

The Inside Scoop: A Q&A with Foster Campus Decision Makers

BY / BECCA BROADDUS



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
ANTHONY LAPES
AND **JD DETHROW**

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BAYLOR UNIVERSITY is home to experts in thousands of fields, but staff members **JD DETHROW** and **ANTHONY LAPES** have begun sharing one area of expertise in recent years: the Paul L. Foster Campus for Business and Innovation. Lapes, the director of the Hankamer School of Business Technology Center and chair of the business school’s core decision team for the project, and Dethrow, senior project manager in Baylor’s construction services department, have been working on the Foster Campus since its inception. I sat down with the pair to get an insider’s look at the making of the new home of Baylor Business.

BECCA BROADDUS: *How were you involved in the building of the Foster Campus?*

ANTHONY LAPES: I serve as the point person for the business school to help keep the dean informed of issues or decisions that need to be made, as well as involving other faculty and staff, as needed.

JD DETHROW: I manage the project as the representative of the university, so I help manage the general contractor and the architect. I evaluate the decisions they make and how they affect the university.

BB: *What were the goals for the new facility?*

JD: We wanted to keep the project in budget, ensure the architects understood the users’ needs and stay on schedule. From a design construction perspective, one of the goals was to do a design-build delivery, which is different than our traditional approach...This approach allows everybody to work together earlier.

AL: Dean Maness wanted to create a space that would meet students’ needs beyond just a place to take class. In our previous facility, students would come, take class and then go elsewhere, so there wasn’t that dynamic of community. Beyond that, the values expressed on the pillars in the atrium, everything from innovation to excellence—our goal was that all of the characteristics we value as a business school would be expressed in the facility.

BB: *What have you learned?*

AL: A lot of practical things about architecture and construction, but I also learned a lot about interacting with people. Getting to know people quite well working over a multi-year span helps you to understand people and to come together as a team. It was a tremendous growing experience for me.

JD: I learned I don’t know anything about today’s classroom! That was a pleasant surprise throughout the project... just seeing the way teaching is executed today using technology.

BB: *What’s your favorite part of working on this project?*

JD: I like problem solving. Trying to imagine what the problem is and then working toward a solution.

AL: There’s something really gratifying about taking the expressions of people—what they want to see—and transforming it into an actual facility.

BB: *What about the Foster Campus most excites you?*

AL: The classrooms. It is our core business, and we are providing faculty with more varied opportunities in terms of the ways they can teach. We want to enable faculty to create more engaged learning opportunities.

JD: I’m excited for the students and faculty. They have a campus that caters to each of them uniquely. Students have a place where they can learn, study, work, collaborate, meet with a group, interview or relax. Faculty have a much more productive place to research, work, prepare for class, and like the students with the variety of classes to learn in, they have a variety of classrooms to teach in.

BB: *OK, last one. In three words, describe Foster Campus.*

JD: Cutting edge. Enjoyable.

AL: Innovative. Collaborative. I would be remiss if I didn’t say beautiful. But also, my fourth word would be inviting. So there, I broke the rules. 📌

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