

New Path

Trailway project will improve Alumni Center landscape

ALTHOUGH HURRICANES KATRINA and Rita have upset Louisiana's budget, a state-administered grant will enable the UL Alumni Association to proceed with a plan to enhance the Alumni Center's grounds.

"I've been informed by state officials that the funding process will go forward," said Dan Hare, director of the Association.

Before the storms devastated New Orleans and much of the state's coast, an \$85,000 grant from the Louisiana Governor's 2004 Recreational Trails Program was earmarked to launch the first phase of improvements at the Center. About \$1 million in federal funds is provided to Louisiana each year for recreational projects through the National Recreational Trails Fund Act of 1991.

"The project started in recognition of the need to improve the Alumni Center grounds and also to provide an opportunity for people to enjoy the gardens. The area has really become overgrown and needs 'taming.' The grant only partially funds the overall project but we couldn't have started without it," Hare said.

The Alumni Center sits on about five and a half acres on East St. Mary Boulevard, across from Angelle Hall.

Thanks to the grant, the northeastern area of the site adjacent to the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum will be enhanced with two trailheads and pathways that will wind through that side of the property. It will be known as the UL Lafayette Trailway.

An existing pond will be refurbished and a new water supply established for it.

Also, a memorial will be erected to

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DAN HARE, DIRECTOR, UL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

commemorate lives lost on Sept. 11, 2001, when terrorists crashed jetliners into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and an empty field in Pennsylvania. A piece of the Pentagon building was obtained and donated to the university for the monument by the late Lester J. Guidry, while he was commander of Stanley Martin-Felix Ducrest American Legion Post 69.

A group of landscape architects, Alumni Association staff, alumni, students, university staff and local residents

Funding has been secured for Phase One.

developed the plan for the Trailway as the first phase of grounds improvements.

Subsequent phases would include constructing an entry pavilion near one of the trailheads, gateways at each entry point and

security lighting and fencing. The Association will apply for additional grants to cover those costs. Donations may also be designated specifically for the project.

"Developing natural resources for recreation and education is a priority for the university and the Alumni Association. This plan also has the support of the community, which is evident in the willingness of so many to partner with us through volunteer efforts and in-kind services," Hare said.

"The project can only enhance the development that has already taken place in this area. It will be a nice place to explore after visiting University Art Museum across the street."

Work on the project is scheduled to begin later this fall. ■

