



Concordia's entire campus moves across Austin

Posted: June 17, 2008 06:06 PM

Updated: June 18, 2008 08:36 AM



Concordia University's campus of 2,000 students is relocating from downtown to NW Austin.

AUSTIN, Texas (KXAN) -- An unusual move is underway in Austin this summer. Even though school is out for the summer, Concordia University's brand-new campus was buzzing with activity Tuesday.

Since 1926, Concordia has called the 23 acres nestled downtown alongside Interstate 35 its home. Now the school is trading in the sounds of trucks, sirens and air horns for birds, breezes and creeks on nearly 400 acres of land on the Balcones Canyonland Preserve in Northwest Austin.

"Going to a new office, not unusual; redecorating new offices, not unusual; moving an entire campus? Very unusual," said Don Adam, vice president of external relations at Concordia.

Construction crews have been busy renovating the six existing buildings on the school's new site. They are constructing two dorms, a field house and a baseball field.

The faculty is eager for students to arrive, although the school year will start a couple of weeks later on Sept. 10, so workers can get the job done.

"Like kids in a candy store, they're going to want to run around and see everything real quickly," Adam said. "On 23 acres that was doable, on 389 that's not doable! You're not going to be able to run that much."

"I'd like to move into my office out here, get a lawn chair and set it out in front of my office, and just watch people move in," said Dr. David Kluth, vice president of university services at Concordia.

Back on campus downtown, it was all about the deconstruction of the old campus buildings. Workers crushed stone, brick and concrete and said they plan to use about 85 percent of it for the new development, said Andy Sarwal, the lead developer for East Avenue.

Sarwal said 2.5 million square feet of space is being developed. That is roughly the equivalent of five Frost Bank buildings. Plans call for offices, retail, residential condos and apartments, and a five-star luxury hotel.

"Densifying the urban core is something that's intrinsically important to us," Sarwal said. "We think it's important to Austin. We think it's a very unique site. There's no other campus that we know of, no other college that's ever moved like this."

Story online at: <http://www.kxan.com/global/story.asp?s=8515113>