The opening of a new building on the University of Hartford campus is an occasion to celebrate not only a new beginning or great architecture. It is a moment to celebrate anew the mission of the university: to create a bright tomorrow for our students, our country, and our world.

Nothing symbolizes the promise of a bright tomorrow more than the completion of the first phase of our Integrated Science, Engineering, and Technology Complex. We will mark that milestone with the official opening of our new science building and the renovated space in half of Dana Hall in late August. We are already well into the second phase of the project, the renovation of the second half of Dana Hall, which will be completed by January 2006.

The new building is spectacular, and the renovated space in Dana is fresh and new. The faculty moved into their new space this summer and are prepared to greet the students when they arrive back on campus in August. Spirits here are soaring. The biology and chemistry departments, who inhabit the new building, now have space for teaching and research that is second to none anywhere in the country.

The views from the new building are breathtaking. Designed to be light and airy, the labs and offices look out onto campus, and bring nature into the building in a way that is perfectly fitting to biology and chemistry, and to environmental engineering, which also has a laboratory in the new space. I’m sure this will inspire generations of University of Hartford students.

As beautiful as this new structure is, as wonderful as it is to have a major new academic building on campus, the true excitement in the air is not about new space but about the vision it represents: the university’s aspirations to achieve regional prominence and national visibility in science, engineering, and technology. Our newly created College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture is now firmly in place and our new dean, Louis Manzione, is on board and prepared to lead the college from the strong platform Dean Alan Hadad has provided him. With our traditionally strong faculty and students in these areas, we are poised to take off. The sky, so beautiful and striking through those new windows, is the limit.

The building is the work of William Wilson Associated Architects, Inc. and Shawmut Construction, but I think it is a testament to the longstanding strength of the university that two of our graduates, Victoria Cerami ’81 and Jim Alibrandi ’84, played key roles in the construction. Cerami’s firm, Cerami & Associates, Inc., served as the acoustical engineering firm on the project, and Alibrandi’s firm, Interstate Electric, was the electrical construction contractor. Cerami herself chaired the building committee that designed the project, and Paul Sittard ’85 was vice chair of that committee. It is a real mark of our maturity as a university that our alumni served in such prominent roles in making this project possible.

No sooner will ISET be completed than construction of the third phase of our initiative will begin. The University High School of Science and Engineering, designed by Jeter, Cook and Jepson Architects and constructed by Fusco Construction, is scheduled to break ground this winter, with an expected completion date of August 2007.

As readers of The Observer know, we began the school with a ninth grade of 100 students in the Auerbach Science Center on Asylum Avenue this past fall, and we will add a second class of like size this August. This early-college high school is setting a pace nationally for providing first-class science and engineering education.

A model of the new high school now sits on a table in my office, and I look at it every day. When I do, I see the excellence that this school represents reflected in its remarkable architecture.
Located on Mark Twain Drive on the north side of the Hog River, it will look across the river at its companion school, the spectacular (and spectacularly successful) University of Hartford Magnet School.

These schools together will transform our campus, but more importantly, they will transform our educational philosophy. As partners in our community, we are now the only private university in the country with two public schools on its campus. We are providing exciting and truly integrated educational settings to enable future generations of students to prepare themselves to take up the leadership of our region, our state, and our nation. That is truly the “tomorrow inside” that John Akers envisioned. That tomorrow will rely increasingly on science, engineering, and technology. Through these new buildings, and through the creation of our new college, the University of Hartford is at the forefront in educating students to lead the way. It is truly an exciting time in our history.

Walter Harrison

LETTERS

The Observer received the following letter in response to President Harrison’s previous message in the Winter 2005 issue in which he outlined the work he is doing with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Wow!

College student athletes could not have a more eloquent, progressive, or positive voice guiding future policy decisions. Living … in Williamsburg [Va.], and being associated with the College of William & Mary, I am reminded each day of the values to which you subscribe, and the agenda of excellence you are currently advancing.

I applaud your involvement in NCAA activities. The University of Hartford is most fortunate to have you as its leader.

Douglas J. Keeler ’65, ’66
Williamsburg, Va.

Fellow Alpha Epsilon Phi’s!

If the graduating classes of 1992 [and] 1993 (or whomever) would like to get together and share what’s been going on for the past 10 plus years, please contact me. I’d love to have a reunion in the Connecticut area!

Amanda Learned ’93

On the Death of Peter Harvey ’72, ’80

Peter Harvey was only a few years ahead of me at Hartt, but so far ahead in other ways—more talent eating his breakfast, I used to tell people—than most of us display in a lifetime of mornings.

When, years ago, we at the school learned that the composer Norman Dinerstein had died too soon (he was almost the same age as Peter), the hallways of Hartt went quiet, as if his soul were passing through. I don’t suppose that happened in the building on March 6 but it should have, and it happened here, in my house.

Memories of Peter: I see him in the pit in Millard, trying to breathe life into a John Knowls Paine relic called “Oedipus Tyrannus,” or in whiteface as the Emcee in Cabaret, in a photo that graced many a Hartt publication in those days. I hear him as Rodolfo while I conducted the New Britain Opera; and as Werther, singing of the sadness of spring. But I don’t remember him best any of those ways. I prefer the memory of Peter Harvey roaring through “I Love a Piano” or “Abba Dabba Honeymoon,” accompanying himself, or with Bob Ashens in tow, laughing, smiling, and so damn alive.

Hurts. Hurts like the Dinerstein. Peter Harvey in death has taken some

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