

Gifts in action: the impact is real

To see how dramatic the impact of the new science center, one need travel no more than about 10 feet from the west staircase.

There, on the first floor, begin the skills laboratory, resource room, meeting space and offices used by the department of nursing. It's a major change for the program, which was formerly squeezed into a remodelled house on the edge of campus.

And nursing students clearly appreciate the difference the building is making in their education.

"The biggest advantage of the new science building is the nursing skills lab," said Brad Norden, a senior from Grandville, Mich. "The new lab is full of state-of-the-art equipment and is laid out in such a way that students can practice their skills without tripping over each other. It is also nice that all of the faculty now have offices in the same building in which they teach. Accessibility to professors is important for students, and the new locale makes this much more convenient."

"The new facility has given us more space and resources to accommodate the growing program here, and we have better and more current supplies in the new center," said Carrie Kurz, a junior from Westlake, Ohio. "I also think it integrates the nursing program into the rest of the sciences instead of completely separating it from the other disciplines."

Such integration was a key consideration as the new science center was being designed, and not only for nursing but for all the other departments in the facility—biology, chemistry, the geological and environmental sciences and psychology. Professors have been grouped by general area of interest rather than department alone, and informal congregating space—headlined by the soaring, skylighted atrium—abounds.

And it's working.

"I see faculty interacting that I have never seen interact before," said Dr. James Gentile, who is dean for the natural sciences and the Kenneth G. Herrick Professor of Biology at Hope. "I've watched a physicist and a biologist and a chemist and a geologist sitting down and having a cup of coffee together in the atrium."

"I've watched a chemist walk into a biologist's laboratory because they happen to be right next to one another and ask the most important question of all: 'How's it going? What's going on?'" he said. "And those are exactly the kinds of things you want to see happen—the informal interactions. And if this building does nothing else, it really promotes the informality through which so much gets done and where new ideas are created."

Perhaps especially because her department was for so long



Faculty member Julie Moes '97 works with students in nursing's basic skills course. The new nursing skills lab, like all of the space in the new science center, is making a major difference to the academic program. The skills lab has been named in recognition of a gift from Dr. Donald Mulder '48 of Pacific Palisades, Calif., and is on the first-floor nursing wing, named by Gary and Joyce DeWitt of Holland, Mich. Many spaces in the building are named for those who provided leadership gifts in support of the project. As fund-raising continues, naming opportunities remain.

on the periphery of campus, Debra Sietsema, assistant professor of nursing and chairperson of the department, readily appreciates the possibilities in the arrangement.

"I think we can interact so much more with the other departments," she said. "There's potential to do interdisciplinary research, both for students and faculty. We can also just share how information can be applied or how it can be built upon."

"That interaction had to be much more purposeful when we were in the other building," Professor Sietsema said. "But now you can just walk down the hall."

Nursing began at Hope in 1982 as a program offered jointly with Calvin College. The arrangement allowed the schools to share resources, but distance, differing schedules and other logistical challenges didn't always make it easy. The joint program graduated its final class last spring with each college having decided to go it alone.

The new Hope-only program ran alongside the joint effort for two years. In keeping with Hope's research-based learning model, all students take a research practicum. The Hope program is emphasizing community outreach as students

take placements with organizations and groups ranging from Holland Community Hospital, to local parish nurses, to Pine Rest and the Ottawa County Health Department. Off-campus study is another option—two students are currently studying nursing through the college's exchange program with the Autonomous University of Queretaro, Mexico.

Students apply to enter the program, and demand is high, according to Professor Sietsema—36 students per year are accepted, and several more have indicated an interest. The first class will graduate this spring.

Norden gives the department high marks.

"The nursing program at Hope is outstanding," he said. "The faculty are well-trained, well-learned and well-prepared to teach the next generation of student nurses."

"Most importantly, however, the nursing faculty nurtures our belief in holism, the care for not only the body, but the mind and spirit as well," he said. "This training and teaching combine to equip student nurses at Hope to excel in a broad spectrum of fields."

The prospects are good for nursing graduates—the nation is experiencing a severe nursing shortage. However, it's the character of the Hope experience—academic excellence in combination with Christian perspective—rather than numbers that Professor Sietsema feels make the college's contribution to the field significant.

"Hope has strengths in the natural sciences and in Christian education and thus has a unique opportunity to prepare individuals for lives of servant-leadership in the critical profession of nursing," she said.

And now, thanks to those who have supported the *Legacies: A Vision of Hope* campaign, the college has the space to do it right.

Postscript: And what of the former nursing house? The building is a prime example of how nothing goes to waste at Hope.

Built as a private home, the two-story brick structure originally stood on College Avenue immediately north of the Peale Science Center, where it eventually housed the admissions office. It was hefted onto a trailer and moved to its current location on east 14th Street in the mid-1980s as part of the site preparation for the Van Wylen Library, at which point it began to serve nursing.

In a way, the building has now come full circle. Admissions did its work so well this year that the college has enrolled a record-high 3,068 students. The 14th Street structure has helped ease the resultant housing crunch. It is now Pieters Cottage, home to 14 men. ✎

Legacies: A Vision of Hope has four primary initiatives: renovating and expanding the Peale Science Center; constructing the DeVos Fieldhouse; increasing the endowment; and general campus improvements, including the construction of the Martha Miller Center for communication, modern and classical languages, international education and multicultural life.

While the Hope family has responded generously in making gifts to the initiatives, the need for support continues.

Thus far, support for the science center totals \$25.7 million. Total project cost, including the new building and the renovation of Peale, is \$36 million.

A major challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., provides a particular emphasis as the college seeks to complete funding for the new science center. Hope will receive the \$850,000 grant upon raising an additional \$3.1 million for the new building by March of 2004. Thus far, the college has raised \$1.8 million to

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meet the Kresge challenge.

The goal for the DeVos Fieldhouse project is \$20 million, of which \$16 million has been raised.

Strong response from the Hope family has yielded \$37

million for endowment, exceeding the goal of \$30 million. At the same time, Hope's endowment-per-student remains extremely low among peer institutions, and the difficult economic climate makes building the endowment an even greater priority than when the campaign's goals were established.

Funding for the Martha Miller Center totals \$3.8 million of the \$8.5 million goal, and for other campus projects (such as the renovation of Graves and Lubbers halls, of the Dow Center and of Dimnent Memorial Chapel) totals \$2.3 million of the \$10.5 million goal.

For more information about *Legacies: A Vision of Hope*, please visit the college online at www.hope.edu or call (616) 395-7393. To make a pledge to the campaign, please call (616) 395-7775.