DUC Renovations

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WKU’s Downing University Center is getting a two year, 49-million dollar makeover.

Amy Bingham previews the transformation of DUC in this week’s View from the Hill.

It’s taking lots of patience and teamwork, but the wait will be well worth it.

The student center that opened in 1970 will have a whole new look and feel when this project is complete in 2014.

This is the scene on the north side of Downing University Center.

 “You’ll see exterior demolition…8:21 you’ll see construction fencing is up”

That’s because the old DUC, with the trademark spiral staircases, will soon give way to this….

 “We’ll have open staircases that will allow you to see multiple floors from top to bottom.”

This major undertaking has been divided into two phases.

 “First phase affects the north side, or avenue of champions side of the building. “In phase two in 2013 after commencement, we’ll go to Minton Hall side of the building and start that work.”

The ground floor of DUC has already been gutted with the post office, ID Center and other offices relocating to Garrett Conference Center.

The WKU Store is also being emptied out and will open back up in the Garrett Ballroom in two weeks.

 “Accessability wise, you can’t beat this store.”

Meanwhile, the WKU Store has found another new home on South Campus.

 “We figured we’re gonna have to have a warehouse, a receiving area off campus that will have accessability to large trucks so we ran across the old Goodwill building and it had store frontage.”

The location on Nashville Road has already been a hit.

 “Our first few customers were out of town folks, they were here visiting Bowling Green and drove by and realized there was a store here.”

It’s a preview of what’s ahead next year when a massive WKU store opens in the renovated DUC.

 “We’re gonna be right next to the football stadium, right next to the basketball stadium on ground level so we’re going to have the opportunity to market to folks as they walk by.”

A radical renovation that some say will make D-U-C the Taj Mahal of student centers.

WKU’s Fresh Food Dining Service will close after commencement next month and a temporary dining facility will open on south lawn at the end of July to serve the campus until the entire project is completed in 2014.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.