Place in time
Crane places new clock tower atop van den Berg Learning Center

SUNY-New Paltz celebrated the replacement of the clock tower by crane on top of the van den Berg Learning Center last Saturday in the Old Main Building.

The ceremony included comments from President Steven Poskanzer followed by a hot cocoa toast once the tower was in place.

The clock tower replaces the original tower, which was built in 1932 and destroyed by fire in 1990. It has a five-foot diameter clock face on four sides, with Roman numerals. It also includes a spire and many of the decorative elements found on the original tower, such as pilasters, columns, cornices and urns.

The tower raising was the final step in its construction process, which began in Campbellsville, Kentucky, where the new tower was engineered and fabricated by Campbellsville Industries Inc. The manufacturer delivered and assembled the tower on-site. Golmar Construction Corporation of New Windsor was the general contractor for the tower project. The total cost of the clock tower restoration is approximately $495,000.

Originally built in 1930 as the Campus Practice School, the building is named after Lawrence H. van den Berg, the last principal of the New Paltz Normal School and the first president of the State Teacher’s College at New Paltz (1923-1943).

The replacement of the tower culminates Phase I of a two-phase $11 million rehabilitation of the entire 67,770-square-foot building to accommodate the School of Business and the Nursing program. The contractor for the project is U.W. Marx Inc. of Troy. Phase II is scheduled to be completed in December 2005. The renovation will double the amount of classroom and lab space for the School of Business and incorporate several state-of-the-art classrooms wired with the latest educational technology.

“We are excited by the long-awaited return of this campus and community landmark,” said Poskanzer.

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