

Saint Anselm marks opening of new student center

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Saint Anselm College held a ceremony to open the Roger and Francine Jean Student Center Complex on Friday. Pictured are, from left, Saint Anselm Abbott Mark Cooper, Board of Trustees Chairman Joanne Pietrini Smith, Roger Jean, Francine Jean, St. Anselm College President Dr. Steven DiSalvo, trustee Richard Meelia and student Joshua Hughes. (Courtesy)

MANCHESTER — Saint Anselm College marked the official opening of the Roger and Francine Jean Student Center Complex, funded in large part by a \$6 million contribution — the largest individual gift in Saint Anselm history — from Roger and Francine Jean of Manchester.

Roger Jean, a 1970 graduate and trustee of Saint Anselm and 2006 honorary degree recipient, and his wife Francine Jean had previously established an endowed scholarship fund in 2003, and an annual scholarship fund in 2007.

Outside his longstanding personal relationship with Saint Anselm, Roger Jean said that addressing national disunity was a driving force behind his desire to contribute toward the construction of a new student center.

"Institutions like Saint Anselm do a lot, not only in their curriculum but in the atmosphere they produce on campus, to bring people together and give them the ability to see beyond their own feelings," he said. "Instead of feeding divisiveness, it feeds understanding."

At 53,280-square-feet, the new complex expands the former Cushing Student Center's footprint by 45 percent. Among its many amenities, the new space houses the campus ministry, a 250-seat auditorium, a café and a glass-walled second floor flexible function room.

With the old student center constructed in 1960, Saint Anselm President Steven R. DiSalvo said that the 2,000 student undergraduate campus was all too willing to welcome a new common space that better reflected the needs of modern university life.

"Students told me time and again that we needed a new student center complex," said DiSalvo. "A place where learning, socialization and spirituality intersect. A place where faith meets hope and service meets Starbucks. Or as I like to say often, where students can meet, eat and greet. This project will forever enrich the landscape of our campus, and experience of our students."