



McDowell Law Center Evolution

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The C. Blake McDowell Law Center opened in 1973 with several classrooms, seminar rooms, and an attractive atrium open to the sky at the center of the building. The law school also took over the top floor of West Hall for classroom and office space. For several years, we operated a clinic in the basement of the former train station across the street.

In the mid-1980s, we built a major addition in response to the American Bar Association's demand for more library space. We had to move classes elsewhere on campus, including, in my case, to The Chapel. We finally got our classrooms back, but we lost the central atrium, covered by the

new library space.

After many years of traipsing through the snow between McDowell and West Hall, we built the “link” connecting the two buildings. Along with more office space, we now had a very attractive two-story atrium for public events. We also took over the first floor of West Hall for both the Clinic and a new student lounge.

Life was good, but the HVAC system was not, and our classrooms were outmoded, both threatening our accreditation. Dean Belsky committed to a new building.

The recession of 2008 was not kind to those plans. It was not until 2017 that we opened a fully rebuilt, state-of-the-art facility. Ironically, we now reduced the size of the library. Today, with classrooms and technology second-to-none, the law school is ready for the next fifty years at the University.