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## NKU's grown used to the rock

### Pragmatic solution now unremarkable

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**HIGHLAND HEIGHTS** - With a new arena, and state-of-the-art buildings popping up seemingly every year, Northern Kentucky University's campus has grown along with its enrollment. But years before NKU began to sprawl, its planners had to do the best with what they had.

Construction of the Business-Education-Psychology Center may have been an early education in managing growth: When you can't go through something, go around it. The building, better known to NKU's approximately 15,000 students and 45,000 alumni as BEP, has a rock in the middle of it.

When construction began in the late 1970s, the builders soon realized that a large rock formation was going to be costly to move. So they left it. The formation is still there and pokes itself into the building's first floor. The problem is that to get from a first-floor room on one side of the building to another first-floor room may require taking an elevator up and over the rock, or walking outside the building to another door.

Mary Paula Schuh, NKU's director of campus and space planning, said the build-around solution was driven by the university's growth.

"It was a push to get as much square footage possible, because enrollment was bursting," Schuh said. BEP was one of the last buildings built during a construction boom at the Highland Heights campus in the 1970s. Nunn Hall and Regents Hall were completed in 1971. The old science building opened in 1974. Steeley Library, Landrum Academic Center and the University Center opened in 1977.

The rock in BEP doesn't bother too many students because very few have to make that transition. The university schedules education classes on one end of the first floor and business classes on other.

"You sort of get used to it," said NKU spokesman Chris Cole, an alumni. "You know where you need to go and figure out how to get there."

"It's a little challenging at first, I guess, but everyone gets used to it. I don't hear people talk about it much. We're a pretty pragmatic campus."