NEWSPAPERS RELEASE

New Nursing Wing Opens Doors to Connecticut and the Nursing Community

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Storrs, CT—The University of Connecticut School of Nursing will celebrate the completion of its new 15,800-square-foot Widmer Wing with a dedication ceremony at 12 (noon) on Friday, November 2, 2012 at the University’s main campus in Storrs.

The facility allows the School to advance as a center for nursing excellence not only in education but in community outreach. The wing includes a suite of exam rooms, clinical simulation labs, and classrooms, including a case-study auditorium with up to 175 seats. It also houses the Josephine A. Dolan Nursing History Collection.

President Herbst says that the Widmer Wing is something that the university can take pride in. “Being here, you really get the sense that this is the future of nursing education that will prepare our students for the modern health care work place.” She adds, “The bottom line is that if the School of Nursing and the university as a whole want to continue to advance, grow, and achieve, we need high quality facilities to do it. And that’s what this is.”

“The Widmer Wing has already changed the way we educate our students. The new spaces give us more room and the high-tech equipment enhances simulation scenarios, better preparing our students for their roles as clinicians and leaders in the U.S. health care system,” says Interim Dean Regina Cusson.

The addition, designed by the architectural firm Tai Soo Kim Partners LLC of Hartford, is connected to 104-year-old Augustus Storrs Hall, one of the oldest buildings on campus, on the building’s east side. The Widmer Wing is named in honor of the school’s first dean, Carolyn Ladd Widmer, a visionary leader who accelerated the school’s standing dramatically during her tenure from 1942 to 1967.
“Our mother would be thrilled, if humbled, by this recognition of her vision and determination in founding the School of Nursing and bringing it to a high level over 25 years. She was an inspiration and mentor for so many students and this wing will inspire generations of students,” said Carolyn Widmer’s sons, Eric and Michael.

The simulation wing features ceiling mounted pan tilt zoom cameras in eight rooms, a birthing simulator and a Giraffe ICU incubator. The simulated community housing unit allows for home care instruction. The high-tech broadcast capabilities allow students in the classroom to watch, critique, and discuss what other students are doing in the simulation labs. Clinical instructors have the capability to evaluate care in graduate labs and grade them.

These facility features ensure that UConn is providing quality education for our future nurses thus supplying not only Connecticut patients, but all patients with quality health care.

“UConn simulation labs allow students to translate textbook knowledge into technical skills under the direction of dedicated instructors. Lab is a safe learning environment that enables students to gain confidence in patient care. In my experience, lab makes for a smoother transition into clinical rotations at the hospital,” says Kyli e Angell, 2013 class president.

Immediately following the 12 noon ceremony, guests are welcome to tour the building, simulation labs, and the Josephine A. Dolan Collection of Nursing History. Nurse historian, Dr. Jennifer Telford will be on hand to explain nursing artifacts such as the newly acquired iron lung exhibit, military nurse uniforms, along with many other historical items. Dolan was the first professor for UConn’s School of Nursing and gathered much of the materials in the collection herself.

Presently there are 549 pre-licensure students and 169 post-licensure enrolled in the School.

The project, paid for through the UConn 2000 infrastructure fund, was approved by UConn’s Board of Trustees in 2009. The School is accepting donations from individuals interested in naming opportunities for various sections of the Widmer Wing. Interested donors can find more information on the school of nursing’s website.

Campus maps and directions are available at uconn.edu/storrs-campus.php

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