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Belmont, NC (July 30, 2018)— Belmont Abbey has begun renovation of the William Gaston Science Building. The changes include updating the exterior and the addition of state of the art chemistry and biochemistry labs. The transformation is a part of the college's continuing commitment to excellence in education, with the intention of potentially adding a Biochemistry program.

The current renovations are the first step of a building master plan that would eventually extend to the whole building. Major work will only take place during the summer to minimize disturbance of classes. To update the building, Belmont Abbey has partnered with an architecture company from Raleigh, North Carolina noted for their college campus laboratory design, having worked previously on similar renovations for NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill.

The William Gaston Science Building was initially constructed in the 1960s, and is currently host to the majority of science related classes, including biology, chemistry, psychology, and mathematics. The science building is easily visible on Belmont-Mt. Holly Rd and can also be seen from I-85 around exit 26.

The construction this summer will achieve several goals. The primary work consists of adding new biochemistry and chemistry labs on the first floor and converting existing second floor chemistry labs on the second floor into a physics lab and classroom space. Associated changes will add more natural light, and redesign one of the primary entrances to the building

The project also aims to foster interactive, collaborative learning. The new labs will allow students to take a more experiential approach to learning. In addition, the change in layout will facilitate interdepartmental work. Further, the new plans include group study spaces, to further encourage teamwork amongst students.

Long-term, the project is hoped to lay the groundwork for adding a biochemistry program, and expand Belmont Abbey's already diverse offerings. The program will likely begin as a minor before upgrading to a major course of study.

Dr. David Williams, Vice President of Academic Affairs for the college said "This is an exciting project, and wouldn't be possible without the striking growth we've seen in our science programs in recent years. We're

also grateful for the amazing generosity of the donor who enabled us to pursue this year's work. The new labs, and the general renovation of the building, will add so much to the experience of our faculty and students."

About Belmont Abbey College: Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic, baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students.

For more information, visit www.belmontabbeycollege.edu.