M c M A S T E R   U N I V E R S I T Y

SO MANY DYNAMOS
The Information Technology Building is McMaster's high-tech hub

Integrated cicuits: Dianne Cunninham (centre), minister of training, colleges and universities, tours the Embedded Systems Lab in the new Information Technology Building with (left to right) associate professor Dr. Martin van Mohrenschildt, student Curtis Miles, President Peter George, Paul Taylor, chair of the Department of Computing & Software, Mo Elbestawi '76, dean of the Faculty of Engineering, and Red Wilson '62, chair of Nortel Networks Ltd. and CAE Inc.

It's been home to a teachers' college, a high school, even occupational therapists and physiotherapists. Now the 1950s building once known as T-16 is the high-tech hub for McMaster's burgeoning information technology programs.

Ontario's minister of training, colleges and universities, Dianne Cunningham, joined several industry representatives, government officials, faculty and alumni December 6 to celebrate the official opening of McMaster's Information Technology Building, located at the south end of campus.

The building's exterior, featuring the original stone work and friezes above the doors, was preserved, while a $12.3-million renovation modernized the 82,000-sq.-ft. interior to accommodate the Faculty of Engineering's expanded computing & software department and the electrical & computer engineering program. The building is also home to the new Software Quality Research Labor-atory, which is a leading source of expertise and academic research in software quality assurance.

Cunningham, who noted she visited the building during its incarnation as a teachers' college, praised the "sincere spirit of collaboration" that guided the information technology program expansion and the building renovation.

The renovation was completed with money committed from Ontario's Access to Opportunities Program and Super-Build Growth Fund, Nortel Networks Ltd., the University and private donations.

Engineering dean Dr. Mo Elbestawi '76 noted that his Faculty identified information technology as a strategic priority.

"We developed an ambitious plan to expand our educational and research activities in this area and built on our current strength in optoelectronics, communication technologies and software engineering. This facility places our students at the leading edge of information technology."

Curtis Miles, a fifth-year software engineering & management student, told the gathering he knows he's benefited from using state-of-the art equipment in conjunction with access to international expert faculty such as software engineering professor Dr. David Parnas.

"I can go upstairs and be working on technology that will help me get a job," Miles said.

Dr. Paul Taylor, chair of the Department of Computing & Software, said the building is "an example of synergy and alliances." He noted that faculty and staff for four undergraduate programs and three graduate programs work out of the facility. He also pointed out that more than half of the computer science students are taking a second degree and more than a third of the software engineering students are taking the five-year degree with the management studies option.

"We are training engineers and scientists to produce the software of tomorrow, the technology of tomorrow," he said. "We want to produce people who warranty their products."

The official opening also marked the announcement that Dr. Ted Szymanski, an associate professor of electrical & computer engineering, has been named the first L. R. Wilson / BCE Chair in Data Communications.

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