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 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
**Public Notices**

00008110000064, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 1127-489, Tax for FY 2019 $79.37.

SANTOS FRANK.
LAND located at 244 SARGEANT ST in HOLYOKE, containing 144 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000064, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 20056-147, Tax for FY 2019 $750.29.

SANDRA MARQUINO,
C/O DARCIA LAFONTE.
LAND located at SKYVIEW ST in HOLYOKE, containing 096 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000042, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 4405-203, Tax for FY 2019 $119.29.

SPEAR MAURICE V.
LAND & BUILDING located at 4-6 SOUTH EAST ST in HOLYOKE, containing 000 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000041, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 18549-289, Tax for FY 2019 $3,247.30.

STEVENVSON SCOTT R.
STEVENVSON ELIZABETH.
LAND & BUILDING located at 31 HAMPTON ST in HOLYOKE, containing 128 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000042, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 11556-17, Tax for FY 2019 $647.41.

STROBEL JOHN GJR.
ARBER ELENA.
LAND located at 403 CHERRY ST in HOLYOKE, containing 1.449 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000040, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 2390-2381, Tax for FY 2019 $116.35.

SUNA LUIS.
GUERRERO ANDRÉ.
LAND & BUILDING located at 8 THORPE AVE in HOLYOKE, containing 0.74 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000034, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 2767-109, Tax for FY 2019 $1,184.68.

TOUVILLE RODGER D.
TOUVILLE PHILIPPE.
LAND & BUILDING located at 342 AUPREMON HILL in HOLYOKE, containing 279 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000038, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 2427-8, Tax for FY 2019 $1,779.55.

WEIDEMAN MARK.
LAND located at EASTERN FRONTAGE in HOLYOKE, containing 0.27 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00000110000003, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Document 210619, Code/Code 37421, Tax for FY 2019 $126.24.

WESTERN NAISE DEMOLITION CORP.
LAND & BUILDING located at 168 MIDDLE WATER ST in HOLYOKE, containing 1.46 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000038, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 2390-381, Tax for FY 2019 $21.40.

YOUNES ABBAS.
MAHEEN TAMIM.
LAND located at 455 NORTHAMPTON ST in HOLYOKE, containing 0.72 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000039, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Document 210619, Code/Code 37421, Tax for FY 2019 $126.24.

ZHEN JUN L.
LI YEE S.
LAND & BUILDING located at 149 1/4 HIGH ST in HOLYOKE, containing 0.56 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000020, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 21975-101, Tax for FY 2019 $7,964.86.

ZOLLO CHRISTINA M.
LAND & BUILDING located at 107 HAYMADEW RD in HOLYOKE, containing 276 ACRES shown on Assessor’s Map 00008110000044, recorded at HAMPTON COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS - Book/Page 17157-176, Tax for FY 2019 $1,530.73.

3/6/2020

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**HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**President Christina Royal** speaks during the grand opening ceremony Feb. 28 for the renovated Campus Center on the Homestead Avenue campus. Photo by Michael Bacon.

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. Fitted with him, from left, are student senator Tenice Kelly of Belchertown, Student Engagement Coordinator Liz Solen, student senator Jose Perez of Holyoke and Janesine Klingenbeck 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 Vieira of Northampton, guitarist Jared Cruz of Chicopee and baritone saxophonist Amalithe Tobias 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 of 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, stunted exterior walls of concrete, which can be seen on the right side of this staircase leading from the campus courtyard.

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**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 final 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 office, library, and 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, 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.

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Joe Piotkin, one of the college’s trustees, agreed.

“This space makes me want to be here,” said Piotkin, 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 centralized 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 to the Homestead Avenue entrance.

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

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