New Human Ecology Building Unveiled

By Anne Marie Cummings

Cornell University officially opened its new Human Ecology building on Oct. 10 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the building’s entry plaza at 37 Forest Home Drive. The ceremony featured remarks by Alan Mathiolas, dean of the College of Human Ecology, and other university leaders. The new building is home to the administrative, faculty and graduate student offices for the Department of Fiber Science & Apparel Design (FSAD).

The 89,000-square-foot modern building was designed by architects at the firm Gruzen Samton, and constructed by the Lake Company and Munnane Building Contractors. “To foster inspiration, creativity and collaboration,” Kay Oenendorf, senior associate dean of research and graduate education, says.

Project planning began in July 2001 following closure of the North Martha Van Rensselaer building due to structural deficiencies. The new $71.7 million building was funded by Cornell and the State University of New York leaders. The building was designed by architects at the firm Gruzen Samton, and constructed by the Lake Company and Munnane Building Contractors. To foster inspiration, creativity and collaboration,” Kay Oenendorf, senior associate dean of research and graduate education, says.

Project planning began in July 2001 following closure of the North Martha Van Rensselaer building due to structural deficiencies. The new $71.7 million building was funded by Cornell and the State University of New York leaders. The building was designed by architects at the firm Gruzen Samton, and constructed by the Lake Company and Munnane Building Contractors. To foster inspiration, creativity and collaboration,” Kay Oenendorf, senior associate dean of research and graduate education, says.

Project planning began in July 2001 following closure of the North Martha Van Rensselaer building due to structural deficiencies. The new $71.7 million building was funded by Cornell and the State University of New York leaders. The building was designed by architects at the firm Gruzen Samton, and constructed by the Lake Company and Munnane Building Contractors. To foster inspiration, creativity and collaboration,” Kay Oenendorf, senior associate dean of research and graduate education, says.

Among the benefits cited by Cornell are daylight views from all of the building’s open and accessible spaces, including the new Human Ecology building. Ashdown had to move her office to accommodate the building's new use, but for persons who do things differently, this new building is very exciting for all of us!”

David Feathers, left, assistant professor of design and environmental analysis, with students Sarah Han and Han Zhang in the Simulation and Human Engineering in Design Lab at the Fare Arm, a coordination measurement machine.

The building also contains dry and wet multipurpose teaching laboratories, to be shared across the college’s academic departments. The wet labs are equipped with features that allow students and faculty to handle substances and materials that require proper ventilation and safety protection, and professors can configure dry labs for a wide range of instructional purposes.

The ground floor is home to the Cornell costume and textile collection. Among the benefits cited by Cornell are daylight views from all of the building’s open and accessible spaces, including the new Human Ecology building. Ashdown had to move her office to accommodate the building's new use, but for persons who do things differently, this new building is very exciting for all of us!”

The Human Factors and Ergonomics Laboratory is on the first floor. This is where research is conducted in design and environmental analysis, fiber science and apparel design, and ergonomics. The Surface Design Laboratory enables apparel design students to apply surface designs and other finishing techniques to textiles. On the second floor, there is a 3,000-square-foot wood and metal shop and an adjacent assembly studio for constructing furniture and other models. Susan Ashdown, a professor in FSAD who has worked at Cornell since 1979, says the new building will make research and collaboration with other professors much easier. “Labs have been designed as labs, as opposed to what we had before—rooms with lab equipment in them,” she notes. Ashdown and students study functional apparel design and whether the “fit” interferes with the way people need to work. Examples of their research items include firefighter clothing and chemical protective gear; bullet-proof vests, disposable coveralls when working with dangerous chemicals and protective clothing for ice hockey players.

Prior to relocating in the new building, Ashdown had to move her lab twice. She also had a lab space near the Ithaca airport. Ashdown said this arrangement limited her collaboration with David Feathers, assistant professor of design and environmental analysis, on research. “Now we have enough space to do hand-scanning for how people interact with hand-held technologies,” Feathers says, adding, “We also have the space for full-body scanning in order to measure the entire body and capture unique postures, and we can do motion analysis, which is used to look at how people interact with products and spaces, not only for persons with healthy joints and muscles, but for persons who do things differently. This new building is very exciting for all of us!”

Providing optical services for patients of all ages, contact lens services and a wide selection of frames and accessories.

Please call for an appointment
607-387-7327

11 East Main Street (Rte. 96), Trumansburg

 FUll Service Eye Care

We Welcome

Optical

Neil Henninger, O.D.

FFull Serviice

EyeMed

TOTAL CARE

EXCELLENT HEALTH NOW

Providing optical services for patients of all ages, contact lens services and a wide selection of frames and accessories.

Please call for an appointment
607-387-7327

11 East Main Street (Rte. 96), Trumansburg

Trumansburg Optical

FUll Service Eye Care

We Welcome

EyeMed

TOTAL CARE

EXCELLENT HEALTH NOW

Providing optical services for patients of all ages, contact lens services and a wide selection of frames and accessories.

Please call for an appointment
607-387-7327

11 East Main Street (Rte. 96), Trumansburg

FUll Service Eye Care

We Welcome

EyeMed

TOTAL CARE

EXCELLENT HEALTH NOW

Providing optical services for patients of all ages, contact lens services and a wide selection of frames and accessories.

Please call for an appointment
607-387-7327

11 East Main Street (Rte. 96), Trumansburg