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Diving into Dole Hall's History



DIVING INTO DOLE HALL'S HISTORY

Before it was Dole Hall, this 32-year-old building was used as a distance learning center. October 21, 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the dedication of Dole Hall. However, prior to naming the building after U.S. Senator Bob Dole, it was called the Kansas Regents Educational Communications Center.

The Kansas Regents Educational Communications Center (ECC) was established in 1988 as part of a statewide effort by the Kansas Board of Regents to provide interactive video conferencing to the K-State community. They also offered courses to high school students in remote or disadvantaged schools.

Construction on the ECC began in April 1989. While the building was under construction, the center was housed in Umberger Hall. After Bob Dole helped to secure federal funding for the building of the center, the Kansas Board of Regents approved a request by K-State to name the building after him.

At the time of its completion, the center had production studios, mobile production units and video disk systems. In January 1993, students in more than 150 high schools throughout 13 states were taking French and Spanish classes from K-State. K-State instructors would hold review sessions via television,

which allowed their students to learn from home. Other broadcast programs included "Kids a Cookin'," which was a syndicated program produced for K-State's Research and Extension Family Nutrition Program.

The ECC provided language classes to thousands of high school students across the United States, and also university and state event coverage, including the Landon Lecture Series and the governor's State of the State address. It provided assistance to university faculty members with videotaping lectures and supported the training and informational needs of a variety of clients. It won numerous state and national awards



for education programming and advancements, including numerous Telly Awards and American Distance Education Consortium Excellence in Distance Education Awards.

After Mel Chastain, Director of the Educational Communications Center, retired in 2007, the ECC was subsumed into Global Campus and the Division of Communications and Marketing.

Overall, the history of Dole Hall is one of educational excellence and community relations. Maybe it's no surprise that today the hall is home to many communication programs, including the university's Division of Communications and Marketing and student-run Channel 8 news.



Above: (left to right) Jon Wefald, president of Kansas State University from 1986 to 2009, Mel Chastain, director of the Educational Communications Center (ECC) and Bob Dole, U.S. senator, attend the dedication of the building.

Middle: Dole, Wefald and Chastain visited the construction site of the ECC in early 1989.

Left: Chastain and Dole on the day Dole Hall was dedicated. The building was named after Dole because of his help in securing federal funding for building the center.



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