Garanzini explains campus renovations
By Zachary Davis
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Future Ramblers will be able to sink their toes into the grass of a new "lawn on the lake" and live in a building with a geothermal greenhouse.

These were two of the campus changes President Garanzini noted in his annual State of the University Address given on Monday, Sept. 26, to an audience of about 200 in the Crown Center auditorium, in addition to those who viewed the live stream online.

Garanzini, in his tenth year as university president, focused largely on changes in the Loyola community. Many of Loyola's current changes revolve around the next generation of college students.

"In 2015 the [number of] traditional, middle class, college-bound groups of students start to diminish," Garanzini said.

What won't change, he said, is the growing number of non-traditional adult and minority students attempting to obtain a college degree.

"We want to be a first choice school for as many students as possible," Garanzini said.

In response to the changing circumstances surrounding enrollment, the university plans to undergo several modifications in the coming years, most prominently in its facilities, demonstrated by the construction around campus.

"Last year I apologized, and I apologize again for all the inconvenience for traveling around campus," Garanzini said.

"While we were able to open Norville Center, we still have a lot of work . . . around the center of campus."

Garanzini promises relief in the near future, the completion of some construction in the fall of 2012 will mark significant progress.

Projects to be completed by next fall include the renovation of Mundelein, Cuneo Hall, Wright Hall and the west campus quad, as well as more progress on the Reimagine project.

The project includes a new student union to replace CFSU and has been part of a four-year process that began back in 2008. In short, the construction in the center of campus should be cleared with the beginning of the next academic year.

In 2012, Loyola students will notice some more green space. Since building the Information Commons, Loyola hasn't had any green space along the lakeshore. The area directly south of
Madonna della Strada will be revamped to host a garden path alongside a new "lawn on the lake."

Loyola's growth will not stop there.

Future Loyola students will be able to enjoy two new residence halls on the south side of campus, near BVM Hall and across from Mundelein. San Francisco Hall, with a geothermal central greenhouse and rainwater recycle, will be a LEED Gold Certified building, the second-highest level of a system that ranks construction projects on environmental practices and sustainability. DiNobli Hall, the other new on-campus residence, will also feature a new dining facility.

The final phase of Loyola's transformation revolves around the redesign of Loyola's El stop.

Loyola is looking into picking up some property around the area to be used for apartment-style upperclassmen living south of Mertz Hall. Loyola is also looking into the creation of a hotel around the El.

"There are an awful lot of visitors coming to campus. Parents coming all of the time. Even now there are prospective parents visiting," Garanzini said. "With that and the conferences going on, we think there a number of reasons we could support a hotel." Garanzini alluded to the success of the Flats at Loyola Station as reason why a hotel would be successful.

The El stop itself will be going through a complete reconstruction. With the help of the city of Chicago and the state of Illinois, the university will create an open plaza for a much safer feel.

"It's going to be well-lit, small plaza area to create a safe feeling of openness," Garanzini said.