

Claflin Breaks Ground on New Student Housing Complex

Written by Staff Writer

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Orangeburg, S.C. – Claflin University has broken ground on a new student housing complex that features state-of-the-art amenities geared toward grooming successful students and attracting many more in the years to come.

“We do envision having on our campus first-rate and first-class facilities for our students,” Claflin President Dr. Henry N. Tisdale said in welcoming those gathered at the groundbreaking ceremony held immediately after Thursday’s Matriculation Day Convocation. The complex, he continued, will be “consistent with the long-range plan developed for the University.”

The new 64,000 square foot residence hall – which will establish a new gateway to the campus from Goff Avenue – will be comprised of two three-story wings, one each for men and women, with accommodations for approximately 200 students in two- and four-bedroom suites. Each wing will feature its own elevator, laundry room, computer lab and informal study areas.

The wings, which will have card access locks accessible only by residents of each wing, will be connected by a shared student commons area that will include the main entry to the building. It will feature open gathering spaces, high ceilings, lots of natural light, a small multipurpose room for student meetings and two fitness rooms. New plazas and courtyards will provide additional outdoor gathering spaces for students.



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The building, designed with environmental stability in mind by Lord, Aeck & Sargent Architecture, will make use of natural daylight and energy-efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, thereby reducing the consumption of electricity and gas. High-efficiency plumbing fixtures will reduce water consumption, and the use of regional and recycled materials in the building's construction will help conserve natural resources.

Tisdale said the complex will bring to fruition the work of many city and campus officials, engineers, architects, contractors, students and others working together toward a common goal.

"The work that went into bringing us to this point was done with careful consideration, excellent oversight and very good participation," Clafin Board of Trustees Chairman Paul Fant said, adding that the Board unanimously approved the building project.

"At this very site, we will have a brand-new building that not only enhances the campus of Clafin University, but also speaks to the vision for this University," he said.

Marshall Clarke, chairman of the Board's Building and Grounds Committee, said the new complex will also aid in getting many of the students currently living off campus back on campus, "a goal that the University has always had."

Officials hope it will help in student recruitment efforts as well.

"A key element in the successful recruitment of students is the students themselves," the Board's Budget and Finance Committee Chairman Calvin Elam said, and the building has the potential to become a selling point as Clafin students share their on-campus living experience with others.

"We hope this new student residential center provides a strong sense that all of us are interested in the success of our students," he said.

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Student Government Association President Dwayne Coleman said the complex is just another example of Clafin's commitment to its student body.

"Personally, I'm very, very excited about this residential complex," he said. "My only regret is that, because I'm a senior, I will not be able to live in this great residential complex, but I know that current and future students will definitely enjoy this great and exciting new luxury."

Tisdale said the \$12 million project will include not only the cost of the building's construction, but also the integration of outdoor spaces and additional paved parking spaces nearby.

Construction will begin immediately on the new student housing complex. It is scheduled to be completed in August 2014.