

# THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

## MEMPHIS COLLEGE OF ART BUILDING AN IDENTITY Midtown School Plans New Residence Hall

By Juanita Cousins  
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The Memphis College of Art is enlarging its campus footprint with a \$3.3 million student residence hall and three residential properties.

An artist rendering of Memphis College of Art's Metz Hall and the new dormitory space the school is hoping to raise enough funds to build.

The college plans to break ground in mid-September on the new residence hall at 139 N. Barksdale in Midtown. The building will be a mirror image of the Metz Hall residence structure at 149 N. Barksdale, which was built in 2004.

MCA President Jeffrey Nesin said the student residences help "build community among students."

The 24,000-square-foot facility will house 47 students on three floors of apartment-like suites, said the project's lead architect Rebecca Conrad, a partner at Askew Nixon Ferguson.

Each suite will have four bedrooms, two baths, a full kitchen and laundry amenities. The fourth floor will have a studio, activity space and warming kitchen, which the college can use for special functions.

The dorm is scheduled for completion in fall 2010.

"It's just helping the campus further its identity on making it more visible in this community," Conrad said.

This summer, Memphis College of Art spent \$250,000 on three Midtown properties: two residential buildings on Tucker Street that now house 10 students, and a Rembert Street property that will eventually provide additional residential housing.

Nesin said the independent art and design college set in Overton Park has thrived despite a slumping economy. Its Design for the Future Capital Campaign raised \$6 million in two years and is just \$2 million shy of its goal. The money will be used to increase scholarships, create a technology-driven curriculum, increase the school's endowment and build the Barksdale Street dorm.

When Nesin became president in 1991, the campus had no student residential housing. Since then the college has acquired some 20 properties south of Poplar Avenue and built housing for more than 160 students.



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