

'More than Just a Building': *Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons*

By Dr. Bea Hardy, Dean of Libraries and Instructional Resources

The Guerrieri Academic Commons is at the heart of campus, literally and figuratively. Located in the middle of the academic buildings, it is meant as a celebration of learning, because learning is at the heart of what a university does. And at the heart of the Academic Commons is a state-of-the-art 21st-century library facility, which will occupy the lion's share of the building.

Built in the 1950s for a student body of 2,600 undergraduates, Blackwell Library served the University long and well. Teaching, learning and research, however, all have changed greatly since the 1950s, as has the University itself, which has grown to over 8,500 students, a tenth of whom are graduate students. Students today need access to multiple information resources, not just books and journals but databases, datasets, graphic materials, streaming media, and even archives and manuscripts. They work in groups and use all kinds of technology to not just consume information but to produce it in diverse ways from papers to presentations to posters to performances. They learn in varied ways, listening to expert faculty in traditional lectures; interpreting, analyzing and experimenting, guided by faculty members; and discussing and collaborating with their peers. And they seem to learn best at night and with food and drink by their sides.

Want to see the Academic Commons for yourself?

Please join us for the **Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony** on Thursday, September 1, at 11 a.m.

Or, sign up for a tour during **Homecoming** at alumni.salisbury.edu/event/GACTours

Meeting 21st-Century Needs

To meet the 21st-century needs of our students and faculty, the University needed a new facility: the Guerrieri Academic Commons. Triple the size of Blackwell Library, the Academic Commons features four times as many seats, and this seating ranges from traditional tables and carrels to sofas, soft chairs, booths, bar-height stools and even rocking chairs. Students working together have access to 16 group study rooms and various spaces for collaboration. Expanded space for quiet individual study accommodates those who prefer to learn on their own, whether in reading rooms with expansive views of the campus or in nooks and crannies around the building. Graduate students have their own dedicated space, the Graduate Commons, and night owls enjoy the large 24-hour space, including the two-story café. Food and drink, in fact, are allowed in most parts of the building.

Tech & Texts

Technology abounds in the Academic Commons, from large screens where students can share their work with each other to a maker lab with 3-D printers and scanners. There are hundreds of computers and electrical outlets galore, much needed by today's device-bearing students. But traditionalists need not despair; there also is space to expand our physical book and other collections. The Edward H. Nabb Center for Delmarva History and Culture and

University Special Collections occupy a state-of-the-art archival facility, with a large reading room, classroom and exhibit space, and secure, climate-controlled storage.

A Center for Learning

The Academic Commons provides ample opportunity for students to interact with faculty and staff and brings together many academic support services. The Center for Student Achievement/TRiO, the Writing Center, and the Math Emporium all provide tutoring and extra instruction. The Library Services and IT Help Desks supply immediate help. The five library classrooms are each configured differently to encourage creative teaching and active learning. An exhibit lab provides students the opportunity to curate exhibits using the library's collections, advised by a professional curator. The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities provides further support for students.

Finally, the Academic Commons also supports the faculty. The Office of Instructional Design & Delivery and the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning foster excellence in instruction. The Faculty Center gives faculty from all over campus a central place to gather and work together, encouraging interdisciplinary projects that reach across schools and promoting shared activities.

The Guerrieri Academic Commons is more than just a building. It promises to be a transformative experience for Salisbury University.

Finishing touches include the capping off of this impressive structure with the Samuel R. Brown Carillon. The carillon tower, at 147 feet, is the tallest structure on SU's campus.



\$8 Million Guerrieri Gift for Academic Commons Transforms Campus



The building is named to honor the Guerrieri family matriarch: Patricia R. Guerrieri.

"Patti Guerrieri often helped others, quietly and privately," Dudley-Eshbach said. "In many ways this new center for learning will do the same: Silent reading, browsing the stacks, conversations centered on classroom collaborations, a refreshing cup of coffee, stimulating exhibits and thought-provoking lectures – all these activities and more will happen within the new complex.

"None of us ever totally knows how such engagement changes lives, but it does. The Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons will, in many thoughtful ways, help others to learn and grow."

On Thursday, May 2, 2013, speaking on behalf of the family, Michael Guerrieri, a longtime SU Foundation board member, eloquently paid tribute to his late mother. He cited her natural curiosity and noted that the family was grateful for the opportunity to honor her "at the very place where she first met our father – on this campus."

"It is our hope that the new Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons will put smiles on the faces of all who use it and enable them to do special things for people in the community," Michael Guerrieri said.



Group Study Room



Graduate Commons



Atrium Seating Area



Faculty Center Balcony



Nabb Center Classroom



CSA Open Study Space

Inside the Guerrieri Academic Commons

By Nancy Talbott '16

For decades, topping the wish list of campus facilities has been a new library. After years of anticipation, this wish finally becomes a reality in fall 2016. The opening of the Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons marks a revolution in learning for Salisbury University. With a new library, new café, and ample space for study and research, the University now has a beautiful – and state-of-the-art – academic hub. In addition to its amazing library services, the Guerrieri Academic Commons is also the place to find the new and expanded homes of several growing student, faculty and community learning centers. Read on about what the new facility means to these support offices.

Center for Student Achievement

The Center for Student Achievement's (CSA) new home in the Guerrieri Academic Commons will provide students with a greater opportunity "to access all of the CSA services in a centrally located site," said Dr. Heather Holmes, director of the CSA. "Currently, the CSA operates from four different locations around campus. The new space will allow us to reach our goal of providing academic support to all undergraduate students – from orientation to graduation."

Features of the center's new location include a closer proximity to the library's resources and other academic offices, an expanded floor plan, a private coaching space, an open study room, Supplemental Instruction session and training rooms, and a tutoring lab. The CSA will be using this larger area to enhance its approach to academic coaching. "The expanded space will allow us to maintain the successful programs that we have created over the past eight years and incorporate new ideas to support the changing needs and interest

of the SU student body," explained Holmes.

The CSA staff looks forward to the opportunities that the Guerrieri Academic Commons provides and is excited to partner with other faculty as they work to create what George D. Kuh, the director of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, calls a "seamless learning environment."

Students are encouraged to visit the CSA "early and often." Its staff are constantly working to support students and their academic goals, and a partnership with such a dedicated office can make all the difference.

Math Emporium

One of the greatest improvements in the relocated Mathematics and Computer Science Tutoring Center is its place in the new Math Emporium, which will provide a space for students to meet and study outside of regular tutoring hours.

Dr. Donald Spickler, chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department, explained that since its opening, the center's mission has been "to act as the primary tutoring facility for

mathematics and computer science classes."

In addition to its new study space, the center's ability to help students is increasing with its larger floor plan and more accessible location. Its new place on the second floor of the Guerrieri Academic Commons provides the potential for expanded tutor availability and weekend tutoring hours, both of which will aid the center in helping SU students more efficiently. With additional space for up to 30 more individuals, 18 computer workstations and an audio/visual presentation system, the center is ready to take the next step in better serving the campus community.

"The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science pours the majority of its resources into providing the best possible out-of-class learning experiences," said Spickler. "Every semester, nearly 25 percent of the entire student body of Salisbury University will take a 100- or 200-level mathematics or computer science course ... if a student is having difficulty in a class or simply wants some help with a homework problem, the tutors are there for them."

