

AU's College of Ceramics Celebrates its 100th Year

4/04/00

Alfred, NY -- On April 11, 1900, Governor Theodore Roosevelt signed legislation creating "a state school of clay-working and ceramics" at Alfred University. By the same act, the Legislature allocated \$15,000 to build a "suitable building for such school," and another \$5,000 to maintain the school. The language of that bill was straightforward and uncomplicated by today's standards, but what an impact that simple act of the State Legislature 100 years ago has had on the world of art and engineering! From its humble beginnings, the College has grown into a unique institution, one with nationally acclaimed programs in both ceramic engineering and materials science, and art. Its enrollment is today is about 800 students; it offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Its annual budget tops \$22.5 million annually, including more than \$5 million in research. And that \$15,000 investment in buildings has grown to encompass facilities worth nearly \$25 million. On this April 11, Dr. L. David Pye, dean of the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University, will host a "Centennial Celebration" at 12:30 p.m. in Holmes Auditorium, Harder Hall, and will offer remarks on "The Making of a College of Ceramics." The event is open to the public free of charge. For his role in the ceremony, Pye has been researching the early days of the College. "What I'm finding is just fascinating," said Pye, who joined the faculty of the School of Ceramic Engineering and Materials Science in 1968 and has served as dean of the College since 1996. Glenn Zwegardt, professor of sculpture, and Michelle Korwin, a graduate student in ceramic engineering, will speak briefly about their perceptions of the College, and AU President Edward G. Coll, Jr., will talk about the impact the College has had on the development and history of Alfred University. The ceremony will conclude at 1:20 p.m. and will be followed by the cutting of a centennial cake in Harder Hall lobby. As a permanent reminder of the centennial, the College is creating an International Friendship Park to "honor the students, teachers, scholars, artists and scientists from foreign lands who have become part of the fabric and history of Alfred University." The park will be dedicated at 1:30 p.m. April 25. The park is being built at the corner of Pine and State streets adjacent to S.R. Scholes Library of Ceramics with \$30,000 in funding from the State University of New York Construction Fund. The park will include seating, a small group of flagpoles, interlocking brick pavement and landscaping. Upcoming Centennial events, in addition to the April 11 celebration, include: April 6: Dr. Donald Royce-Roll, associate professor of art history, will present "Art Education at AU for the Next (20th) Century" at 12:10 p.m. in Nevins Theatre. His Bergren Forum presentation will talk about the future, as it was predicted in April 1900 when the College of Ceramics was created. Royce-Roll will don period costume for the lecture. April 8: Opening of a special exhibition, "The Binns Medal Winners," at the Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art at Alfred. The opening reception is 2-4 p.m. and will be highlighted by the naming of the year 2000 recipients of the Binns Medal. The exhibition will remain on display at the Museum through Oct. 19. April 14: Hot Dog Day, Alfred's annual rite of spring. Contact Alfred University's Student Activities office, 607 871 2175, for more information. April 21: Annual Light Show, also known as the annual exhibition at the Museum of Luminous Phenomena at Alfred. Students from the School of Art and Design will be joined by those from the Munson Williams Proctor Institute in Utica, NY, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison for an exhibition of their neon work and other luminous pieces. The exhibition is under the direction of Fred Tschida, professor of glass art. April 25: Dedication of an International Friendship Park at 1:30 p.m., ceremony and reception. May 1: Celebration for alumni and friends attending the annual American Ceramics Society meeting in St. Louis, MO. A reception at the St. Louis Athletic Club will begin at 6 p.m, followed by dinner at 7 p.m. May 6: Opening of the Senior Art Shows. Nearly 100 seniors in the School of Art and Design will simultaneously open their shows at 4 p.m. Work will be shown in several buildings on campus, as well as in the community. For more information, contact Kathy Isaman, 607 871 2412 or isaman@alfred.edu. June 1-2: Centennial Alumni Symposium, School of Ceramic Engineering and Materials Science. For more information about centennial events, contact Marlene Wightman, 607 871 2425 or wightman@alfred.edu.