

# High Point University unveils plan to 'lead the way' with \$160M in new building projects

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High Point University President Nido Qubein on Wednesday announced \$160 million in projects, saying the three-year stretch of new construction and offerings is a way for the university "to lead the way" in High Point.

"We want to partner with the city at large and make great things happen in the next decade," Qubein said. "We're going to lead the way, and we're going to lead the way by expanding the university."

The new phase of construction at the university's main campus includes:

- a \$70 million 5,000-seat arena and conference center, with the possible addition of a small executive hotel;
- a \$60 million undergraduate science center to include a planetarium, a conservatory and a restaurant;
- a \$23 million residence hall to house 310 students.

High Point University has been in a state of near-constant construction and expansion during the past decades, as the campus has more than quadrupled in size to 420 acres, grown from 22 buildings to more than 100 and seen its student population expand from 1,450 to more than 4,400.

The university is now in the midst of building its new Congdon School of Health Sciences and the Fred Wilson School of Pharmacy, a \$120 million project that HPU broke ground on last summer and which should be completed in March 2017.

What stands out about this next list of projects is that they are designed to be more integrated with the High Point community at large, as well as include money-generating components intended to attract outside audiences, such as the restaurant running in partnership with the conservatory, and the conference center and hotel.

"We are focused on creating space that accommodates the needs of High Point University," Qubein told me. "But we also want to consider — how can we also serve the needs of the community at large?"

The largest of the three projects — the arena and conference center — will become home to the university's men's and women's basketball programs and serve as a large-scale venue to accommodate major events, speakers, concerts and recreational activities.

According to Qubein, the university has about two dozen events each year with 1,000 or more attendees, and right now, there is no facility with the capacity for those crowds in a single location.

Along with the 5,000-seat arena, which will include suites, locker rooms, staff offices and athletic training areas, the connected conference center can accommodate 2,500 in one large room, with a kitchen that feeds 1,500, along with smaller meeting rooms.

Qubein will also be presenting plans for a connected hotel to the university's board this fall.

The specific location for the expansive complex has not been settled on, with four locations on the main campus now being considered, Qubein said.

"We have significant acreage on campus now that is open for development," Qubein said.

The new \$60 million, 65,000-square-foot undergraduate science building will be located adjacent to the health science and pharmacy schools now under construction on the south end of the campus along what had been Montlieu Boulevard.

The decision to include "a brand-new state-of-the-art planetarium" within the building is to grow the school's small astronomy program, but more broadly, to create an attraction for the community at large, Qubein said.

"This would be quite a facility that as you know could be utilized by students of High Point University, but we feel this would be a tremendous asset for the Triad community," Qubein said.

The attached conservatory will be home to an expansive array of botanical life, and will house a restaurant open to the general public, likely featuring organic and vegetarian fare, Qubein said.

"This is innovative. We really have an eye on being innovative in our approach, and it has worked phenomenally well in the last decade, and we've only just begun," he said.

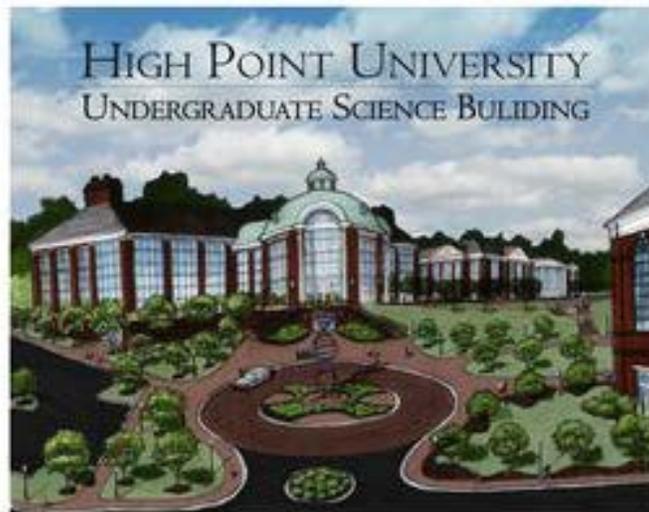
The new 150,000-square-foot residence hall, the tenth added at HPU since 2005, will house 310 students and will be built near Cottrell Hall, home to the Center for Student Success, that opened last year.

As for paying for the projects, Quebein said at least \$30 million has already been raised in large dedicated gifts, with additional fundraising activity to commence with the announcement of the plans. Operating revenues will also underwrite the cost, he said.

Qubein believes that the university is undertaking this next phase of expansion after reaching "critical mass" with the expansion of its student body and academic programs that includes awarding the university's first doctoral degrees next month.

The addition of new programs, such as the pharmacy program which will accept its first students later this year, along with expanding freshman classes should add another 1,000 students to the campus within the next several years, he said.

"The university today is in a sweet spot," Qubein said. "We are poised for natural, organic growth. We believe at High Point we need to innovate, or become irrelevant."



A rendering of the new \$60 million, 65,000-square-foot undergraduate science building planned at High Point University.