

## Then and Now: Welch Hall

GALLERY, FORTY ACRES

Since its construction in 1929, Welch Hall has hosted chemists and many other Longhorns. One of UT Austin's largest buildings, Welch now sees 10,000 or more students on a typical day, and faculty researchers here generate roughly \$12 million in research awards for the University.



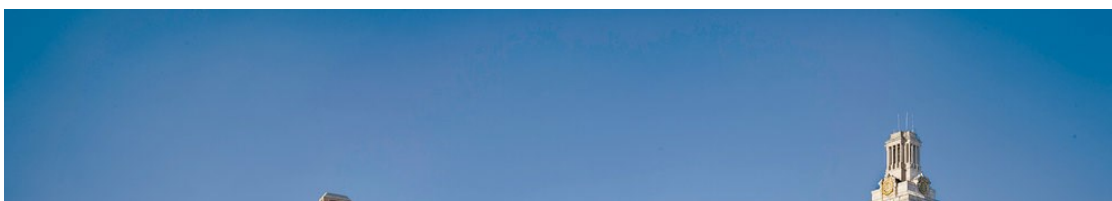
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"Genius loci—translated roughly as 'the guardian spirit of a place'—refers to the character that certain locations achieve when the natural, the constructed, and the interaction between the two work in harmony to create a special magic." – Larry Faulkner, Chemist and Former UT Austin President

**1929** Originally the Chemistry Building, what became Welch Hall was constructed after an earlier UT chemistry building burned down in 1926. The fire, caused by aging wiring, sparked a blaze that quickly reached stored chemicals, resulting in colorful explosions. Faculty and firefighters rushed to save the department's most prized asset: the library. Many irreplaceable books and journals escaped with only a few dampened or singed pages.

New wings were added to the building in 1959 and 1978. It was renamed Welch Hall in honor of Houston oilman and philanthropist Robert Alonzo Welch (1872–1952).

**Today** In 2015, the Texas Legislature decides whether to move forward with much-needed capital investments in Welch.





**Future** Renovations would give students modern classrooms, better community spaces, safer labs—including dedicated labs for the Freshman Research Initiative—and needed upgrades.



Get the latest about what's planned for this historic building at [NewWelchHall.utexas.edu](https://NewWelchHall.utexas.edu).



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