



Home > News > Editorials

Dobelle Again Remaking A City

WESTFIELD REDUX • Former Trinity president spurs revival again

August 25, 2009

E-mail Print Share Text size

Topics

- Trinity College, Connecticut
- Government
- Starbucks Corp.

See more topics »

Ads by Google

University of Phoenix
 Official Site. Online Programs. Flexible Scheduling. Get Info.
 Phoenix.edu

Hawaii Student - Live Here
 100% Students. *Beware Hotels that try to trick you! Ask Questions*
 www.hawaiistudenthousing.org

Crisis Communications
 Learn how to respond effectively when a crisis strikes your campus.
 www.SimpsonScarborough.com

When he was president of **Trinity College** a decade ago, Evan S. Dobelle was in the vanguard of a movement among colleges to help develop their neighborhoods and cities. Schools such as Yale and Brown have been catalysts for change in their communities.

Mr. Dobelle spearheaded the development of the Learning Corridor campus between Trinity and **Hartford Hospital**, which brought top magnet schools to the city and helped stabilize the Frog Hollow-Barry Square neighborhoods.

It's good to see Mr. Dobelle is back at it, this time in Westfield, Mass.

After stints as president of the University of **Hawaii** and the New England Board of Higher Education, Mr. Dobelle became president of Westfield State College in December 2007. He began working with the city and his school's foundation to plan the revival of Westfield's quiet-to-moribund downtown. That effort got a big boost with the recent announcement that **Barnes & Noble** College Booksellers will establish a bookstore, with a **Starbucks** coffee outlet, in downtown Westfield by fall 2010. The chain will also manage the school's on-campus bookstore starting next month.

This is part of a plan that, if fully realized, will bring housing for up to 1,000 students to the central business district and create several arts venues there as well. The student presence will lure restaurants and other private investment downtown.

Universities are big businesses. The 270 colleges in New England employ 250,000 people and spend \$20 billion a year in operating expenses. If more of this economic power can be directed at cities, it becomes a vital tool at fighting sprawl, building a creative economy and making urban areas vibrant again. Mr. Dobelle has understood this for years.

Copyright © 2009, The Hartford Courant

E-mail Print Digg Twitter Facebook StumbleUpon Share

