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Cranes are in the sky at Loyola

University begins campus upgrades

By **Craig Malveaux**
Staff writer

The profusion of trucks, backhoes and other heavy equipment around Loyola University's campus isn't exactly a recruiter's dream. But university officials hope the end result of the disruption is a more attractive campus that enhances the school's curb

appeal.

The construction projects, costing about \$35 million, are a part of Phase I of Loyola 2012, the university's strategic plan to improve the appearance of the campus and boost retention.

The ongoing work is the largest string of projects Loyola has seen in the past 10 years. Since 1999, \$32 million has been invested in construction around campus, including the Carrollton residence hall and J. Edgar and Louise S. Monroe Library.

The four projects include renovations to Thomas Hall and the Dominican Conference Center; a

two-floor addition to West Road parking garage and improvements to Loyola's infrastructure. Work on all four is under way.

"This plan reflects Loyola's commitment to a thriving, growing residential campus," said the Rev. Kevin Wildes, the university's president. "We are looking forward to the results, which will further accentuate the utility and beauty of our campus.

"Improvements to our classroom and teaching facilities will ensure we are providing learning environments that meet the demands of the 21st century," Wildes said. "Having

an increased capacity to house undergraduate students on campus will strengthen our ability to realize a Jesuit ideal of education, which is educating the whole person."

Upon completion, Thomas Hall will serve as the new administrative building — housing the admissions, financial aid, bursar, student records and student finance offices.

The former administrative building, Marquette Hall, located just behind the horseshoe overlooking St. Charles Avenue and

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RUSTY COSTANZA / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Renovations are under way at Thomas Hall at Loyola University in New Orleans on Friday, part of an ongoing strategic plan to improve residence halls, administrative offices and other facilities.



PHOTOS BY RUSTY COSTANZA / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

A construction worker works in a window at Thomas Hall at Loyola University in New Orleans on Friday, a project in the first phase of Loyola's strategic plan. The second phase is expected to include an updated sports complex.

Construction projects aimed at attracting, keeping students

LOYOLA, from B-1

Audubon Park, is expected to be used for additional classroom space. The recently purchased Dominican Conference Center will house offices in the College of Law as well as the Stuart H. Smith Law Clinic, where third-year law students represent indigent clients.

According to Wildes, all Phase I projects are scheduled to be completed by June.

In proposal for a second phase of work is in development. It will be presented to the University's Board of Trustees for approval in May.

The proposal, which calls for creating a new student center

and residence hall for prospective students, is slated to begin in the summer of 2011. Architectural firms Kell-Munoz of San Antonio and Mathes Brierre of New Orleans will design and develop both projects.

Other planned features include an updated sports complex and a new home for the College of Social Sciences.

"We are attracting very talented faculty and students to the university," Wildes said. "The improvement to our facilities will help to support our talented students and faculty in their work."

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Craig Malveaux can be reached at cmalveaux@timespicayune.com or 985.652.0958.



'Having an increased capacity to house undergraduate students on campus will strengthen our ability to realize a Jesuit ideal of education, which is educating the whole person,' said university president the Rev. Kevin Wildes.