

## **A PROPOSAL TO RENOVATE HELEN NEWMAN HALL AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY**

*I love the classes they offer – spinning, yoga, Pilates. You work out the kinks you get from sitting at a computer all day. You get away from it all and breathe a little bit. But I think the building could be so much more. I'd like to come back for a reunion and say, wow, Helen Newman Hall has been renovated and it looks so great!*

*Phillip Kaine '08, School of Industrial and Labor Relations*

It's a short walk from Cornell's freshman dorms on North Campus to Helen Newman Hall. But when they get there, students often have to wait an hour to play basketball or work out on the treadmill.

From 6 a.m. to after midnight, 2,000 students pack the fitness facility every day. They double up on the basketball court, wait in line for exercise machines, and try to grab some of the limited pool time. To meet student interest in health and fitness, Helen Newman Hall needs a full renovation.

Cornell's programs for intramurals, fitness, recreation, outdoor education, and physical education are superb – the best in class in the Ivy League and among the best in the country. Intramurals, fitness, and recreation serve well over half the student body, and participation rates continue to grow. Recognizing these facts, the Trustee Task Force on Athletics strongly recommended that Cornell maintain the high quality of these programs.

To achieve these goals, Cornell seeks to raise \$15 million to renovate and expand Helen Newman Hall, so that it will serve as the capstone of the transformation of undergraduate residential life on North Campus.

### **Fifty Years of Fitness**

*“Helen Newman Hall is in a great location. It's the heart of the Cornell fitness centers. It's what you're looking for after a tough day of classes and tests. It gives you an outlet. You come into the gym and don't think of anything; you just work out. But with the crowding – well, there are not many opportunities to play basketball in Ithaca in the winter, so you come and wait for a court.”*

*Manuel Natal '08, College of Human Ecology*

Helen Newman Hall (HNH) was built in 1963 as a state-of-the-art facility for women's athletics and dance. The three-story building overlooking Beebe Lake was made possible by a gift from Floyd R. Newman '12, a former member of the Board of Trustees, in honor of his wife, Helen.

At that time, no one imagined that fitness and recreation would become as popular as they are today – nor did they foresee that most of these activities would be co-educational. Now, after a

day of classes and studying, more than half of Cornell's students head for one of the five fitness centers on campus, where they work out on machines, take a group exercise class, compete in intramural sports, and socialize. HNH is the only building at Cornell that is a fully dedicated recreation center. (The other four centers are located in varsity athletics facilities and dormitories.)

Over the years, changes have been made in HNH to accommodate the explosive interest in health and fitness. In 1995 the beautiful lounge facing south toward Beebe Lake became a fitness room, with cardiovascular and strength-training equipment. But more extensive renovations are essential. For example, because HNH was originally built for women, the men's locker rooms have only three showers, while the women's lockers have three times that many. Also, Cornell's "newest pool" – part of the original 1963 construction – was made for women. Now it is used by both Physical Education classes and swim team practices, so only few swimming times are available for others. And when the men's swim team practices the butterfly stroke, the narrow lanes must be widened for them.

These limitations don't stop Cornell students from thronging into Helen Newman Hall, despite long waits for court time and swimming lanes.

#### **Four Crowded Programs**

*"Being a Student Monitor at Cornell Recreational Services is a great opportunity to be a manager at such a young age. You learn about communication and public speaking. At staff meetings you have to talk in front of 200 people, or you have to give public presentations on health issues. It's a pretty demanding job, so my time management has gotten much better. It teaches you to stay focused and get everything done."*

*Lindsay Petrovic '07, College of Human Ecology*

Everyone at Cornell seems fascinated by fitness. Faculty and staff, as well as students, enthusiastically participate in the four Cornell Recreational Services programs, all of which are headquartered at Helen Newman Hall. Over the past 20 years, Recreational Services has expanded from seven fulltime staff members to 21 full and part time staff. As a result, office space has become congested. Every available inch of storage space has been converted to offices – including the pool's viewing gallery, which is now crammed with desks and computers.

Four programs are housed in HNH: the Intramural Sports Program, the Cornell Fitness Centers, the Faculty-Staff Wellness Program, and the Helen Newman Bowling Center.

#### **The Intramural Sports Program**

- This program offers 33 different individual and team events, ranging from badminton to wrestling.
- In 2005-06, 43.5 percent of Cornell undergraduates and 11 percent of graduate students participated in intramural sports.
- Another 150 students are employed as referees, supervisors, scorekeepers and equipment managers.

#### Cornell Fitness Centers

- Fitness facilities offer individualized exercise programs, ongoing orientations in using the cardiovascular and strength training equipment, as well as classes in aerobics, dance, yoga and martial arts.
- In 2005-06, 225 student employees served as monitors, coordinators, group exercise instructors and equipment managers.

#### The Faculty/Staff Wellness Program

- This program includes fitness testing, personal training, and nutrition counseling.
- In 2005-06, 1,900 staff or faculty members took part, representing over 10 percent of Cornell Employees.
- Over 1,000 people attended health education seminars and lectures.
- 800 faculty or staff members had their blood pressure taken at 80 different clinics.

#### The Helen Newman Hall Bowling Center

- The Center hosts student and staff bowling teams.
- In 2005-06, there were 180 bookings for post-prom parties, children's birthdays, departmental events, and summer sports camps.
- 100 families participated in Family Day Bowling.

With so many programs to choose from, Cornell students have unparalleled opportunities to meet outside of class, form strong bonds with one another and to Cornell, and learn lifetime fitness skills.

### **Recruitment, Retention, and Academic Performance**

or, to continue the "numbers" headings

#### **A Dozen Scientific Reasons for Fitness Programs**

*"At college, you get the Freshman 15; that is, you put on weight. Working out helps you avoid that, along with reducing the stress of this rigorous academic institution. A workout regime in your schedule helps with time management, too."*

*Kelsey Space '08, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences*

One of the most consistent findings in recreational research is that student satisfaction with their college or university is highly correlated with participation in intramural sports and recreation. Researchers also have found a positive relationship between grade point average and frequency of participation in fitness programs and intramural sports.

As part of a research project on the impact of recreation and fitness on the college students, the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association polled over 2,600 students from 16 colleges. Over 70 percent of these students agreed that participation in recreational fitness programs enhanced their overall emotional well-being, reduced stress, improved their ability to handle their workload, boosted their self-confidence, and helped them feel a part of the college

community. Unsurprisingly, campus recreation facilities are among top five considerations among students who choose a college.

These research findings, combined with student demand for recreation and fitness facilities, have made those facilities very important to the recruitment process. Comfortable, state-of-the-art facilities can also positively impact a student's decision to attend a particular school. As a result, many institutions of higher learning are investing in new and renovated facilities for recreation and fitness.

Students who feel a part of the college community, and who can reduce stress and build self-confidence, are more likely to remain in college, maintain good grades, and graduate on schedule. Renovation of Helen Newman Hall will enhance Cornell's ability to recruit the best students, and will have a positive impact on student academic achievement at Cornell.

### **The Design for Helen Newman Hall**

*"Helen Newman Hall is the best facility when it comes to a full range of activities. It is the only building on campus that has a pool, basketball courts, indoor volleyball/badminton courts, fitness classes – such as yoga, Pilates, spinning, tai chi, and more – as well as the fitness center on the second floor. No matter the degree of someone's physical fitness experience, they can find an activity at HNH to help get them through a plateau, or push them forward to the next level."*

*Phillip Kaine '08, School of Industrial and Labor Relations*

The design for the new Helen Newman Hall will add more fitness opportunities and create a lively, friendly space. A soaring new lobby will face Mews and Court Residence Halls and Appel Commons, welcoming students and giving them a place to meet, while a new student lounge will furnish an additional space for "facetime."

The congestion and crowding that is now infamous among those who frequent Helen Newman Hall will be a thing of the past. Expanded facilities will offer students many more chances to shoot hoops, play intramural volleyball, or swim laps, while more workspace will improve the work lives of Recreational Services staff. The building will remain nestled along the hillside, and students working out in the fitness center and dance studio will continue to enjoy a captivating view of Beebe Lake.

The new facility will include:

- A third gymnasium
- A new multi-activity court
- A second pool
- Reconfigured locker space
- Expanded office spaces

The proposed design for the renovation of Helen Newman Hall is by Dagit•Saylor Architects, a nationally recognized design firm that provides full architectural services as well as planning,

programming, and interior design. Dagit•Saylor partnered in designing the North Campus site, and designed the new student union, Appel Commons.

Since its founding in 1970, the firm's experience has spanned a range of building types, including educational, institutional, and cultural facilities. In recent years, projects for colleges and universities have represented the majority of the firm's workload. Dagit•Saylor Architects has been honored with numerous national, state, and local design awards, including gold and silver medals from the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a Progressive Architecture design citation, several historic preservation awards and the Pennsylvania Society of Architect's Silver Medal, its highest honor. In the international design competition for the Newport News Cultural Arts Pavilion, Dagit•Saylor Architects was awarded first place.

Dagit•Saylor will design an exterior to the Recreation Facility that will compliment the three new buildings it faces, Appel, Court and Mews, as well as the crescent green [insert "now known as Rawlings Green" if appropriate]. [insert "Drawings of the proposed design for Helen Newman Hall are enclosed." if appropriate]

### **Request for Support**

A leadership gift for the renovation of Helen Newman Hall as the hub of the North Campus Community [insert if appropriate "will serve as a wonderful tribute to Hunter Rawlings, who has made the strengthening of student life a central part of his mission as Cornell's president." It will also] honor the \_\_\_ family's partnership with Cornell, recognizing them as an essential force in the residential initiative and its historic impact on student life at Cornell. Such a gift will be vital in creating a facility to house Cornell's superb recreation and fitness programs; programs which enhance student academic performance and lead them to a lifetime enjoyment of sports and fitness. In recognition of this gift of \$\_\_\_\_, Cornell would be proud to [naming opportunity] to salute the family's commitment to Cornell and to enhancing the life of Cornell students.

**Note: we need to build a separate databank of all opportunities with their descriptions and dollar amounts. Giving officers can then choose from a menu to present in their proposals.**

In recognition of **your strong record of support** in advancing the mission of Cornell University, we request your consideration of a gift commitment of \$AMOUNT. This gift may comprise of:

#### **Option 1**

- **\$AMOUNT** (to be paid over the next **NUMBER** years) in support of the Helen Newman Hall Renovation and Expansion, and composed of \$AMOUNT to establish a permanent endowment for **NAME OF FUND** in the **HOUSE** and \$AMOUNT (to be paid over the next **NUMBER** years) to establish a permanent endowment for **NAME OF FUND** in the **HOUSE**.

#### **Option 2**

- **\$AMOUNT** (to be paid over the next **NUMBER** years) to establish a permanent endowment for **NAME OF FUND** in the **HOUSE**

### **Option 3**

- **\$AMOUNT** (to be paid over the next **NUMBER** years) to establish a permanent endowment for **NAME OF FUND** in the **HOUSE**

### **Cornell Annual Fund**

- In addition, we request your consideration of a gift commitment of **\$AMOUNT** (to be paid over the next **NUMBER** years), equally divided between **COLLEGES/UNITS**, to provide unrestricted annual operating support for **COLLEGE/UNIT**.

We foresee that your leadership commitment will **help inspire** and leverage support from other alumni, parents and friends of the University. It is our hope that you will give this proposal careful review.

### **The Importance of Operating Support for Cornell**

Like many universities today, Cornell is faced with increasing pressure on its operating budget. Colleges and universities are labor-intensive operations that rely heavily on resources that increase rapidly in price (e.g. advanced technological instrumentation, printed journals, and other materials and services). The goods and services calculated in the Higher Education Price Index have typically risen far faster than those in the Consumer Price Index. When this escalating cost of fundamental goods and services is combined with the institution's growing need for financial aid, the result is extraordinary pressure on the annual operating budget of the University.

Annual giving is the principal means of enhancing the University's operating budget. Given that each dollar raised through unrestricted annual giving is equal to approximately \$22 in additional endowment (based on a spending rate of 4.5 percent), annual giving may be thought of as "the silent endowment." Put another way, if Cornell were able to double the approximately \$10 million of unrestricted annual gifts it currently receives, this would equal the income generated from an additional \$200 million in endowment.

In order to continue offering Cornell students the exceptional educational experience and value they now receive, the need for increased annual support must be recognized as an important and necessary part of a comprehensive fiscal plan that controls costs without compromising quality.

All alumni, parents and friends are being asked to maintain and increase their annual support through the Cornell Annual Fund as a means of **making a difference** in the lives of today's students. To that end, we ask that you consider a gift of **\$AMOUNT** to the Cornell Annual Fund over the next five years, as outlined in the attachments.