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Project to Restore Prairie at Governors State University Now Fully Funded

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From: [Drakulich, Michael](#)
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Attachments: [DoddPortrait.jpg](#)
[Bill Dodd official copy press release--FINAL.docx](#)

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For Immediate Release

Photo: Portrait of former GSU administrator Bill Dodd.

Project to restore prairie at Governors State University now fully funded

University Park, Ill., Feb. 26, 2014 – Governors State University announced this week that financing for prairie restoration on the university’s campus has now been fully funded through generous donations.

The university has raised \$29,160 for the Bill Dodd Memorial Prairie Restoration Fund. The prairie restoration will be done to compliment the university’s Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, which is located right on campus.

Investment income raised from the principal amount will fund ongoing landscape projects around the sculpture park. The goal is to restore the natural flora around the park back to conditions seen by settlers when they first arrived in the area in the early 19th Century.

The fund is named after William H. Dodd, a longtime administrator at Governors State University, who played a large role in creating the sculpture park. Dodd was also known for his love of nature. To honor him, those who knew Dodd thought the fund and its purpose would be a fitting tribute.

Geoffrey Bates, director and curator for the sculpture park, said restoring the native flora to the area creates a more enriching experience for the sculpture park’s visitors.

“Restoring the area to pre-settlement conditions creates a unique experience,” Bates

said. “When visitors encounter the works of art within the wild of the prairie, it creates a striking contrast between the deliberate and controlled vision of the artists with the natural and wild look of Illinois prairie.”

Bates said even though the university has reached its initial goal, additional donations would allow for the scope of the restoration to widen. Maintaining the sculpture park in its natural state also is important for students who will be learning on a campus infused with the arts, he said.

Some of the prairie restoration has begun. The university has conducted two controlled burns to eradicate non-native plant species and native plant species will be planted in place.

Donations for the Bill Dodd Memorial Prairie Restoration Fund are processed through the GSU Foundation. To contribute to this fund, contact Geoffrey Bates at gbates@govst.edu or call (708)534-4486.