

No Stone Unturned

By Joel Seligman

MAY 16TH WAS A RED-LETTER DAY FOR THE University. We dedicated Raymond F. LeChase Hall, the new home for the Warner School of Education, in a gala ceremony. LeChase Hall is the first major academic building to be constructed on the Wilson Quadrangle in 30 years.

LeChase Hall is a four-story, 65,000-square-foot facility, with 14 classrooms on its first floor that are used by Arts, Sciences & Engineering during the day and by Warner in the evenings and summers. LeChase Hall also includes the Genrich-Rusling Room, the Pallodoro Methods Classroom, the Miller Technology and Research Lab, specialized classrooms and faculty offices, as well as many meeting rooms and common spaces designed to build community and encourage collaboration.

The dedication of LeChase Hall also marked a commitment by the University to help strengthen K-12 education, one of our nation's great social challenges. In an era when many urban school districts experience low graduation and college preparation rates, Warner focuses on preparing teachers, counselors, and administrators for public, private, and parochial K-12 schools, as well as professionals playing educational roles in a variety of other contexts.

The school began in 1958 when President de Kiewiet and the University Board of Trustees orchestrated the establishment of professional schools in business, engineering, and education. In its 55-year lifespan, the Warner School has developed a distinctive profile and sense of mission, combining the best of a rigorous research school of education with a commitment to preparing educators who are driven to improve not only schools, but also the human condition, by becoming leaders and agents for change.

Warner has a long history of collaboration within the University and in the community, recognizing the need to address complex problems from various professional and disciplinary perspectives, and bringing a deep commitment to equity and justice. Warner faculty, staff, administrators, and students partner with school-based educators and community members



DEDICATING LECHASE HALL: Formally dedicated in May as the new home of the Warner School of Education, “LeChase Hall was a team effort, uniting friends, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators in support of students.”

in their research in ways that allow for meaningful change and provide important knowledge that is transferable to other schools and organizations.

A critical moment occurred for the school in 1993, when William Scandling provided substantial support to strengthen research programs and increase its ability to attract graduate students and recruit faculty. The school was renamed in honor of Scandling's wife, Margaret Warner Scandling, a former University trustee who had long been an advocate for educational reform.

In recent years, the Warner School has been like the little engine that could. Since 2000, Warner has grown faster than any other of our schools, more than doubling its student enrollments and tripling federal and state-sponsored research support.

I want to particularly express my gratitude to Warner's outstanding dean, Raffaella Borasi. I will always cherish my memory of my first conversation with her when I was a candidate for the University presidency in 2004. She was on one of many committees that interviewed me. Raffaella explained that the top priority for Warner was a new building. The school was literally “bursting at the seams” because of enrollment growth. “How can you help us raise the resources for the building?”

I responded, “No stone unturned.”

There is no project at a University more challenging than raising money for a school of education. But with Raffaella, we worked ceaselessly to make the new building a reality. The Warner School's new home would not have been possible without the generous support of Wayne LeChase and his family, who provided the decisive gift that made it possible to proceed with a facility named after Wayne's father, as well as lead gifts from Tim and Robin Wentworth, Sandy Parker, and an engaged and galvanizing National Council led by Chair Bill Carpenter.

But a key to the financing of LeChase Hall was the Warner School faculty and staff. Over time, working with Raffaella, they relentlessly engaged in innovations that led to increased net tuition and grants, generating reserves that covered about one third of the building costs and thus made the ultimate financing of LeChase Hall possible.

LeChase Hall was a team effort, uniting friends, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators in support of students.

The Warner School has made a difference in educating generations of students. Now Warner has a home as inspiring as its mission. Three cheers for the Warner School and LeChase Hall! 🎉