

HOUSING • CONTINUED FROM 4

community. The unnamed residence hall, priced between \$40 and \$45 million, encourages a "high-tech, high-touch" philosophy, Luna said. Adding new technologies like USC's wireless Internet access while encouraging the use of technology in education will, according to Luna, create a more cooperative learning community. The new dorm will encourage a more intimate learning environment by separating students into smaller living communities of 12 each. However, it will also include a mentoring community. The new dorm will also become the first freshman and sophomore residence hall to offer private rooms to students. Student input influenced decisions through focus groups directly contributing opinions and design ideas to the new hall's architect. Courtyards and other wireless outdoor areas around the new dormitory are some of the ideas that the student focus groups have suggested. In addition, the new hall will be considered a "green space," similar to West Quad, the first environmentally conscious student residence at USC. The university has planned for every new dormitory to be designed in a similar fashion. The question arises about the displaced non-Honors freshman currently occupying the spaces in the Towers. Just as Capstone was converted to an all-freshman facility this past year, Columbia Hall will be designated as such in the near future. The current designated home for Honors freshmen, Maxcy College, will become open to non-Honors freshmen, as well. In addition, there are plans to renovate Patterson, McClintock, Wade Hampton and other freshman and sophomore dorms in the near future. With the growing number of Greek and off-campus student apartment facilities, many upperclassmen have moved off campus and the need for freshman housing has come to the forefront of housing's concerns, according to university housing officials. With the new Honors College dorm and other housing developments like West Quad, the French House, and next year's Spanish House and International Residential College, housing officials hope to move student housing in a direction promoting more intimate interaction between students with similar interests. "Smaller communities encourage specifics and increase chances of success," said Tim Coley, director of residence life. Coley also stressed the importance of student involvement in housing, whether it be through focus groups influencing design, or through selecting roommates with common interest. Coley added that roommate selection programs similar to VIP'S UCHOOSE are in the works through Facebook communities.

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ALITO • CONTINUED FROM 1

House, as the Senate voted. He was sworn in about an hour later in a low-key ceremony at the Supreme Court building across the street from the Capitol. Chief Justice John Roberts, Bush's first nominee for the high court, administered the oath of office. Alito's confirmation has been a certainty for days, and all Republicans except Sen. Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island voted for him. Only four of 44 Democrats voted in favor of confirmation, the lowest total in modern history for an opposition party. "There is no consensus that he will allow the court to perform its vital role in continuing the march of progress toward justice and equal opportunity," said Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, leader in a final attempt to derail the nomination that exposed Democratic divisions instead. Roberts was confirmed by a far wider margin, 78-22, late last year, replacing the late William H. Rehnquist. Republicans were unanimous in voting for Roberts, and Democrats had split evenly, 22 in favor and 22 opposed. Roberts was viewed by Democrats as one conservative replacing another. By contrast, Alito is seen by Democrats and outside groups aligned with them as a Reagan-era conservative replacement for a moderate justice whose opinions kept the court centered. The conservative Family Research Council

said it welcomed Alito's confirmation on behalf of those whose "weariness over the court's embrace of judicial activism rallied voters across the country in pursuit of a new course." Apart from placing Roberts and Alito on the nine-member Supreme Court, the Senate has confirmed Bush appointees to 42 of 179 total seats on the federal appeals courts. Several of those were confirmed in bruising political battles that brought the Senate to the verge of political meltdown. Bush has long said he hoped to appoint members of the Supreme Court in the mold of Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. The two men are among the court's minority that has voted to overturn the landmark 1973 court ruling that establish a woman's right to an abortion, the issue representative of a political and cultural divide that has persisted for over 30 years. Judging from the court docket, the first case Alito will hear from his seat at the far right end of the bench will involve a pair of challenges to Clean Water Act regulations, appeals from cases filed by landowners and a paper mill. Alito's confirmation capped a seven-month drama that began when O'Connor announced she would retire, signaling the first change on the court in a dozen years. Bush named Roberts to replace her, but Rehnquist died before the Senate could hold hearings.

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