

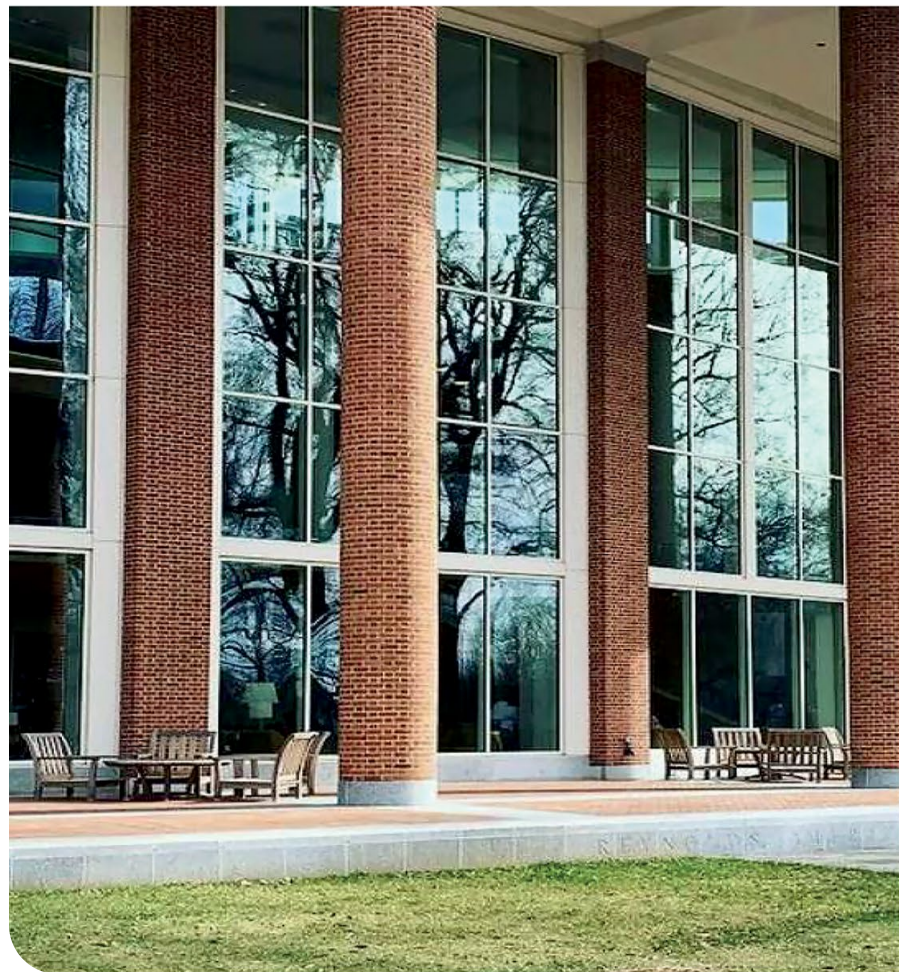
BUILDING *for* BEARS

Belong Engage Aspire Relax Savor

New Student Life Center



MERCER
UNIVERSITY



A PLACE WHERE EVERY BEAR BELONGS

Mercer University is building a bold new student life center on its Macon campus that will transform the student experience for generations to come. This ***Building for BEARS*** initiative (***Belong-Engage-Aspire-Relax-Savor***) represents far more than new construction. It is an investment in belonging, connection, leadership, and community — the experiences that define a Mercer education and prepare students to change the world.

Designed with significant input from students, the new center will serve as the University’s central gathering place and living room, bringing together dining, collaboration, student services, leadership opportunities, and spaces where meaningful relationships are formed.

Slated to open in August 2028, the new center will replace Connell Student Center, which was razed in summer 2026 prior to students returning to campus in fall 2026. Rather than continuing to maintain or renovate an aging structure, Mercer’s Board of Trustees approved the University’s proposal for a new build, as Connell could no longer accommodate the evolving needs of the modern student body.

New Student Life Center Enhancements

- **Expanded Square Footage:** A three-story center spanning approximately 75,000 square feet versus Connell’s 51,000 square feet to allow for greater collaboration and gatherings.
- **Expanded Primary Dining Commons:** Modernized to accommodate Mercer’s expanding residential undergraduate population with multiple food options along with the addition of a new “quiet zone” to welcome students looking for a peaceful retreat or study spaces.
- **Community Hubs:** Larger student lounges, living room nooks, and dedicated collaborative meeting spaces to provide enhanced opportunities for learning and gathering.
- **AI Technology Lab:** Next-gen computing and dynamic immersion pods for expanded learning.
- **Centralized Resources:** Optimized offices for Student Affairs, Campus Life, Residence Life, and TRIO Programs designed to better meet and exceed student needs.
- **New Event Space:** Featuring a large balcony with seating overlooking Cruz Plaza.
- **Connected Outdoor Plazas:** Built for student gatherings and special events, facing Cruz Plaza and Bill and Kathy Pou Plaza.
- **Café:** Providing additional dining options and campus views.
- **24/7 Student Market:** Providing convenience and quick bites.
- **Indoor and Outdoor Fireplace:** Offered to accommodate enhanced gathering and foster special moments.

“One of the things I’ve valued most about my experience at Mercer is the people I’ve met and the connections I’ve made beyond the classroom. As a Mercer Ambassador, I’ve seen firsthand how a simple conversation can turn into a friendship, a new opportunity, or a lasting connection. I’m excited for the new student life center because it will give students even more opportunities to come together, share ideas, and strengthen the sense of community that makes Mercer so special.”

— **Israel Ayettey, CLAS ’29**



Mercer Ambassadors gather around architectural renderings during the Building for BEARS press conference in September.

WHY IT MATTERS

A Mercer education extends well beyond the classroom.

Some of life's most important lessons happen while sharing a meal with friends, preparing for an exam, attending a student organization meeting, connecting with a mentor, or simply finding a welcoming place to belong.

The new student life center has been thoughtfully designed to support every aspect of student life, with every square foot designed with one purpose in mind: to provide a welcoming environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally.

Your gift builds more than a building.

The new student life center will stand as a visible reminder of the alumni and friends who believed in Mercer's future. Naming opportunities throughout the building will allow donors to honor loved ones, celebrate their Mercer story, or leave a lasting legacy that will inspire generations of students.

When you invest in the Building for BEARS initiative, you are helping create a place where students will discover lifelong friendships, develop leadership skills, find encouragement, celebrate milestones, and build memories that will last forever.

Every gift, regardless of size, brings this vision closer to reality.

Together, we can build a place where every Bear belongs!

Building for BEARS reflects the experience Mercer seeks to create for every student.

- **Belong:** Every student deserves to feel welcomed, valued, and connected.
- **Engage:** Meaningful experiences outside the classroom help students grow into servant-minded leaders and professionals.
- **Aspire:** Relationships formed at Mercer inspire students to pursue lives of purpose, service, and achievement.
- **Relax:** Campus should include spaces that encourage student wellness, reflection, and balance.
- **Savor:** Sharing meals is an important part of campus life, bringing students together to build friendships and create lasting memories.

For more information, visit
BuildingForBears.Mercer.edu.

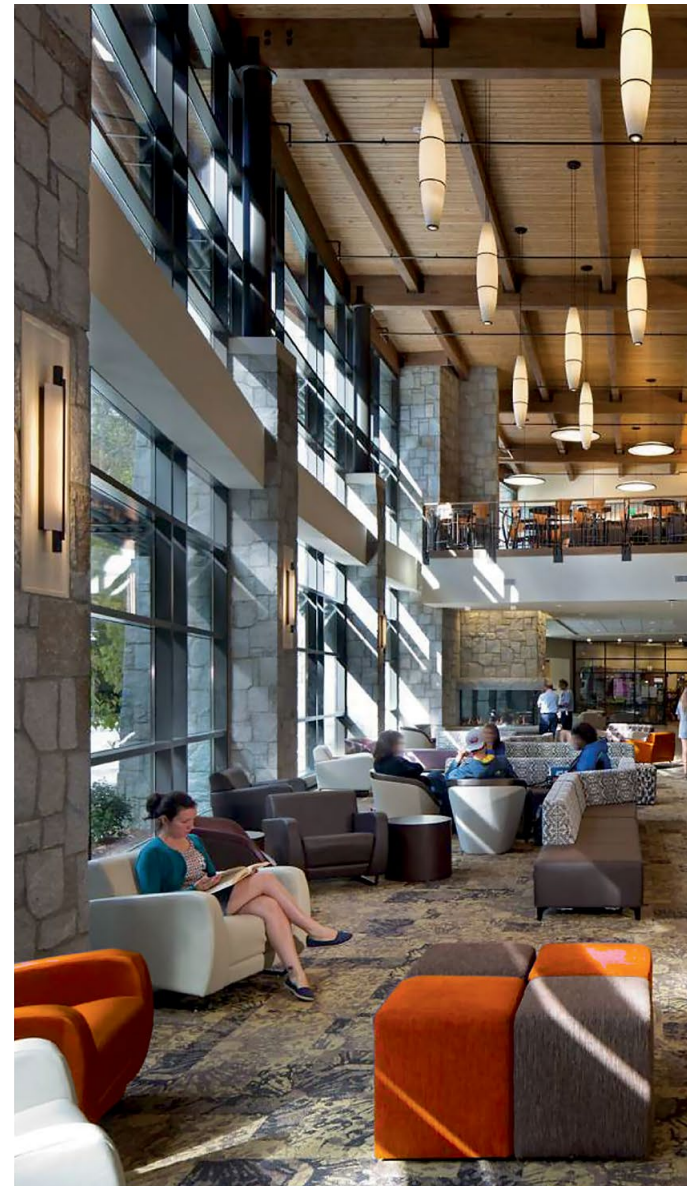


“Connell will always hold amazing memories for Mercer students, but it’s very exciting to think about a new place that will hold all the in-between moments for students — everything from breaks in between classes, to late night study sessions and grabbing a quick bite with friends. I can’t wait to see how the new student life center will become a new place for creating these special memories.”

— **Jocelyn Ramirez, EGR, CLAS '28**



President Elkins unveils renderings of the new student life center to the local and campus community and announces a gift to name the Bill and Kathy Pou Plaza.



** Internal renderings are conceptual representations and are subject to change throughout the design and construction process.*

Gifts or pledges of \$1,000 or more received by February 2028 will be recognized on the main donor wall in the new building. Additional naming opportunities are outlined below and on the following pages.

GROUND FLOOR

South

Housing and Residence Life

- Staff Offices - \$15,000 each (11)
- Director's Office - \$20,000
- Reception - \$25,000
- Conference Room - \$50,000
- Catering Kitchen - \$250,000

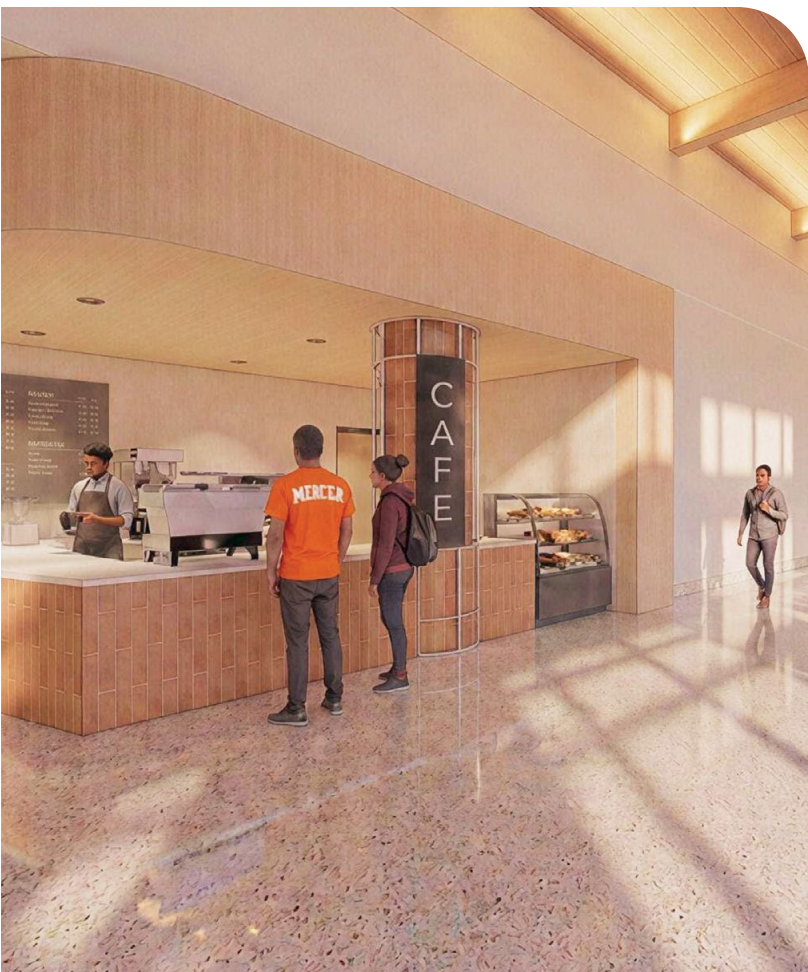
North

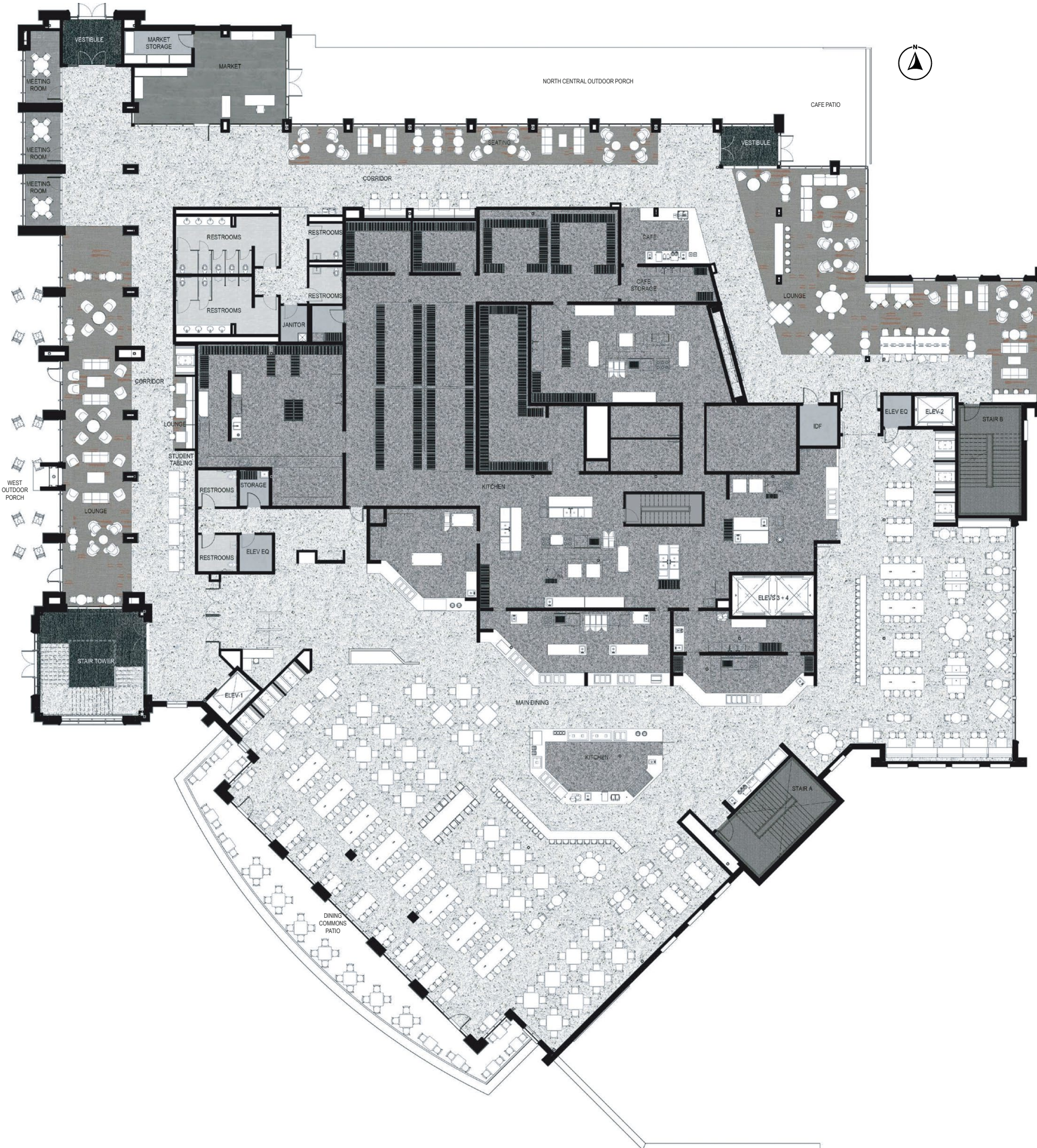
TRIO Programs

- Director's Office - \$20,000
- Offices - \$15,000 each (11)
- Conference Room - \$50,000
- HUB - \$50,000
- Breakroom - \$35,000

Stairwells

- A - \$50,000 (SE Emergency Stairwell)
- B - \$250,000 (NE Stairwell)
- C - \$50,000 (Interior, Mercer Culinary Group)





FLOOR 2

Northwest

Vestibule - \$25,000

Market - \$100,000

Private Research Lounges (Meeting Rooms) - \$50,000 each (3)

North Central

Study Lounges - \$1,500,000 total (6)

North Central Outdoor Porch - \$1,500,000

Café Patio (above Pou Plaza) - \$750,000

Northeast

Café Lounge - \$5,000,000 (including The Café)

Vestibule - \$25,000

West

Grand Tower Entrance (Stair Tower) - \$5,000,000

Living Room (Lounge) - \$4,000,000

Outdoor Porch - \$2,000,000

South

Dining Commons (Main Dining) - \$5,000,000

Dining Commons Patio - \$2,000,000

Kitchen - \$1,000,000

Elevators

#1 Elevator - \$100,000

#2 Elevator - \$100,000

#3/4 Elevators - \$50,000 each
(Mercer Culinary Group food service)

FLOOR 3

Southwest

- Pre-function Lounge - \$2,000,000
- Ballroom - \$5,000,000 (entirety)
- Individual Ballrooms - \$1,500,000 each (3)
- Ballroom Patio - \$1,500,000
- Lounge - \$100,000

Southeast

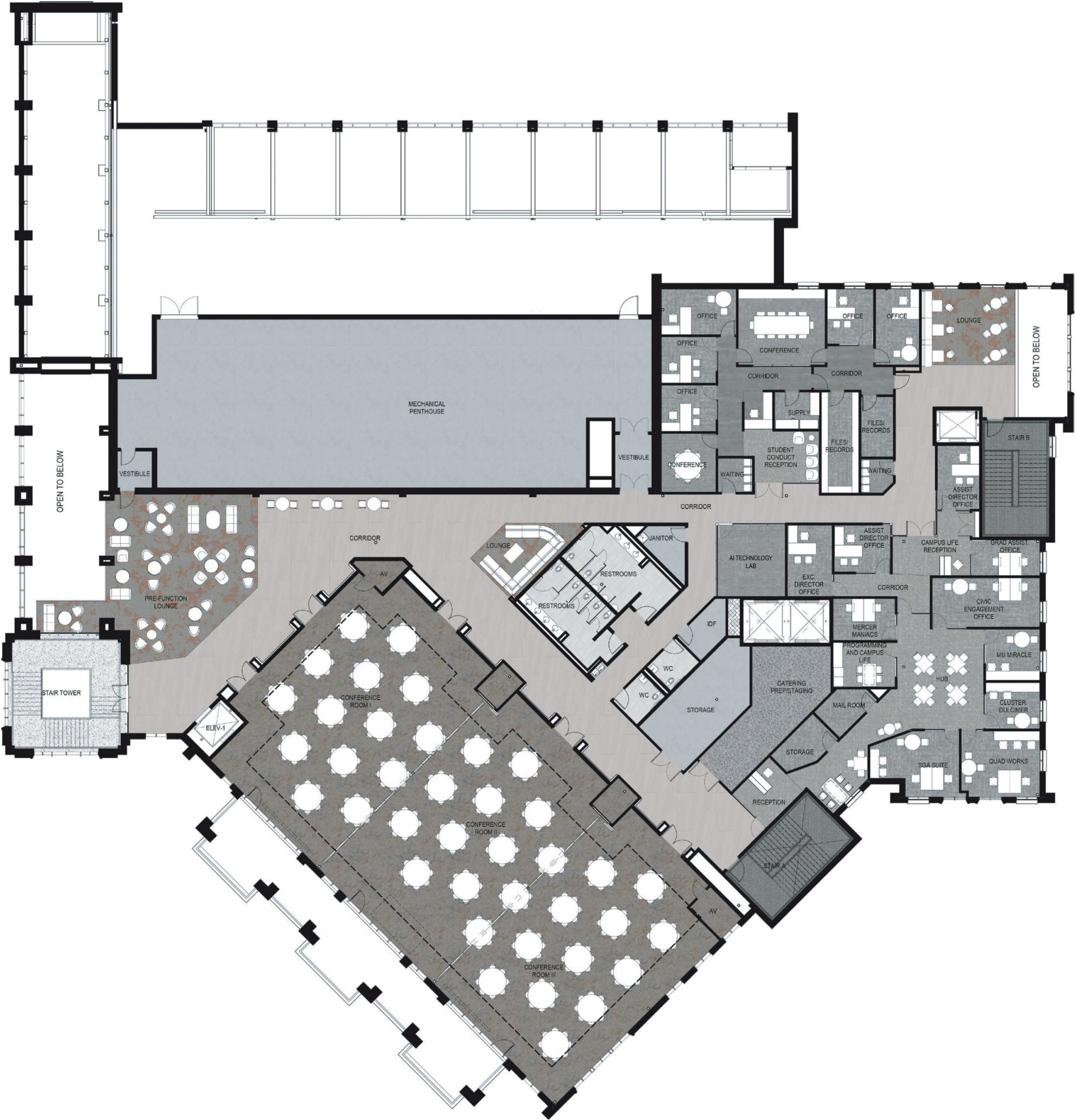
- Student Organizations Suite - \$250,000
- AI Technology Lab - \$250,000
- Reception - \$15,000
- Student Org Offices - \$40,000 each (7)
- Campus Life Exec Dir Office - \$25,000
- Assistant Director Office - \$15,000 each (2)
- Campus Life Reception - \$15,000
- Grad Assistant Office - \$15,000
- Conference Room - \$50,000
- Student Org Hub - \$75,000

North Central

- Student Affairs Suite - \$250,000
- Dean of Students Office - \$30,000
- Waiting Rooms - \$15,000 each (2)
- Reception - \$50,000
- Conference Room - \$50,000
- Small Conference Room - \$25,000
- Offices - \$15,000 each (5)

Northeast

- Lounge - \$150,000



ABOUT MERCER

Founded in 1833, Mercer University is a dynamic and comprehensive center of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. With nearly 9,000 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges, on major campuses in Macon and Atlanta; three four-year medical school sites in Macon, Savannah, and Columbus; two third- and fourth-year clinical campuses in Valdosta and Carrollton; and at regional academic centers in Henry and Douglas counties, Mercer is ranked among the top tier and best values of national research universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. The Mercer Health Sciences Center includes the University's College of Pharmacy, School of Medicine, and Colleges of Nursing and Health Professions.



Mercer is affiliated with multiple teaching hospitals across the state of Georgia and has an educational partnership with Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins. It operates an academic press, a performing arts center in Macon, and an engineering research center in Warner Robins. Mercer Medicine, the clinical faculty practice of the School of Medicine, is based in Macon and operates additional clinics in Sumter, Clay, Putnam, Harris, Taylor, and Glynn counties. Mercer is one of only 293 institutions nationwide to shelter a chapter of The Phi Beta Kappa Society, the nation's most prestigious academic honor society; one of four private institutions to hold membership in the Georgia Research Alliance; and the only private university in Georgia to field an NCAA Division I athletics program.

To learn more about naming opportunities and ways to support this project, please visit **BuildingForBears.mercer.edu** or contact the Office of University Advancement at **giving@mercer.edu** or by calling (478) 301-2715.

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