

As students and visitors approach the main entrance of the East Campus, they are greeted by a new sight – a gleaming sculpture more than 10 feet tall with wings reaching skyward and a sphere balanced between its wings.

The stainless steel sculpture includes nearly 100 icons representing past and present East Campus academic programs and extracurricular activities. Sculptor Duke Oursler, an assistant professor of art at Western Illinois University, designed and created the massive artwork called “Brink.”



Richard Fiems, chair of the BHC Board of Trustees; Dr. Bettie Truitt, BHC president; Drew Cotton, BHC associate professor of horse science; Duke Oursler, Brink sculptor; Liz Breedlove, executive director of the BHC East Foundation; and Doug Parrott, chair of the BHC East Foundation

“Upon physically entering the campus and passing by the sculpture, students and faculty are crossing a metaphorical threshold to the future,” Oursler said. “They are stepping beyond the ‘brink’ of their current knowledge and exploring new ideas and possibilities.”

The Brink was dedicated Oct. 16 at a celebration that culminated three years of planning and fundraising.

Each year, the e4e (Employees for Education) Employee Giving Campaign spends its first meeting brainstorming potential project ideas. Before the 2014 campaign, a piece of artwork that could become a focal point was selected as the project.

“Duke provided the artistic direction for the vision provided by the 2014 e4e Employee Giving Committee. The end result is a magnificent representation of Black Hawk College East Campus, reflecting Duke’s artistry and amazing talent,” said Liz Breedlove, executive director of the BHC East Foundation.

“The vision was to commission a statue that would draw attention and be a lasting symbol of

Black Hawk College East Campus,” said Drew Cotton, associate professor of horse science and chair of the 2014-16 e4e committees.

The committees raised more than \$23,000 for the sculpture. Donors included BHC employees, retirees, trustees and East Foundation Board members.

Additionally, Blake Benedict with Mechanical Service Inc. provided in-kind support toward the electrical work for the Brink. At night, the sculpture is illuminated with colored lights that project the icons onto the ground.

To see the Brink at night, watch this Facebook [video](#).

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