

## Two New Expansive Spaces

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# TWO NEW EXPANSIVE SPACES

Two construction and remodeling projects were completed this summer on the Dordt University campus, energizing students and faculty in two departments.

The theatre arts department moved into a new 12,000 square-foot building on the south side of campus, and the nursing department took over the former theatre space in the Ribbens Academic Complex. That extensively renovated area is now the Carl and Gloria Zylstra Nursing Education Center.

Theatre arts now has an independent, flexible space featuring a black box theatre that seats 140 people, a spacious scene shop, and dedicated makeup and green rooms. The building also has a classroom equipped with cushioned flooring, a floor-to-ceiling collaborative whiteboard wall, and full-length mirrors.

"It is amazing to act without worrying we are disrupting other departments," says Christianna Marcy, a student. "The windows are wonderful. During our last department meeting, we watched two deer run through the prairie."

Expansive natural light in offices, classrooms, and group spaces is an upgrade that both theatre arts and nursing departments are celebrating.

"I am so impressed with how well-lit and clean the lab appears each time I enter," says Carolyn Liddle, a senior nursing major. "I enjoy having so much space to work in and being close to the rest of the campus."

The nursing program at Dordt previously included two years of coursework and



JAMIN VER VELDE ('99)

With 116 students in the program this fall, nursing is one of the Dordt's largest majors.

clinicals at St. Luke's College of Nursing in Sioux City, a distance that curbed students' ability to fully experience campus life. The program is now housed entirely on campus and has partnerships with more than 20 area medical facilities.

Key features of the new nursing complex include an eight-bed ward with a variety of mannequins, ranging from infant to geriatric. Two high-tech simulation labs allow students to experience realistic situations in a controlled environment.

"In a clinical setting, a student may

not have the opportunity to care for a patient whose heart stops," says Melanie Wynja, instructor of nursing and simulation director. "In the simulation labs all nursing students experience this and other scenarios in a realistic and psychologically safe environment where it is okay to make mistakes and learn from them."

"One of the most exciting things is the look on the students' faces when they realize, 'This is for us,'" says Dr. Debbie Bomgaars, chair of the nursing department.

Both the nursing and theatre departments previously worked within limited spaces, and each department made significant contributions to the design and priorities in their new quarters.

"The design will change the way we work," Dr. Teresa Ter Haar, a theatre arts professor, says, noting that faculty and students will want to work up to the level of what the space provides. "It looks like a space where vital contemporary work is happening, and that feels exciting."

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"The modern feel and the spaciousness of the building change how our program looks," says Dr. Teresa Ter Haar. "Visitors have commented on the 'wow' factor of the space."