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## TowerPinkster named to work on East Hall renovations

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2013

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Work is to begin immediately on the transformation of East Hall at [Western Michigan University](#) into a new alumni center now that TowerPinkster has been selected to develop plans for the project.

[TowerPinkster](#), with offices in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, has been selected to be the architects for the project that will create a home for the university's alumni and development offices. The university says the alumni center will be the focus of campus and community events and a showplace to highlight the WMU's history.

TowerPinkster principal architect Bjorn Green will lead the project. He and his team will meet with [WMU](#) campus planners to develop a schedule and launch a design process.

Some of TowerPinkster's recent historic preservation projects include the Federal Building in Grand Rapids, recently renovated for Ferris State University's Kendall College of Art and Design. It won the 2013 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation.

David Dakin, director of planning in WMU's Facilities Management Department, says he is looking forward to working with the award-winning architectural firm and says: "Bjorn Green knows this building inside and out, so he'll be able to hit the ground running. His firm is part of the fabric of this community, and its record in the historic preservation arena is first rate."

Gene Hopkins from Hopkins Burns Design Studio of Ann Arbor also will work on the project. He has worked to oversee projects involving such National Historic Landmarks as the Grand Hotel, and Fort Mackinac.

The \$15 million project calls for renovation of the core of East Hall, about 34,000 square feet of space. East Hall is WMU's original building and was completed in 1905. It includes the columned portico facing the community, a lighted cupola and the University's original administrative and instructional spaces.

The site is at the top of Prospect Hill and overlooks Kalamazoo's downtown area. Building at the location began in 1904, shortly after the University was founded as Western State Normal School. The core of East Hall and the 20 acres at the top of the hill were donated to the new school by the Kalamazoo community. East Hall became a National Historic Landmark in 1978.

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