

NEWS RELEASE



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UMKC Plans New Building for Rapidly Expanding School of Computing and Engineering

Education and research center will provide expanded faculty research capabilities

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The [University of Missouri-Kansas City](http://www.umkc.edu) will build a \$32 million education and research center for the university's rapidly expanding School of Computing and Engineering.

The new building is needed to accommodate the rapid growth of the school, where enrollment has doubled in less than 10 years to meet surging demand in a community that is home to four of the nation's top 50 engineering firms and eight of the top 200, plus global tech firms such as DST Systems, Zoloz (formerly EyeVerify) and Cerner. The new building will increase both classroom space and faculty research capabilities for the school, which plays a key role in maintaining and enhancing Kansas City's and Missouri's ability to compete in a high-tech 21st century global economy.

The project was approved by the University of Missouri Board of Curators at their Dec. 7 meeting in St. Louis. UMKC will begin construction in late summer 2018, with plans to have the building ready to welcome students, faculty, and staff for the fall 2020 semester.

The new building will feature the dynamic labs and high-tech equipment that are essential to attracting and accommodating the most promising future engineers and computer scientists to build Kansas City's and Missouri's future workforce.

The 44,400-gross-square-foot building will be constructed on UMKC's Volker Campus, adjacent to the School of Computing and Engineering's current home in Flarsheim Hall. It will provide leading-edge high-tech research and development capabilities that will be available to both the campus and the community at large.

"We are doing this because leadership in science and technology will define the future of our community. The new center will play a major role in determining how strong a position of leadership Kansas City will be able to take," said Barbara A. Bichelmeyer, Ph.D., interim chancellor and provost of UMKC. "These high tech capabilities will provide critical support for the role that UMKC plays in this community – as an urban-serving public institution delivering on its mission of research, education, public service and economic development. The center also will enhance UMKC's strength as a talent magnet to help keep our best and brightest here at home, and attract fresh new talent from across the country, and around the world."

Kevin Z. Truman, vice provost and dean of the UMKC School of Computing and Engineering, said the new building will allow Kansas City to seize the future.

"A big piece of the benefit will be economic development, of course. But it also means that the future we create will be applied right here in this community, creating positive impacts on people's daily lives," Truman said.

High tech capabilities in the new building will include:

- \$3 million worth of new virtual reality and augmented reality equipment
- A clean room and scanning electron microscope, which can allow for the development of nanotechnology, robotics, biomedical applications, mechatronics and other technologies
- Research-grade 3-D printing equipment
- A high-bay structural lab that will power research and development for, and prepare the workforce for, Kansas City's large and growing civil engineering and construction sector
- "Big data" analytics labs that will replicate major data centers, preparing students for jobs at local tech firms such as Cerner and DST, as well as major national and international employers such as Google, Microsoft and Facebook
- An energy learning and research facility that will address topics ranging from renewable energy and traditional high voltage transmission to the creation of

batteries small enough to power tiny monitors being used in medical research and healthcare.

Some of these technologies, originally planned for the proposed Free Enterprise Center at the northwest edge of the UMKC Volker Campus, now will be more centrally located and more easily accessible to the majority of students and faculty. Embedding these technology assets in this new project allows UMKC to move forward urgently with an initiative that garnered strong support from state leaders.

At a press conference announcing the new building, Truman thanked the state for its ongoing support and recognized the many private donors who contributed the bulk of the financing for the project. The largest single private donation -- \$6 million -- came from the Sunderland Foundation. Truman also recognized several other donor organizations present at the announcement, including DST Systems, Black & Veatch, Burns and McDonnell, J.E. Dunn, the Bloch Family Foundation and the Hall Family Foundation.

About the University of Missouri-Kansas City

The University of Missouri-Kansas City, one of four University of Missouri campuses, is a public university serving more than 16,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. UMKC engages with the community and economy based on its six-part mission: placing student success at the center; leading in life and health sciences; advancing urban engagement; excelling in visual and performing arts; embracing diversity; and promoting research and economic development. For more information about UMKC, visit umkc.edu. You can also find us on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), see us on [Instagram](#) and watch us on [YouTube](#). Read our students' stories at [#UMKCGoingPlaces](#).

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