

Another great beginning

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ON OCT. 22, 2011, the Connecticut College community gathered in Palmer Auditorium for the culminating celebration of the Centennial year, a multimedia production called “100 Years of Great Beginnings.” The audience represented a wide swath of the College’s history, from 99-year-old alumna Gladys Russell Munroe ’34 to our newest students and their families.

In this, the last magazine of the Centennial year, we are bringing you a series of stories from the Oct. 22 event; they begin on page 20. These stories together with all the Fall Weekend programming presented a compelling portrait of Connecticut College on its 100th birthday. From “Foundations, Dreams and Inspirations,” a student-written theater production directed by Michael Lerner ’89, to the ceremonial signing of the steel beams for the new science center, the weekend was a snapshot of Connecticut College today, shaped by the past and preparing for the future.

Less than a month after the gala weekend, members of the campus community gathered again to celebrate a topping out ceremony for the new Science Center at New London Hall. It was raining, but spirits were high. I donned a safety harness and rode a lift to the top of the new addition. Looking down on a sea of umbrellas and upturned faces, I placed an evergreen at the peak following an old Scandinavian tradition. The tree is said to symbolize growth and good fortune.

Just as our founders constructed New London Hall and hired the first faculty, today we continue to build our campus, our curriculum and our community for a second century: a century in which Connecticut College will adapt and respond to new opportunities, as it has been doing for 100 years.

I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again: This liberal arts education is the best preparation for work and life. Our students and graduates go out into the world with the skills, knowledge and, importantly, the moral compass to take on the hardest problems — and find solutions.

Our students and alumni develop a global orientation in the classroom and put it into practice through



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internships, study abroad, student-faculty research and community learning. In our interdisciplinary centers, they learn how to look at the world through multiple and very different perspectives. Through our CELS career program, they connect their studies with work and personal goals. They are immersed in a challenging academic program that teaches them not what to think, but how to think.

The excellence of a Connecticut College education is more than any list of features and programs, no matter how comprehensive. What makes this place and this experience so important are people — faculty, staff, alumni, parents, the larger New London community and, of course, our students.

As a community, we work together to challenge our students in every way, while providing them with all the resources and support they need to meet those challenges and learn from them.

Over the course of this Centennial year, we have looked back at our history and all the people who gave the College its start. During Centennial Fall Weekend, and in this issue of the magazine, we are also celebrating the present and the future and all those who are helping us build that future.

I am proud and honored to be president of Connecticut College at this important milestone in its history.

And I am especially honored to be part of this community, with all of you, as we set our sights on the next great beginning. ■