

HOLYOKE the Sun

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'Light, open and spacious'

HCC celebrates \$43.5M renovated Campus Ctr.

By Michael Ballway
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Even for a place that talks about building bright futures daily, Holyoke Community College celebrated a large, shining example of one last Friday.

The college officially dedicated the \$43.5 million renovation of its Campus Center on Feb. 28, and the new façade — floor-to-ceiling windows replacing a concrete-dominated architecture that drew comparisons to a “pit,” a “cave” or a “dungeon” — got rave reviews.

“The whole building feels light, open and spacious, kind of like an Apple Store,” said Maiv Lee-Ruiz of Holyoke, who represented the student body at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

She shared her first impressions of the pre-renovation building, when she first began taking classes at HCC in 2016: “I remember following the student [tour] leader into the Campus Center, thinking ‘This place is dark.’ ... The halls were gloomy and felt like a cave.”

Student Mark Cote of



Gov. Charlie Baker, student Maiv Lee-Ruiz and state Rep. Aaron Vega, center, help HCC trustee Evan Plotkin and President Christina Royal cut the ribbon on the renovated Campus Center at Holyoke Community College. Standing with them are state representatives from neighboring towns.

Photo by Michael Ballway

Northampton, who was meeting with friends in the student lounge during the dedication ceremony, called the renovated space “a major improvement from what it was before.”

Gov. Charlie Baker, whose administration oversaw the project, said the difference between the dark, compartmentalized building he toured in 2016 and the light, renovated

Campus Center is “breathtaking.”

“It also speaks to the way one of our objectives is to take old space and make it new,” he added. “This is one of the best examples I have seen about it anywhere in the commonwealth. I give kudos to all the people on the boards and design teams to pulling off a beautiful transformation and

one that you should be enormously proud of.”

The Campus Center had been built in 1978 and closed for renovations in the spring of 2017, with student services moving to temporary quarters in converted classrooms in the college’s academic buildings. It reopened in time for the fall

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Public Notices

000081000064, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 11571-493. Tax for FY-2019 \$279.37.

SANTIAGO ROBERTO,
LAND & BUILDING located at 244 SARGEANT ST in HOLYOKE, containing .144 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000089000014, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 20056-147. Tax for FY-2019 \$703.29.

SANTOS FRANK,
LAND located at PINE ST in HOLYOKE, containing .101 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 0006-9000014, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 22244-286. Tax for FY-2019 \$43.37.

SBREGA TARQUINO E,
C/O GARY LAPOINTE,
LAND located at SKYVIEW ST in HOLYOKE, containing .096 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000153000043, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 4405-703. Tax for FY-2019 \$19.93.

SPEAR MAURICE V.,
LAND & BUILDING located at 640 SOUTH EAST ST in HOLYOKE, containing .060 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 0029-8000014, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 18849-285. Tax for FY-2019 \$3,247.83.

STEVENSON SCOTT R,
STEVENSON ELLEN M,
LAND & BUILDING located at 31 HARVARD ST in HOLYOKE, containing .128 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000095000041, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 11355-517. Tax for FY-2019 \$487.41.

STROBEL JOHN G JR,
ANGERS JONATHAN A,
LAND & BUILDING located at 403 CHERRY ST in HOLYOKE, containing 1.440 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000193000002, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 20740-281. Tax for FY-2019 \$16.85.

SUMBA LUIS,
GUERRON ANDREA,
LAND & BUILDING located at 8 THORPE AV in HOLYOKE, containing .074 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000091000054, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 21761-199. Tax for FY-2019 \$1,184.68.

TOURVILLE ROGER D,
TOURVILLE PHYLLIS C,
LAND & BUILDING located at 342 APREMONT HW in HOLYOKE, containing .275 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000181000108, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page ABS 2/1-139. Tax for FY-2019 \$773.59.

WEDDERBURN MARK,
LAND located at EASTERN PROMENADE in HOLYOKE, containing .217 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000121000037, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Document 211,184, Certificate 37421. Tax for FY-2019 \$129.24.

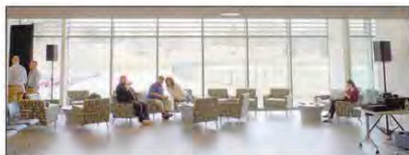
WESTERN MASS DEMOLITION CORPOR,
LAND & BUILDING located at 160 MIDDLE WATER ST in HOLYOKE, containing 1.400 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 0047-1000011, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 22106-1. Tax for FY-2019 \$21.40.

YOUNES ABBAS,
MAHDY TAMER,
LAND located at 455 NORTHAMPTON ST in HOLYOKE, containing .783 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000223000009, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Document 202,781, Certificate 36350. Tax for FY-2019 \$910.49.

ZHEN JUN L,
LI YEE M,
LAND & BUILDING located at 148 154 HIGH ST in HOLYOKE, containing .058 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 0013-2000002, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 21875-101. Tax for FY-2019 \$7,964.86.

ZOLLO CHRISTINA M,
LAND & BUILDING located at 127 WEST MEADOWVIEW RD in HOLYOKE, containing .278 ACRES shown on Assessor's Map 000140000040, recorded at HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 17187-176. Tax for FY-2019 \$1,330.73.

3/06/2020



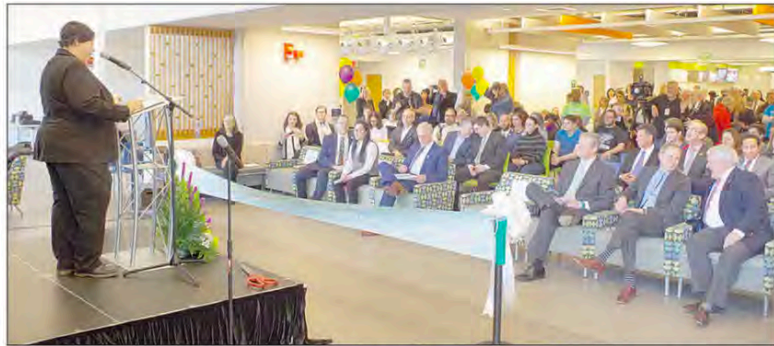
A wall of windows facing Holyoke Community College's parking lots and athletic fields let ample light into the main lounge at the renovated Campus Center.

CAMPUS, from page 1

2019 semester, as construction crews completed the finish work. The first floor now serves as a centralized home to the college's admissions, advising, career, transfer and testing departments. The second floor hosts new space for the college bookstore, which had previously occupied space in the basement. It's also home to the food court and student lounge, and offices and meeting rooms for student services.

"We love it," said Liz Golen, the college's student engagement coordinator. "We love it because of the light, the open floor plan, and the amount of space that is planned for" student groups.

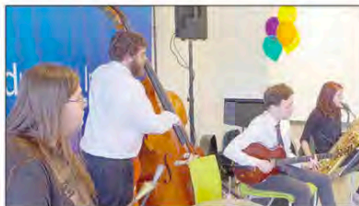
The large, open lounge on the second floor is a key factor in the Campus Center's flexibility. Golen said. She has space she can use for classes, club meetings, video game tournaments and other small gatherings,



Holyoke Community College President Christina Royal speaks during the grand opening ceremony Feb. 28 for the renovated Campus Center on the Homestead Avenue campus. Photos by Michael Ballway



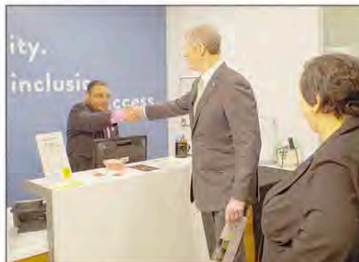
Gov. Charlie Baker drops in on a meeting of the student-led Diversity Board at Holyoke Community College during his tour of the renovated Campus Center on Feb. 28. Pictured with him, from left, are student senator Terice Kelly of Belchertown, Student Engagement Coordinator Liz Golen, student senator Jose Perez of Holyoke and Jasmine Klingenberg of Northampton, who was chairing the meeting.



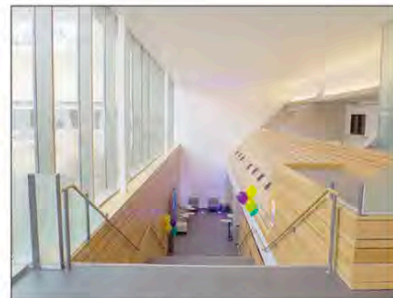
A jazz ensemble of Holyoke Community College music students plays during the Campus Center grand opening last week. Pictured, from left, are drummer Dylan Baker of Easthampton, bass player Marcus Viveiros of Northampton, guitarist Jared Cruz of Chicopee and baritone saxophonist Annalee Clough of Palmer.



One of the features added in the renovation was a bridge over Tannery Brook, turning the Campus Center into a gateway from parking lots off Homestead Avenue to the campus courtyard.



Gov. Charlie Baker shakes hands with student Luis Pinto of Holyoke while touring El Centro, a new home for HCC's Multicultural Academic Services program in the renovated Campus Center.



New vertical walls of glass give the renovated Campus Center a more inviting atmosphere than the old, slanted exterior walls of concrete, which can be seen on the right side of this staircase leading from the campus courtyard.

and sections of the lounge can be configured for larger events such as film screenings, concerts and dance parties, in addition to its daily use as a cafeteria and gathering place.

HCC President Christina Royal said the second-floor lounge is "a dining room, living room, study room, play room and launching pad ... [which] provides students with a space to 'just be.'" She said spaces like this are important, as they inspire collaboration and community engagement. She called the informal gathering space the "heartbeat" of the college.

Evan Plotkin, one of the college's trustees, agreed. "This space makes me want to be here," said Plotkin, who works in commercial real estate and property management. "You can see as you look around you the impact it has on the college. ... We are creating a physical environment that helps students feel proud. One that gets them excited to learn, and that keeps them coming back."

As the governor toured El Centro, the new cen-

tralized home for the college's Multicultural Academic Services program, coordinator Myriam Quinones and college trustee Lucy Perez told him that having a bright, inviting and expanded space will help their program and the students they serve.

Architects were able to bring more light into the building by encasing the old sloping, concrete walls with a vertical glass wall. This also added 9,000 square feet to the previously 57,000-square foot floor plan.

Brightening the space was not the only reason for the renovation, however. The construction work also addressed a persistent water leak in the basement, encasing the whole building in a water-tight seal. It also added a bridge over Tannery Brook and a new atrium connecting the Campus Center with visitor parking lots adjacent at the Homestead Avenue entrance.

"It's really a great gateway into the college, now," remarked state Rep. Aaron Vega, D-Holyoke, himself an HCC alumnus. "I've met constituents here. It's utilized by community as well as the students and faculty."