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D-FW's \$1 billion college campus building boom aims to meet future workforce needs

Big ticket construction projects across North Texas will help train students for jobs in biotechnology, health care, business and more.



Rendering of \$140 million renovation and expansion project for the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University. This new building is one of many in a wave of construction on North Texas university campuses that will train the next generation of D-FW workers. (Courtesy of Southern Methodist U)

By [Angela Mathew](#)

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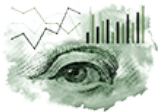
There's a building boom on college campuses across North Texas, with over \$1 billion in construction projects underway to train future nurses, scientists, biomedical engineers, doctors and business leaders.

In recent weeks, [Texas Women's University](#) in Denton and the [University of North Texas at Dallas](#) broke ground on separate \$100 million facilities to expand their programs in the medical sciences.

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Those expansions join other big projects already underway at Texas A&M and Tarleton State's Fort Worth campuses, Southern Methodist University, Texas Christian University, the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, the University of Texas at Dallas, Dallas College and the University of Texas at Arlington.

Here's a look at the new facilities taking shape across the region.



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Texas A&M-Fort Worth



An architect's rendering of the Texas A&M University-Fort Worth campus that will span four city blocks. (Texas A&M University-Fort Worth)

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Texas A&M broke ground in June on a new, nearly four-acre campus in Fort Worth that's being billed as "[a magnet for economic growth in the North Texas region](#)" by developing research and talent pipelines.

The first building in the project is a \$150 million, eight-story Law and Education center. It will replace the university's existing Fort Worth law school by 2025.

Two additional buildings are planned by 2027 for the campus that will span four city blocks.

University leaders plan to partner with defense and aerospace companies such as Lockheed Martin and Elbit Systems and eye care products company Alcon – all of which have extensive operations in Fort Worth – to nurture job growth in North Texas [by addressing workforce needs](#).

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A research and innovation building is planned for the next phase of the campus. It would house public and private research in areas such as aerospace, defense, energy, agriculture, transportation, telecommunications, health sciences and computer-based visualization.

Biotechnology and health care at Tarleton State University, Fort Worth



Rendering of the \$66 million Interprofessional Education building at Tarleton State University's campus in Fort Worth. (Courtesy of Tarleton State Unive)

The Stephenville university's 80-acre southwest Fort Worth campus currently has one building and 2,200 students enrolled this semester. A \$66 million Interprofessional Education Building is expected to start welcoming students next fall.

The 100,000-square-foot space with classrooms and specialized labs will offer courses in medical laboratory science, teacher education, kinesiology and nursing to address the region's shortage of workers in the education and health care sectors. The campus is planned to serve about 10,000 students by 2030, according to university officials.

As part of the Texas A&M-Fort Worth campus, Tarleton State will construct a new biotechnology institute to focus on bioinformatics and computational modeling that's applicable to industries from agriculture and medicine to energy and the environment. The biotechnology building is expected to be completed in early 2027.

The institute will offer degree programs in biotechnology, nursing and medical laboratory science and prepare students for a variety of STEM careers, said Rupa Iyer, Tarleton State's vice president of research, innovation and

economic development.

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Biomedical engineering at UT Southwestern Medical Center



Rendering of the \$120 million joint biomedical engineering building being built by the University of Texas at Dallas and UT Southwestern Medical Center.

A [\\$120 million biomedical engineering facility](#) is expected to open this month at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

The 150,000-square-foot, five-story facility – created through a partnership between UT Southwestern and the University of Texas at Dallas – will help connect bioengineers to physicians and patients.

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The facility will have labs designed for equipment development and testing, space for research and translational trials with patients, and device fabrication shops.

Arts at the University of Texas at Dallas



Rendering of the Crow Museum of Asian Art that will be built as part of the Edith and Peter O Donnell Jr. Athenaeum arts complex at the University of Texas at Dallas. (The University of Texas at Dallas)

The University of Texas at Dallas is investing in the arts.

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In May 2022, the university broke ground on the [Edith and Peter O'Donnell Jr. Athenaeum](#), a 12-acre complex that will include three buildings — a second location for the Crow Museum of Asian Art (the museum in the Arts District in Downtown Dallas), a performance hall and a museum that will house Latin American art.

The first phase of construction — the two-story, 68,000-square-foot building for the Crow Museum — will be complete by spring 2024.

The next phase, the 53,000-square-foot performance hall, will include a 600-seat concert hall, practice rooms, and choral and orchestra rehearsal rooms. The university's existing Jonsson Performance Hall seats 196. The university has already acquired three art collections for the Latin American museum, which will be built as part of the third phase of construction, after the performance hall.

The two museums and the performance hall are funded through private contributions. The total cost of the project is \$133 million, with \$32 million of that coming from a gift from [the O'Donnell Foundation](#).

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UT Dallas is also in the early stages of planning a multidisciplinary science and technology building, said Calvin Jamison, UTD vice president for facilities and economic development.

Related: O'Donnell Foundation gives \$30 million to SMU for data science, engineering faculty

Graduate research and business at Southern Methodist University



Rendering of Frances Anne Moody Hall, school of graduate and advanced studies at SMU. (Hillsman Stuart Jackson)

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SMU has its sights set on becoming a top-tier research university.

To that end, the university completed construction in June on Frances Anne Moody Hall, a new building for the school of graduate and advanced studies. The 44,000-square-foot, three-story building will support the work of master's and doctorate students across disciplines with new classrooms and collaborative spaces for research.

"It was the next natural step for a university that had ... strong professional graduate programs, as well as emerging research programs," said Brad Cheves, vice president for development and external affairs at SMU.

The \$57.5 million construction project took two years to complete and was funded by a \$100 million gift from the [Moody Foundation](#). The remainder of that gift is being used to fund the work of [Ph.D. fellows](#) and to attract future scholars.

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The university is also in the midst of an overhaul and expansion of its Cox School of Business. The \$140 million project will be completed next summer and will expand the school's square footage by 30%. Cheves said the expansion will provide more space for guest lectures by local business leaders and collaboration among students.

Medical education at Texas Christian University



Rendering of a learning studio at a new building for Texas Christian University's Anne Burnett Marion School of Medicine in Fort Worth. (Courtesy of Texas Christian Univ)

TCU's [new building](#) for its Anne Burnett Marion School of Medicine is under construction, with completion expected in 2024.

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The four-story, 100,000-square-foot building will be in Fort Worth's Near Southside neighborhood that's home to several hospitals.

The school welcomed its first class of M.D. students in 2019 at a temporary location in Fort Worth's international district. The new 5.3-acre campus will support 240 medical students and hundreds of faculty. It will have an anatomy lab, a simulation center, and suites for students to practice clinical skills, university officials said.

The school is expected to generate about 31,000 jobs for North Texas and produce an economic impact of about \$4 billion by 2030 according to a Tripp Umbach study.

Nursing and early college high school at Dallas College



Rendering of early college high school center at Dallas College's Mountain View campus. (Courtesy of Dallas College)

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The seven-campus system formerly known as Dallas County Community College District has a nursing building and four early college centers in the works, funded by the [first phase](#) of Dallas College's \$1.1 billion bond approved by voters in May 2019.

The \$28.5 million nursing building planned for the college's Mountain View campus is in the permitting phase and is scheduled to be completed next year.

"From a curriculum standpoint, we are working on developing a four-year nursing degree that we plan to launch next year," said Dallas College chancellor Justin Lonon.

Dallas College now offers [associate's degrees in nursing](#) at four of its campuses, including Mountain View. Lonon said these investments are aimed at alleviating the nursing shortage.

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Dallas College is also building four new early college centers at its Richland, Mountain View, Cedar Valley and Brookhaven campuses. Around 30,000 high school students earn college credits and associate degrees at Dallas College and these centers will help support more students, Lonon said.

"We want to ensure there's a seamless transition from high school to college because that really impacts economic outcomes for students," Lonon said.

The institution is also in the early stages of planning a second campus in downtown Dallas in addition to its existing El Centro campus at the West End.

Life sciences at UT Arlington



Rendering of renovated and expanded life sciences building at the University of Texas at Arlington. (The University of Texas at Arlin)

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[A \\$149 million project](#) at the University of Texas at Arlington will add 87,800 square feet to its life sciences building that was first built in 1970. The project will renovate the facility's electricity and plumbing, add new laboratories for teaching and research and create more spaces for students to gather.

The building houses the university's biology and psychology departments and the advising offices for students interested in professions in the health care industry. The project, expected to be completed by fall 2027, is intended to help the university [attract](#) more researchers and tenure-track faculty.

Related: Meet the nurse practitioner leading UNT's new nursing school



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