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UT Regents approve renovation project for Jester West

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Jester West, Jester West Residence Hall, Bill Throop, contractor, Director, director of UT project management and construction services, Education in New York, Hope Osborn, Mike DeBow, Regents Examinations, Technology, Tommy Macalik

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Renovations are set to begin on Jester West Residence Hall in 2013 after the UT System Board of Regents approved the [\\$36 million project](#) at the Regents meeting on Thursday.

The plan is to renovate two or three floors each summer and finish the 14th floor in 2018, said Bill Throop, director of UT project management and construction services. He said this project will be similar to the project that upgraded floors, walls and furnishings in Jester East. The current built-in furniture will also be replaced with moveable furniture.

The funds for both projects come from the Division of Housing and Food Services. Throop said they could not hire a design firm and an outside contractor until the Regents approved the request.

Jester East and Jester West were built in 1969 and together house about 3,000 students, according to the University website. Throop said the interior of the building is dated and in need of these renovations.

“I’m under the impression that this is going to be the first major upgrade,” Throop said.

Mike DeBow, associate director of UT project management division, said the tight schedule required to complete renovations each summer makes it imperative to choose a contractor who can meet those deadlines.

DeBow said Jester East renovations will be completed in the summer and includes additions that will be part of the renovations in Jester West, such as windows put in dark hallways.

“The idea is to create the best looking living space for our students so they can be close to classes and close to studying,” DeBow said.

Government sophomore Hope Osborn lives in Jester West and said she believes the dorm is fine the way it is.

“Our rooms aren’t fabulous, but they have everything you need,” Osborn said. “I never thought to myself ‘I wish we had new floors.’”

Osborn said the one aspect she would like to change is the bathrooms.

“The showers are terrible,” Osborn said. “They are so short.”

Human development and family sciences senior Tommy Macalik currently lives in the renovated area of Jester East and previously lived in Jester West for two years. He said the free-standing bed in his current room is nice because he has long legs that used to hang off the end of the pull-out bed in Jester West.

“I definitely did not like the beds,” Macalik said. “They’re so difficult to pull out.”

Macalik said the moveable furniture in the renovated sections is a plus because he can set up his room as he chooses instead of being confined to the built-in furniture of the rooms that are not yet renovated. Macalik said overall, everything in his current room in Jester East is better than the furnishings in his old room in Jester West.

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