

## **Alfred University renovating Harder Hall facilities**

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Harder Hall, one of the best-known buildings on the Alfred University campus, is getting a lift on its public face. Jeffery Johnson, director of facilities for the College of Ceramics, the state-supported unit of Alfred University, said work began in late May on renovations to Harder Hall lobby and the adjoining Fosdick-Nelson Gallery. Holmes Auditorium in Harder Hall is the site of many of the Alfred University lectures, concerts and other performances open to the public. The Fosdick-Nelson Gallery is the main gallery for the School of Art and Design, and the site of exhibitions by guest artists, as well as faculty and student artists. During the first phase of the \$1.2 million project, asbestos-containing ceiling materials installed when Harder Hall was built in the late 1960s and located in the lobby, the gallery and in some second floor offices and hallways will be removed. In addition, the gallery will be expanded into the lobby area with the creation of a new office and reception area. Installation of new wiring and fiber optic cables will equip the gallery for multi-media presentations, and new structural grid lighting on the ceiling will allow for more flexible installation of art work within the gallery, said Johnson. New doorways with movable transoms will make it easier to move large art work into and out of the gallery space, said Johnson. That phase of the project is scheduled to be completed by mid-March of next year to allow the gallery to be used for Master of Fine Arts exhibitions and senior shows that mark the end of the spring semester. Johnson said the lobby and Holmes Auditorium will remain open for public use during the next academic year. The second part of the project, which is scheduled to start in May 2003 and conclude by the end of August that year, involves the removal of the existing black slate flooring in the lobby and gallery and replacement with new flooring that requires less maintenance. Funding for both phases of the \$1.2 million project comes from the State University of New York (SUNY) Construction Fund. Harder Hall is one of the state-owned facilities located on the Alfred University campus. Another project being done this summer involves the moving of the metal foundry from the ground floor of Binns-Merrill Hall and relocating it to the former Alfred State College agricultural engineering building located on Route 244 north of the village of Alfred. When Binns-Merrill Hall was closed for extensive renovations four years ago, Alfred State turned that building over to the College of Ceramics to house some of its sculpture programs. The new foundry will have an overhead crane, and a new induction furnace, donated by former Trustee Jon Tabor, an AU alumnus, for melting metals for casting. In the Binns-Merrill space left vacant by moving the foundry, a new facility for glass casting will be created, Johnson said. He explained that the present glass-blowing facilities, also located on the ground floor of Binns-Merrill Hall, are not large enough to accommodate the School of Art and Design's growing program in glass, which now includes students interested in hot glass casting, as well as in blowing glass. The School of Art and Design, which is state-supported, received \$110,000 over two years from the State University of New York to cover the cost of the new facilities for metal and glass casting. Large-scale facilities for melting metal and glass are considered rare in academic settings. The new foundry and new glass-casting area will greatly enhance Alfred's facilities in those two areas and allow it to attract even greater interest from visiting artists around the world, as well as from prospective graduate and undergraduate students interested in making large-scale sculptures of metal or glass.