The state has appropriated $4.7 million in capital improvements funding to Harris-Stowe State University over the last decade, but $2 million, or approximately 43%, has been restricted or vetoed.
Harris-Stowe State University

Harris-Stowe is an open-enrollment university located in the city of St. Louis offering baccalaureate and select master’s degrees. Nearly 1,500 students attend Harris-Stowe from 31 countries, and about one-third of students live on campus. All on-campus students are undergraduates.

Capital Improvement & Facilities History

Over the past decade, $4.7M in capital improvements funding has been appropriated to Harris-Stowe State University, with $2M vetoed or restricted. All of the approved funding has been intended for maintenance and repair projects. In 2015, the legislature appropriated funds for a 50/50 project to renovate the Vashon Center. However, the state portion was vetoed by Governor Nixon and the project had to be significantly downsized. With the funds available, the Vashon Center received a new roof, but not all of the windows could be replaced; therefore the building is not climate-controlled and is currently used as storage. In fiscal year 2017 and 2019, funds were approved for laboratory renovations. The funds were restricted in fiscal year 2017 and one third of the fiscal year 2019 funding was vetoed. With the funds remaining, Harris-Stowe plans to complete laboratory renovations but cannot complete the full project as it was requested and approved.

Facility Challenges

Growth in enrollment has Harris-Stowe operating at full capacity. A residence hall added to the campus only six years ago is already at capacity. Last year, Harris-Stowe housed students off campus, and institution leaders project that they will need to house at least 50 students off campus in the coming academic year. Newer buildings, including a state-of-the-art early childhood development and parent education center, residence halls, library, performing arts center, and gym and athletic facility operate at high utilization. Classrooms and student events are tightly scheduled to meet space demands, and athletic programs compete for limited space. All of these buildings were constructed using a variety of funds, including state and federal appropriations, bonds, and private donations.

Despite the high utilization of newer buildings, 80% of courses delivered on campus are provided in the Dr. Henry Givens Jr. Administration (HGA) building. Classrooms are old but well-used, and faculty offices are cramped but active. HGA was built in 1925 as a high school and occupies nearly half (45%) of the total campus square footage. This building presents major facility challenges for Harris-Stowe. It has aging systems and several deficiencies that have a negative impact on the educational programs offered in the

cont. >>
1. New STEM Building

Both Harris-Stowe’s number of research grants and the student population enrolled in science and math programs are growing. Harris-Stowe produces 9.1% of the degrees in sciences granted to African American students in the state of Missouri. A new STEM building is a strategic move for Harris-Stowe and is its highest priority. The new 27,000 square foot facility will house six state-of-the-art science classrooms and six research extensions where funded research will be conducted. The building will also house standard classroom space for non-laboratory math and science lectures. The math and science department faculty will be housed in the building.

Moving science labs from the HGA building to a new STEM building will eliminate the need for expenditures to renovate those labs and free up valuable classroom space to accommodate the institution’s growth.

Capital Priorities

Harris-Stowe State University has identified the following as the university’s top three capital priorities for the future. The total state request for these projects is about $34 million.

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Harris-Stowe State University
2. New Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE)

The mission of the CIE is to cultivate and foster the growth of emerging entrepreneurs from underserved communities as future business owners. There is an urgent need within the St. Louis metropolitan area to address the unmet needs of low and moderate income individuals by providing education and consulting for startup businesses. The CIE will provide educational training and services in a state-of-the-art facility for Harris-Stowe State University students and the community at large.

The proposed 14,600 square foot center is conveniently located in midtown St. Louis adjacent to Harris-Stowe, and will provide:

- An incubator program to reflect the needs of the St. Louis metropolitan area community and create a cycle of job creation and innovation within underrepresented communities
- Services to startups over a period of 1-2 years as new businesses grow from the incubation stage to full maturity
- A mixed use/blended model of service delivery enabling startups in the incubation stage to interact with business owners reaching full maturity; the space will also include retail space to lower the cost of services provided by the CIE
- Using the School of Business Entrepreneurship degree program as its foundation, the CIE will offer training sessions and workshops for entrepreneurs at all stages of business development
- Access to office and meeting space including related technology for startups, technical assistance regarding marketing, legal, financial, and human resources needs of small businesses

Harris-Stowe’s CIE will attract a diverse pool of talented entrepreneurs and provide a variety of resources required for innovation and successful startups, resulting in systematic and long-lasting change to the St. Louis community.

3. Renovation & Restoration of Dr. Henry Givens Jr. Administration Building

The Dr. Henry Givens Jr. Administration Building (HGA), Harris-Stowe’s main academic building, was built in 1925 as Vashon High School. The building houses 80% of the institution’s classroom space, administrative offices, faculty offices, and an auditorium that is a center of academic and community activities. A prior plan requested $3.26M to renovate HGA’s laboratories. Harris-Stowe’s program growth in all areas, but particularly those in the sciences, indicates that a wiser facility move is to build a new STEM facility. This move will make valuable space in HGA available for other program areas to expand, thereby satisfying the institution’s classroom crunch.

This expenditure will allow for mechanical improvements completing energy improvements already initiated. Additionally, new collaborative classroom spaces will replace outdated science labs. This project will also include basic renovations to corridors, currently overcrowded faculty offices, and a new auditorium.