” “A few years ago, as a community we told this University that ‘we expect more.’ The University has exceeded our expectations.”

On behalf of the students, Gomez implored State Legislators and Representatives to fully fund this project.

“Student needs and community needs have evolved, and it is crucial that we develop and create a new Cofrin Research Center that can meet the student needs, community needs, and more importantly, the educational needs of the modern world,” he said. “The reality is, our current building cannot do that.”