

## **\$13.5 Million Spurs Lab Upgrades**

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Tulane University has received a \$13.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to redesign and upgrade laboratory spaces in the J. Bennett Johnston Health and Environmental Research Building, located at 1324 Tulane Ave. on the downtown health sciences campus.



A grant enables Tulane to construct new laboratories in the J. Bennett Johnston Building, in which scientists from different fields can conduct research together. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The building is home to the Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research, the Tulane Cancer Center, the Tulane Center for Gene Therapy and the Tulane Center for Infectious Diseases. Funding for the grant is provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that Congress passed last year.

The grant will fund the Tulane University Interdisciplinary Bioscience Initiative that seeks to construct labs in which scientists from different fields can conduct research together.

"Traditionally, science has been conducted in silos. Individual laboratories work on

projects that are of interest to the investigators in those laboratories. But future advances are going to be made at the interfaces of those traditional disciplines where we bring together investigators from different areas working on a common problem," says [John Clements](#), professor and chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, who is principal investigator of the grant.

The revamped [J. Bennett Johnston Building](#) will feature open, flexible laboratory spaces capable of being immediately reconfigured. Meeting spaces and conference areas for the cross-fertilization of ideas will be key elements in the new layout.

This project complements a Tulane-funded \$46 million research and development revitalization initiative that includes "green" infrastructure upgrades and an investment in new faculty at the university's downtown health sciences campus.