

THE WEST WING

ON 3550 TERRACE STREET

BY ERICA LLOYD



The addition will be built on existing foundational infrastructure.

Plans include a renovated Falk Library of the Health Sciences; the library will have an entrance on Lothrop Street, making it more convenient for all health sciences students.

Bringing Scaife Hall's mid-century physical plant up to snuff would have cost \$54 million. Instead, Scaife's new addition will supply high-efficiency HVAC, plumbing, and electrical to the rest of the building, while offering seven floors of contemporary learning space.



Once upon a time, in the summer of 1954, University of Pittsburgh officials came together with civic leaders to break ground for a building devoted to the education of health professionals. The building, Scaife Hall, would be connected to Presbyterian Hospital. Industrialist Alan Scaife led the University's campaign to raise funds for the construction effort. On that summer day, his wife, Sarah Mellon Scaife, stood on the hillside next to the hospital and struck the earth with a gleaming spade. Two years later, a broad, imposing 11-story limestone structure opened its doors to students and scholars.

Scaife Hall's designers envisioned an academic home to some of the country's most promising minds in medicine. The next two decades brought a golden age of sorts, with the likes of Frank Dixon, Jack Myers, Klaus Hofmann, Niels Jerne, Julius Youngner, and Jonas Salk inspiring Pitt Med students.

Sixty-five years after Sarah Scaife wielded that shovel, the human body has not changed, but some of the ways we teach about it and explore its mysteries have. So the School of Medicine is planning an education addition and renovation that capitalizes on how learning happens today. Later this year, pending some approvals, Pittsburgh leaders will again come together for a groundbreaking next to Presbyterian; this time, they'll be celebrating the raising of the School of Medicine's new West Wing.

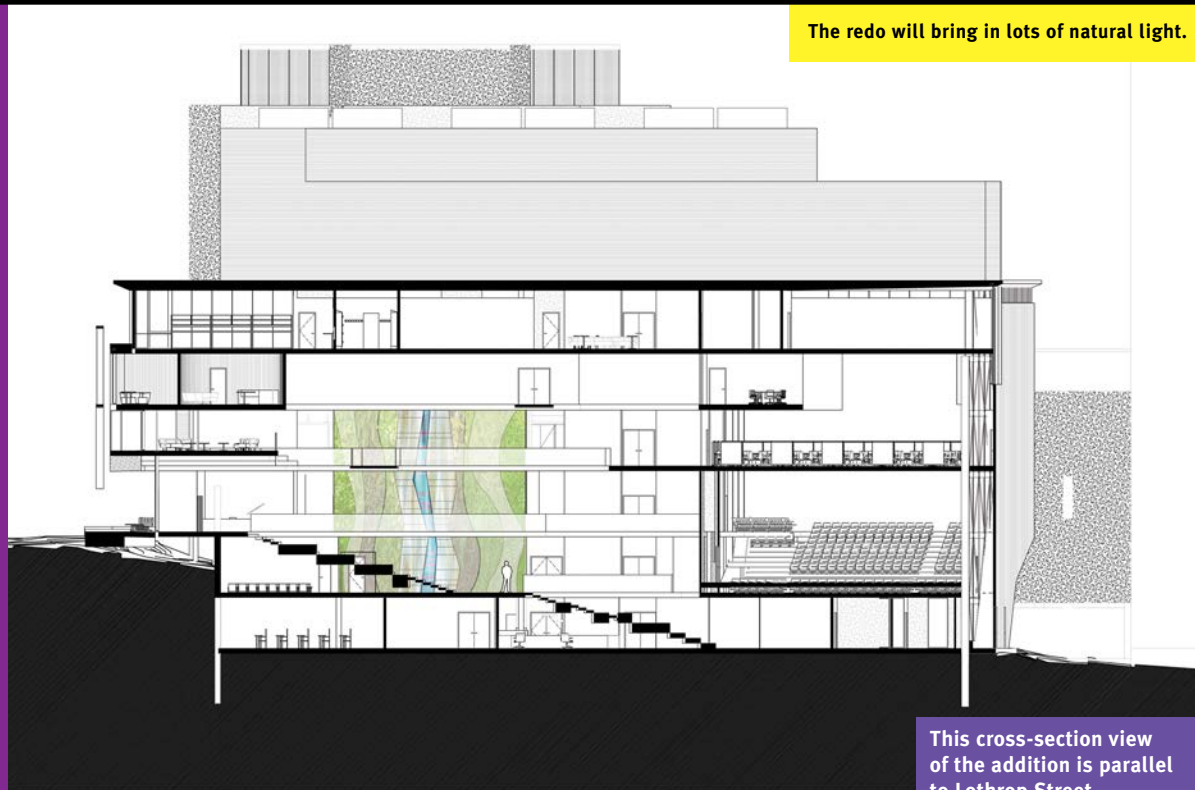
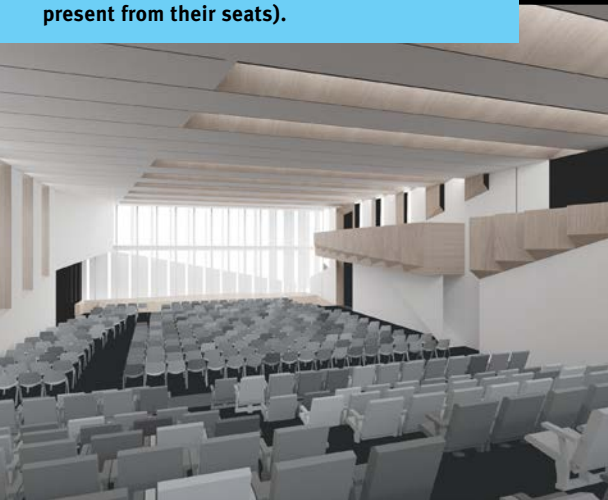
“We’ve learned a lot about how adults learn, and we understand that many people don’t learn from one-hour lectures one right after the other all day every day,” says Ann Thompson, vice dean of Pitt’s School of Medicine. So before the raising of the new will be the razing of the old: specifically, the two-story structure at the corner of Terrace and Lothrop Streets, where the school’s largest lecture halls are currently housed.

RENDERINGS NOT FINAL

Where it makes sense, the school will salvage and reuse existing wood trim and travertine.

In the existing lecture rooms, seats are bolted to the floor in the direction of the stage. The auditoriums and classrooms in the new seven-story wing will make it easier to break into groups and flip lectures (so learners can present from their seats).

The redo will bring in lots of natural light.



This cross-section view of the addition is parallel to Lothrop Street.

The \$129 million project includes 110,000 square feet of new construction and 47,000 square feet of renovations.

Team- and problem-based learning will get a boost. The school will renovate existing group spaces (see diagram below) and build more.



Labs will be flexible, too. The set-up will change depending on whether the class is Medical Microbiology or Digestion and Nutrition, for example. The Gross Anatomy lab on the top floor will be able to incorporate virtual technologies with traditional anatomy dissection and teaching methods.



Renovated space

New construction

A partial main entry level (fourth floor) layout, after renovations and additions.

A terrace cafe on Terrace Street.



Lounges. Couches. Cafes. Carrels. Ad hoc meeting and plug-in areas aplenty will accommodate a range of study styles. They'll also offer places to kick back. And we'd be remiss in not mentioning the student-only areas—"where they can snooze, study, hang out, play ping-pong, make a mess," says Vice Dean Thompson with a smile.