

# TCNJ Magazine

## First Class

Posted on September 13, 2012 by Tony Marchetti '96, MA '02 • 2 Comments

f Like

Tweet 1

+1 0

2



When it became evident that the facility being built to house the College's teacher preparation program would not be ready for the start of the academic year, a notice was posted in the local papers instructing students to report to City Hall at the start of the fall term. It was there, in a three-story building that also housed the mayor's office, police headquarters, and a jail, inside a second-floor assembly hall that had played host to traveling magicians and town dances—and where none of the school's textbooks or equipment had been delivered—that

the College's first education students and professors held classes in October 1855.

One can only imagine what the reactions of those individuals might be if they saw the magnificent new building their current-day counterparts inhabited this semester.

In July, The College of New Jersey opened its newest academic facility—a 72,000-square-foot, three-story Education Building. Constructed in the Collegiate Georgian architectural style common to campus, the facility stands adjacent to—and in many ways represents the antithesis of—the School of Education's former home, Forcina Hall. Modern, functional, and inviting, the Education Building contains 21 standard and specialized classrooms, a computer lab, a 165-seat auditorium, a seminar room, a café, an observation room for the counselor education program, a multipurpose room, a rooftop terrace, and offices for the school's faculty, administrators, and grant-funded centers.

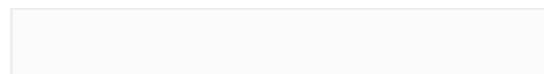
Plans to build a new home for the College's oldest school were publicized as far back as 2001. The building's design was finally approved in July 2008, and construction of the \$33.5 million facility, which was financed through the sale of bonds, began in May 2010. Faculty and staff moved in this past summer, and students are attending classes in the building this semester.

"It's been a long time coming, but it was worth the wait," said **Mark Kiselica**, dean of the School of Education, shortly after the building opened. A member of TCNJ's faculty since 1994, Kiselica explained that while the College has a "great tradition of teacher preparation that stretches back for generations," the work of School of Education faculty had become "increasingly challenging" in recent years. "We didn't have a facility that always allowed us to expand our teaching and scholarship to the fullest extent possible. This new building will allow us to do that—to take our work of preparing high-quality educators and clinicians in exciting new directions."

### A modern building for training tomorrow's educators

Twenty of the Education Building's 21 classrooms are known as "smart classrooms," which means the latest technology is built into the room. The new building's smart rooms include ceiling-mounted projectors and projection screens that can be operated by wall switches or from the room's lectern. The lecterns also house computers; in two rooms, the computers are connected to, and electronically record what is written on, that room's interactive white board. In other classrooms, the wiring infrastructure was built into the walls to allow for future interactive white boards.

The STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)



classroom includes all of the features typical of the science classrooms in which many TCNJ students will eventually teach, and also includes such “high-tech” resources as proscopes (microscopes that can be projected onto a computer screen), Vernier probe-ware (for measuring temperature, pressure, and speed), clickers, and document cameras. A section of the STEM room’s ceiling was left off to allow students to see the building’s mechanical and structural systems, thus enhancing the

learning experience. All elementary, early childhood, special, and deaf and hard of hearing education majors, as well as a number of master’s in teaching students, will use the STEM room, said **Lauren Madden**, assistant professor of elementary and early childhood education. In the

past, the school had to conduct its science methods classes in Armstrong Hall, because Forcina did not have the proper facilities. “We’re very excited that our students now have a ‘science home’ in this beautiful new building,” said Madden.

The counselor education department’s suite includes three small group rooms, each fitted with a one-way mirror, as well as an interconnected classroom and observation/resource room. The small group rooms can be used to facilitate and observe group dynamics and to role-play counseling situations, explained **Atsuko Seto**, associate professor of counselor education. A closed-circuit camera system allows faculty and students to simultaneously monitor the small group rooms from the observation/resource room. This live observation method makes it possible for a course instructor to provide students with useful feedback on the spot when appropriate, said Seto. In addition, practice counseling sessions held in these group rooms can be digitally recorded so that students can later review and discuss their performance with classmates and faculty.

The Education Building was designed to meet LEED Silver specifications, and boasts a number of energy-efficient features, including motion-activated lighting and a chilled-beam system with heat recovery wheels and heat-pipe technology. “This system pretreats the air to reduce the amount of cooling and heating needed to condition the building, and provides free precooling and reheat air to the air-handling unit. The reduction in primary airflow also reduces the amount of electricity used,” explained **Lynda Kane**, director of planning and campus architect.

Functional spaces that serve a variety of purposes



*A section of the STEM room’s ceiling was left off to allow students to see the building’s mechanical and structural systems, thus enhancing the learning experience.*

The Education Building houses two model classrooms for elementary education and early childhood education



students. The early childhood room is named for **Marilyn Grinwis Gray '48**, a retired kindergarten teacher, in acknowledgement of her support of the School of Education, in particular, the early childhood program.

**Sarah Kern**, chairperson of the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education, said the model classrooms will help students

begin to understand what real classrooms look like and how the classroom environment supports learning.

“Classroom environment is key to setting up and maintaining all the elements that support intellectual curiosity and discovery, and if done well, also is an important element in classroom management,” Kern explained.

Another significant improvement the new building offers over Forcina Hall is that it includes adequate space to properly serve the many centers housed in the School of Education, said Kiselica. “We’ve become a leader in the state in preparing students to work with special-needs students, and our centers are a reflection of that.”

One such center is CATIES (the Center for Assistive Technology and Inclusive Education Studies), a research and service initiative dedicated to improving the educational experiences of children with disabilities by linking faculty and staff expertise with the needs of New Jersey’s educational community. CATIES Director **Amy Dell** said the center’s suite includes much-needed space to store and exhibit the electronic equipment that the center loans to individuals with differing abilities (such as portable and desktop video magnifiers that assist visually impaired students with reading). There is also an evaluation room where CATIES staff can meet with special-needs individuals to assess their technology needs, as well as a training room where the center’s staff can host professional development workshops for school district personnel.

One of the recurring complaints among faculty and students about Forcina Hall was that there was nowhere for either group to meet informally, outside the classroom. This was particularly difficult for the school’s many graduate students, most of whom are commuters and therefore had nowhere convenient to meet with their peers to discuss experiences in the field or ongoing research projects. As Kern put it: Students came to Forcina for class but went elsewhere for conversation. The Education Building includes several student lounge areas that provide ample space for students and faculty to meet and share work or exchange ideas. There is also a first-floor café that offers a convenient place to grab a snack in between classes.

The multipurpose room can accommodate close to 200 people and provides a modern, functional venue for hosting a variety of events on campus. Kiselica said he sees an advantage to having such a space inside the

## Education Building.

“It was difficult for the School of Education to host events in Forcina because the facilities were so dated,” said the dean. “Now, with this beautiful, two-story multipurpose room, which overlooks the woods and the lake, we can welcome people into our building and showcase our facilities, our programs, and the work of our students, faculty, and staff in ways we couldn’t before.

“I eagerly await visits from alumni, fellow administrators and teachers in area school districts, and professors and deans from around the state,” continued Kiselica. “We want people to come visit and enjoy this facility with us.”

*[Click here to read about Building Up, the public art accompaniment to the Education Building.](#)*

*Photos by Deric Raymond '11 and Amy Macintyre '12*



Filed Under: Features, September 2012

[← Softball diamond renamed for a coaching legend](#)

[This month in Lions' sports history: Eric Hamilton's first game as head coach →](#)

## 2 Responses to *First Class*

### **[Looking Back: September 2012 | TCNJ Magazine](#)**

September 21, 2012 at 5:51 pm

[...] the College community celebrates the completion of a structure that is sure to become a campus landmark for generations to..., the staff of TCNJ Magazine thought it would be appropriate to remember another structure that past [...]

### **[Breaking Down “Building Up” | TCNJ Magazine](#)**

September 24, 2012 at 11:41 am

[...] the main entrance to the Education Building stands Building Up, a 22-foot-tall sculpture that was commissioned as the public art accompaniment [...]

## Leave a Reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.

### TCNJ LINKS

---

[TCNJ Home](#)

[Alumni Events](#)

[Class Notes](#)

[Find Alumni](#)

[Give to TCNJ](#)

### CONTACT

---

[magazine@tcnj.edu](mailto:magazine@tcnj.edu)

### ARCHIVES

---

Select Month

---

[HOME](#)   [UP FRONT](#)   [FEATURES](#)   [ALUMNI NEWS](#)   [LIONIZED](#)   [CAMPUS NEWS](#)   [ATHLETICS](#)

[MULTIMEDIA](#)   [LETTERS](#)

---

[Go To Top](#)

The opinions expressed in these pages are those of the contributing writers and not necessarily those of The College of New Jersey.

[View Full Site](#)