

HEALTH MATTERS | By Principal Ty Tingley '48, '64, '01 (Hon.); P'99



ART DURITY

Exeter's plans for a new health and wellness center in the heart of our athletic complex will bring the five departments that care for our students' health together under a single roof.

When, in 1919, Principal Lewis Perry announced a fund-raising campaign, one of the three goals was to raise money to build an infirmary. The need for such a facility had been brought into sharp focus the previous fall when the Spanish flu, a pandemic of enormous proportions, hit campus, infecting more than 100 boys. Several students died as a result; different accounts put the number at three or four young men. With no place to properly isolate the ill students, they were lodged in Hooper House (a former private home that served as the school's infirmary), the old gym and in their rooms. Faculty wives helped nurse the sick boys.

The Lamont Infirmary, completed in 1923, was a result of Perry's campaign. It is now known as the Lamont Health and Wellness Center and it is staffed by health care professionals drawn from many branches of medicine. The facility incorporates medical services, counseling and psychological services, health education and nutritional services.

In the story beginning on page 24 you will read about changes in adolescent health care in general and here at the Academy. You will also have a glimpse into the day-to-day workings of the center and learn about plans for a new health and wellness facility.

Since the majority of our students reside here, and most of our day students are on campus from before breakfast until after dinner, the Academy must be prepared to meet student needs both in and out of the classroom. The new Phelps Academy Center is an example of how successful a well-thought-out program and a well-designed building can be in meeting student needs outside of class.

It became clear over time that the Davis Student Center, much like the current Lamont facility, was not only well past its prime, but also inadequate as a community gathering place. A great deal of collaborative thought and discussion was put into the new student center with its meeting rooms, kitchen, game room, Grill and post office. Its success has been palpable, and a walk through its Agora at any time of the day or evening is literally a visit to the crossroads of our campus. I sometimes take a detour through the Agora and Grill just to experience the energy of the academy center.

Similar time and effort has gone into the plans for Exeter's new health and wellness center. One key detail is the proposed location of the new structure, in the heart of the Academy's athletic complex. The new center will be a two-story addition to Love Gymnasium, which will allow full collaboration among the five departments that care for our students' health and send a clear message that physical activity is key to lifelong health.

With 17,000 square feet of new construction and renovated space, the new facility will be a third larger than the Lamont building. Nearly half the space will be dedicated to medical services, and the rest will be divided among health education, nutritional services, and counseling and psychological services.

The Lamont staff now logs in more than 11,000 student interactions a year, ranging from quick visits to pick up a prescription to more serious short-term medical stays. Approximately 200 students visit the counselors each year, and the health education department teaches a required, yearlong course in health and human development for all preps and new lowers. All these efforts contribute to the well-being of every student on campus, and prepare them to make healthful choices throughout their lives.

I'm very pleased to say that an alumnus from the 1980s has recently made a leadership gift of \$6 million toward the new center. We are continuing to seek additional support, and I will keep you posted on our progress and on our plans for the Lamont building, which has served this community's health and wellness needs for nine decades.