

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

SECS celebrates launch of modern computer classroom

By **Katie Land**, news editor

Oakland University's Dodge Hall of Engineering received a boost when an electronic storage shop was converted into a new top-notch computer classroom. The launch of the new classroom was celebrated on Wednesday, Dec. 2, with a ribbon cutting ceremony and reception.

The 42-seat classroom offers a new student lounge and state-of-the-art workstations designed for students to interact and follow along with an instructors' lecture in real time. It is more than twice the size of previous labs that had a maximum capacity of 20 students.

"We needed that facility," said Bhushan Bhatt, associate dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science. "There has been a longstanding need for that type of space."

The renovations bring the building up to modern standards, according to Bhatt. "The renovations will make an enormous difference to our students and our programs. We are very excited about it," he continued.

The classroom space will make a substantial difference in the learning process for students. Before the lab, students would listen to lectures, take notes and then try to use different programs on their own time. Now, a sizable class can follow the programs along with their instructor in real time, Bhatt said.

The new classroom labs are just a part of the renovations made to Dodge Hall. The other computer labs have been upgraded and the entire area has been revamped and spruced up.

"The building is becoming student friendly and inviting," Bhatt said. "Now students can work together on assignments and projects and have the opportunity to sit face to face and collaborate and talk."

The main entryway into the building has been redone with new furniture and workspaces to provide students with a place to read, gather or work on class projects. A large mural has been added to the DHE office area, outside the Dean's office, depicting the progression of technology from the Dodge brothers driving a Model T to astronauts in space.

Tables, chairs and convenient outlets have been added to hallways and corners to utilize and expand as much of the existing space as possible.

"There is a substantial commuter population at Oakland University and we wanted to provide a space for our students to stay longer on campus after their classes," Bhatt continued. "We want to make the areas more inviting and functional."

The student lounge and classroom lab is located on the first floor of Dodge Hall. For more information about SECS programs, visit the Web site at oakland.edu/secs.

SUMMARY

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