

MSU Debuts Mock Office Construction Trailer

By Jessie Fetterling (11/24/2015)

STARKVILLE, Miss. — Mississippi State University (MSU) officials, faculty, staff and students gathered on Oct. 23 to celebrate the new Construction Training and Research Laboratory (CTRL) for the university's building construction science (BCS) program — one of only two studio-based construction programs in the U.S.

“The CTRL is an innovative new venue in an academic setting that allows applied and collaborative learning,” said Dr. Craig Capano, director of the BCS program. “It provides students and faculty a place to model and research new and evolving technologies and processes that are having an impact on how we are designing and building future projects.”

The CTRL is a 720-square-foot office construction trailer situated on a parking area. It serves as a mock construction site outfitted with the latest in high-tech equipment, according to Dr. Capano. This includes a TechSuite office and KNAACK DataVault with construction-site technology from companies such as Hewlett-Packard, [EarthCam](#), Samsung and CyberPower. Students will benefit from firsthand experience operating smart boards, digital plan tables, interactive monitors, job-site cameras, software servers and plotting or printing technology, according to Dr. Capano.

Other features include office furnishings for a variety of configuration options. There is also a 3,600-square-foot mock-up and assembly yard as well as a 128-square-foot storage shed for tools, equipment and materials.

“[The CTRL creates] applied learning environments and research opportunities for students, faculty and the construction industry,” Dr. Capano said. “This new lab offers the chance to train students and keep up with the direction the construction industry is headed in regard to technology. The CTRL will allow us to equip students to face these new technologies in a collaborative work environment.”

The biggest challenge in developing the CTRL was creating a collaborative partnership with academia, vendors and the industry to come together for a common educational project, Dr. Capano added. “In the end, all parties agree that this is a venue which can represent how all parties must work united if we are to further the development of construction higher education,” he said.

“Our building construction science program is becoming more and more popular, and we now have this wonderful teaching and research laboratory for our students to be able to enjoy,” said MSU President Mark E. Keenum at the Oct. 23 celebration. “We absolutely understand the importance of having well-trained leaders in this profession. What sets us apart as a university is that we provide real-world opportunities so that our students can be successful.”

In addition to Keenum, other distinguished guests in attendance included MSU Provost and Executive Vice President Jerry Gilbert; Jim West, dean of the College of Architecture, Art and Design; Joel A. “Tony” Carroll of Tupelo, a 1975 MSU industrial arts education graduate, CAAD Alumni Fellow and BCS Industry Advisory Council chair who now serves as vice president and construction manager of Sanderson Construction Co. Inc.; and Ron Perkins, president of Jobsite Tech Group.

