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And speaking of helping, our campus is outfitted with automatic doors and ramps on each building; 21 accessible gender-neutral restrooms distributed throughout the main campus; more than 300 curb cuts in sidewalks and street corners in and surrounding campus; and 370 parking spaces reserved for mobility impaired students, faculty, staff and guests. Our facilities management team always has its eye on doing more to make getting around, in, out and through campus as painless as can be.

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Haywood McNeill (Interviewer): How long have you worked for the University?

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HM: Who are your coworkers? Who are your clients?

JJ: On the plumbing crew we have three Texas-licensed plumbers and two apprentice plumbers. Our client is anyone who turns in a work request.

HM: What was your job like earlier on compared to what it’s been like lately?

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New Housing Operations Building

The clock is ticking on construction of headquarters for the University’s Housing Operations.

The general contractor for the project, Hill & Wilkinson, said the building is set to be completed and open late September. Construction is slated to begin in late March or early April.

The location for the project, near the corner of Waterview Parkway and Synergy Park Boulevard, has been fenced off but soon will be abuzz with activity. Architectural firm Vai, in charge of the building’s design, plans a one-story facility that will serve as housing operations headquarters with storage and workshop areas.

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“As far as accessibility is concerned, never let great get in the way of better”, said Kelly Kinnard, assistant vice president for Facilities Management, “There’s always something that can be done better to improve accessibility. That said, I think we have a really good recipe here at UTD, and we are much better off than most schools due to our young age and strong commitment to accessibility”.

“There are very stringent codes relative to accessibility. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), along with Texas Accessibility Standards, govern how we build. They set minimum standards that have to be followed. Things like the configuration and number of accessible parking spaces, rail and counter heights, ramps, width of doors, et cetera”, Kinnard said.

The fact that UT Dallas has such a young campus has helped us be more accessible. More than half the buildings on campus are less than 10 years old and were built to comply with newer, tougher codes and standards.

“There are things UTD does as an internal practice that is above and beyond what state and federal codes require. We do it because it is right thing to do and we need to do it”, he said, “These are not required by code but have been adopted by Facilities Management as a campus standard”.

Accessibility on Campus
There are 300+ curb cuts in the street corners and sidewalks on or surrounding our main campus, and we make sure all our sidewalks are ADA-compliant.

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There are 370 accessible parking spaces on our main campus.
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