



## CAMPUS HISTORY

### 1980-1989 A New Focus

The 1980s saw a change in leaders and a shift in focus at Kent State Stark. Long-time Director Jack Morehart, whose efforts had helped create the modern Stark Campus, turned over Campus leadership to a new Dean, Dr. William G. Bittle. The building construction and campus expansion that had dominated the 1970s yielded to an emphasis on the campus infrastructure during the 1980s. Significant changes and additions to the grounds, staff, faculty, and student services led to a qualitative--rather than quantitative--sense of improvement and change on the campus. During this time, the University theater, concert band, fine arts programs, community services, and other on-campus activities expanded significantly, providing many students with an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the college experience.

At the same time, programs were being developed to meet the needs of the nearby community in a variety of ways. The Office of Special Programs and Continuing Studies grew during this time frame from a one-person staff offering limited personal enrichment programs to a vital part of the Kent State Stark picture. The focus of the office was on continuing education course work and the development of workshops and seminar programs for community groups, local businesses, and scholarly and professional organizations. The Midwest Writers Conference, for example, began as a small local conference and grew to be a major event on campus. The credentials of the faculty continued to be more and more impressive during the 1980s as the campus offered a true university curriculum and faculty, with the atmosphere of a small, liberal arts college. Kent State Stark made up for the unfortunate loss of many of its intercollegiate athletic programs (due to state funding cuts) by placing an increased emphasis on better teaching and a broader range of student activities.

More significantly perhaps, Kent State Stark worked throughout the 1980s to continue to enhance the quality of service to the students on the campus. Substantial renovations to the facilities made accommodations for classrooms, computer utilizations, and student assistance in numerous areas more "user friendly" in many ways. For example, the organization of the Student Services Office gave every student the opportunity to be admitted, advised, considered for financial aid, and registered all in one location. In addition to its many other quality programs, Kent State Stark entered the 1990s on the cutting edge of computer access and utilization by providing numerous, well staffed computer labs that were accessible to student users. All in all, the decade of the 80s continued the forward progress that had marked the school's previous four decades, and set the stage for the current era of growth and innovation.

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