



Ashford University plans 2nd campus

Herald Staff Writer

By Rebecca Boysen— CLINTON — There are big changes on the horizon for Ashford University.

The four-year institution is planning to build a new college campus here in Clinton. “I have an architect coming to this campus next week so we can review the possibility of building a brand-new campus right here in Clinton, Iowa,” said Ashford CEO Andrew Clark during a special presentation Monday. “We plan on accomplishing a master plan at the end of the year to outline a vision for building a brand new campus system with state-of-the-art facilities, which can support 3,000 to 4,000 students.”

The school currently has about 10,000 students. According to Clark, the existing Ashford campus would be renovated, and used to support a specific college of the university, such as education.

“We may make significant changes at this campus by building completely new buildings, in addition to refurbishing both St. Clare Hall and the Durgin Center,” Clark said. “If we took this approach, we would take the remaining buildings, and replace them with brand new facilities.”



Founded in 1918 as Mount St. Clare College and Academy, the university was purchased from the Sisters of St. Francis in 2005 by Bridgeview Education of Poway, Calif.

“I remember when Bridgepoint Education first purchased Ashford University, there were questions about whether the campus would continue, if there would be investment in the campus, investment in the community,” Clark said. “Well, I’m proud of all the various investments we have made in the community over the past two and a half years.”

According to Clark, when Bridgepoint purchased Ashford in 2005, it contributed a payroll of \$4.8 million.

“This year alone, we will contribute \$11.1 million in payroll to the Clinton economy, and over the next year, we plan to contribute another \$3.6 million,” Clark said. “We are deeply committed to the people of Clinton.”

According to Clark, the university has increased total new student enrollment by 45 percent over last year. Clark said on-campus enrollment at Ashford has grown to 525 this fall, 97 more than last fall. The university this year has its largest freshman class since 1999.

The university has also been granted a 10-year reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, in addition to being accepted into the Higher Learning Commission's Academy of Assessment of Student Learning.

The university's new online center has contributed more than 300 jobs to the area, and plans are being made to add more in the future.

The university has also added several new academic programs, including master's programs in arts and education, health care administration and public administration. According to a recent survey of more than Ashford 1,000 students, 98 percent would recommend the university to their friends and family.

"We set out to provide a successful, affordable alternative to higher education," Clark said. "Students have responded to that value."

Clark said architects will be on campus next week to begin developing a master plan. Clark said he hopes the plan will be finished by the end of the year.

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