



## Jastak-Burgess Hall honors UD benefactors

5:41 p.m., April 24, 2006--For many years, Sarah Jastak-Burgess and her husband, Leslie M. Burgess, have exemplified the rich tradition of generous giving to the University of Delaware established by UD's greatest benefactor, Pierre Samuel du Pont.

Their contributions were formally recognized on Friday, April 21, with the dedication of [Jastak-Burgess Hall](#), the new home of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. Located on the North Green near Old College, the renovated building houses approximately 60 faculty offices and other office space, a language laboratory and the Rollins Conference Center.



*Leslie M. Burgess & Sarah Jastak-Burgess*

A UD alumnus, Sarah Jastak-Burgess received her master's degree in 1954 and her doctorate in 1963 and is a recipient of UD's Medal of Distinction. Leslie M. Burgess received his bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley and his MBA from Harvard University.

University President David P. Roselle joined UD Board of Trustees Chairman Howard E. Cosgrove and Richard Zipser, chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, in welcoming the Burgesses and acknowledging their many contributions to UD.



*Helping cut the ribbon at the dedication are (from left) UD President David P. Roselle, Michael Deptula of Anderson, Brown, Higley Associates, UD Board of Trustees Chairman Howard E. Cosgrove, Sarah Jastak-Burgess, Leslie Burgess and Richard Zipser, chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.*

“We are here to celebrate this building, the new home of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, but more importantly, to celebrate the individuals who have made this transformation possible, Sarah Jastak-Burgess and her husband, Leslie M. Burgess,” Roselle said. “Together they have been among the most generous donors to the University and are members of the Signers Society, the highest giving association at the University.”

Roselle also lauded the Burgesses for gracing UD with significant collections of Russian icons, ambers, sculpture and art from around the world.

“They have a deep interest in the health and enrichment of the state's cultural life, as well as cultural exchange,” Roselle said. “It is appropriate that the building bears their names, and we honor their friendship today by doing so.”

Jastak-Burgess Hall combines two former fraternity houses, Sigma Phi Epsilon and Sigma Nu, both designed by architects Day and Klauder. The land on which the building stands was purchased in 1916 by Isabella du Pont Sharp and her husband H. Rodney Sharp, with funds supplied anonymously by P.S. du Pont.

Du Pont, working with his brother-in-law H. Rodney Sharp, a Delaware College graduate and a member of the Board of Trustees, had made an anonymous gift of 40 acres of land to the college in 1915 that forms the central area of the campus now known as The Green, Roselle said.

“Thus began the development of the University as we know it today,” Roselle said. “Architects, Day and Klauder, who also were the architects for Princeton University’s campus, were called in to lay out the vision for construction on campus and particularly the design of The Green.”



The new addition, which joins the original structures, added approximately 5,400 gross square feet to the existing 21,500 gross square feet. At the south end of the building is the Rollins Conference Center, which contains a large conference table and chairs used by the late John W. Rollins Sr., noted local business executive and donated by his wife, Michelle.

The project cost approximately \$8 million. Architect for the renovation was Anderson, Brown, Higley Associates of Wilmington, and the project was coordinated by Larry McGuire, senior project manager, Facilities Planning and Construction.



“The renovation and expansion of these two buildings, now known as Jastak-Burgess Hall, was a major commitment by the University to restore and preserve an historic link in our institution’s architectural heritage,” Cosgrove said. “Sarah and Leslie joined us in making that commitment the reality we celebrate today.”

Zipser praised Jastak-Burgess Hall for its appearance and amenities, including a media center complete with a film-screening room.

“As you can see, the building is a feast for the eyes and is one of the loveliest structures on campus,” Zipser said. “If you have not been inside it, you are in for a real treat.”

The new home for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures also will further facilitate the many educational opportunities available to students, including participants in UD’s Study Abroad Program, Zipser said.

“Our overarching goal is to develop students’ knowledge of foreign languages, literatures and cultures, both Western and non-Western,” Zipser said. “Over the years, our department has played a leading role in internationalizing our University’s curriculum and campus.”

Zipser also noted that the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures sponsors more study abroad programs and sends more students abroad than any other foreign language department in the country.

“This year, we sponsored 26 study abroad programs, with over 560 students participating,” Zipser said. “We offer students the opportunities to study in Spain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, China, Japan, Mexico, Martinique, Argentina, Brazil and Ecuador. In the coming year we will add Austria, Chile and Panama to the list.”

Burgess, who remarked that UD's colors of blue and gold also are the traditional colors of his alma mater, the University of California at Berkeley, said the dedication was of great importance to him and his wife Sarah Jastak-Burgess.



“It's a great honor to be associated with the University of Delaware,” Burgess said. “I'm grateful to President Roselle and Chairman Cosgrove and Mr. Zipser for their kind words. We thank you very much, and we appreciate this deeply.”

The dedication concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and the unveiling of a plaque honoring the Burgesses.

Article by Jerry Rhodes

Photos by Kathy F. Atkinson