By Gary Murrell
(The Kansas City Star)

Lawrence, Kas.—It has been said that a university is solely a community of scholars. But at the University of Kansas the word “scholar” while highly regarded, has developed a binding kinship with growth, expansion and building.

In the last 10 years, more than 30 million dollars in construction projects either have been completed, begun or planned.

R. Keith Lawton, vice-chancellor for operations, pointed out that the master plan for university expansion is the key to the success for the future.

To him the single most significant development has come out of the creation of the west campus, an area where buildings whose function is primarily scientific are being constructed annually.

“We have set out to coordinate the pursuits of most of the sciences in the west campus area through the establishment of multi-disciplinary facilities,” Lawton said.

Specifically, the so-called west campus is on what was once acre of farmland in the 4.4-block area west of U. S. 59, known as Iowa Street in Lawrence.

In the west campus area alone, the university master plan has provided for about 4.5 million dollars in construction projects. By far the biggest single undertaking and one that perhaps best typifies the interdisciplinary principle is the $2.25 million-dollar Science Technology building now under construction.

The facility, largely supported by a $1.25 million-dollar grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, will increase the university’s ability to conduct space research.

In fact, university officials have set aside a special research unit will push U. I. into the mainstream in this important new area.

The 19,000-square-foot structure will house research and technological facilities in remote sensing, geology, geophysics, botany, chemistry, physics, environmental health and many other fields.

It also will become part of the facilities to provide a new graduate degree in engineering which will focus on the application of engineering to remote sensing to the identification and solution of technical problems.

The program, offering degrees of master of engineering to be followed by doctor of engineering, is partially supported by federal funds.

Lawton said the interdisciplinary aspect of the space building is its most significant aspect.

One feature of this new unit will be a large, centrally-located seminar room and lounge equipped with blackboards which the planners hope will turn casual encounters among researchers into highly productive interchange.

The space center was designed by Hollis & Miller, Overland Park architects, under the supervision of the state architect for Kansas.

The ALZA corporation of Palo Alto, Calif., is financing the construction of a $250,000 basic research laboratory in the chemical engineering building at a cost of $250,000 to be housed by the University of Kansas Endowment association.

To be fully operational by September, the unit is part of a 2-campus Institute of Pharmacological Sciences organized by ALZA. The other is to be at Stanford University.

Dr. Takaji Higuchi, associate professor of chemistry and chemical engineer, will become director of the Lawrence laboratory.

THE LABORATORY, being constructed on a 1-acre site in the west campus area, will provide space for 25 professional personnel. It will permit fundamental research on basic problems related to drug transport, release and absorption during therapy.

Higuchi is believed to be the only scientist in K. U. 163-year history to have a laboratory built primarily for the use of a single man.

He was contracted in 1961 by the University and his appointment was precipitated by the construction of the Pharmacological Sciences laboratory.

The one-story, steel frame and concrete block structure of 1,000 square feet, the pharmaceutical laboratory cost $300,000 to build. It was financed by the endowment association through private support, and was opened two years ago.

DR. HIGUCHI, often called "the father of physical pharmacology," came to K. U. from the University of Wisconsin, where he had served 21 years.

The first phase of the research development was conducted with the building of the Great Plains Botanical Research center. It cost about $200,000.

The library-museum houses university’s 125,000 specimens collection of plants and fossil plants, purported to be the largest in the Great Plains.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH this research a special greenhouse and a three-storied laboratory were constructed.

One of the only projects de- signed from the scientific research is the University of Kansas Service building, completed in the spring of 1969.

Covering about 20,000 square feet, the $350,000 plant handles most of the university printing, excluding largely of scholarly publications, professional journals and the publication of the University Daily Kansas, campus newspaper.

Last March the 3-level Walter Resources building, which...