



LCSC HERITAGE

Sam Glenn Complex (Sam Glenn Vocational Complex)

Date Constructed: 1971, 1974, 1978

As early as 1909, Lewiston Normal offered vocational education or instruction for “manual training, music and drawing, primary methods and rural science.” In 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Hughes Act creating a Federal Board for Vocational Education to oversee a massive program between federal and state governments with the goal of training vocational teachers for public schools. Idaho Governor Moses Alexander accepted the provisions of the Smith-Hughes Act and appointed the State Board of Education to oversee Idaho’s vocational education programs.

In the 1950’s, legislative committees twice dispatched Sam Glenn to Lewiston. They tasked Glenn, then assistant state supervisor of trade and industrial education, to determine whether or not the vacant buildings on the campus of Lewis-Clark Normal School could accommodate vocational instruction. Glenn found some favorable aspects to the campus but reported negatively on its overall acceptability.

Then, early in the 1960’s, Congress passed a new federal vocational act, and in 1965, the Idaho Legislature subsequently approved the addition of post-secondary vocational courses for Twin Falls and Lewiston. Once again Sam Glenn was sent north to take a look at possibilities. And this time, Glenn reported favorably. Soon thereafter, twenty acres of land several blocks from the campus were purchased specifically for the site of a proposed post-secondary vocational school. Although debates about the wisdom of combining academics and vocational training on the same campus would continue, in 1967 the State Board of Education made the decision to physically merge the academic and vocational divisions of its Lewiston school rather than isolate them.

Again, Sam Glenn visited Lewiston to reexamine the best sites for a proposed complex of vocational-technical buildings. With that end in mind, the State Board of Education negotiated a land swap with the City of Lewiston, exchanging the 20 acres previously purchased for the proposed vocational school for 4.5 acres of land immediately adjacent to the academic campus. That same year, 1967, the Idaho legislature approved \$750,000 to construct a vocational education building.

In August of 1968, Sam Glenn died of a heart attack. No one had done more to promote vocational education in Idaho. Exactly one year after the groundbreaking ceremony for its first vocational building, Lewis-Clark officials invited Sam Glenn’s widow to cut the ribbon officially dedicating the entire vocational project to her husband. The project was thereafter known as Sam Glenn Vocational Complex.

Also in 1968, the Clearwater Economic Development Association gained state approval to make Lewiston eligible for federal funds as a growth center. The Vocational-Technical Director, Marion Shinn, and CEDA board members persuaded the federal government to help boost area development by granting an additional \$750,000 for constructing a second structure. The first of the two buildings – now known as The Mechanical-Technical Building—was completed in July 1969, and the second in 1971. The second building has now taken on an abbreviated version of the name of the entire project: The Sam Glenn Complex (also affectionately known simply as “Sam Glenn”).

As things turned out, the construction of this building signaled the beginning of decades of impressive growth for both the vocational and the academic programs at the college. Sam Glenn's son, Dr. Michael Glenn, served the college briefly as its interim president from 1994 to 1995.

History taken from *Educating in the American West One Hundred Years at Lewis-Clark State College 1893-1993* by Keith Petersen and interviews with Marion Shinn