

New digs for archaeology, anthropology

Booth-Ferris, Keck grants support new technology, expansion at Denny Hall.

Engaging the world means sometimes getting your hands a little dirty.

Thanks to two recent grants to the anthropology and archaeology programs, Dickinson students can do just that—and they don't even have to leave campus.

A \$200,000 grant from the Booth-Ferris Foundation, combined with

\$400,000 from the Keck Foundation, is supporting vast improvements to the way Associate Professor of Anthropology Kjell Enge, Assistant Professor of Anthropology Karen Weinstein, and Associate Professor of Classical Studies and holder of the Christopher Roberts Chair in Archaeology Christofilis Maggidis teach anthropology and archaeology in Denny Hall.

"Before, we had only small spaces in the basement," Weinstein explains. "The anthropology lab held up to 15 students, and we had no equipment. It only allowed us to teach field-work

elling issues."

But anthropology and archaeology still lacked the space in Denny to house the new facilities. "In order to make this work, we needed some structural changes," Weinstein says.

So Associate Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations Cheryl Kremen worked with faculty to apply for funds from the Booth-Ferris Foundation. And, in the spring, Enge, Weinstein and Maggidis received what they had long hoped for—support for large-scale physical renovations to Denny Hall and the building next to it, formerly a public-safety garage.

The project, which began last spring, included the creation of first-floor work stations and research spaces, explains Weinstein. "The anthropology department got a new lab, and the archaeology department got a new space [next to Denny] to expand its dig area," she says. "We have a new computer lab facility, and we're getting set up with Smart classrooms, which will have computers hooked up to video projection."

"[Maggidis] is getting a big space for an excavation pit," adds Enge. "It's enormous—you can fit trucks in there. Now, he can simulate true outside excavation conditions."

Weinstein is most excited about the

methods by lecture."

"It was kind of set up like a museum," adds Enge. "All we could do in the basement was put out fossil displays."

It was time for a change. As the college moved forward with its Workshop Physics and Calculus programs—hands-on, student-centered curricula that have garnered national praise—the faculty envisioned a similar approach to teaching their disciplines.

"Anthropology and archaeology are very hands-on, visual fields of study," says Weinstein. "The way this all

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opportunity to offer lab-based, field-work exercises in introductory classes. "There's a whole variety of issues that, before, I could just tell people about," she says. "Now, I can implement new teaching techniques, including computer-based programs that introduce students to biological diversity in human populations and nonhuman primates and laboratory equipment to analyze body composition in living and archaeological populations. It'll be a lot of fun."

The renovations are scheduled to be near completion this fall.

Dickinson is already a leader in archaeology as the only undergraduate college or university in the world that conducts research and excavation at the world-famous archaeological landmark of Mycenae, Greece. Now, the campus's Center for Human Origins "will make Dickinson, in terms of facilities, near the top of the list in terms of similar institutions," says Enge. "It also will make the college more competitive [in attracting students interested in anthropology and archaeology]."

"Our vision for these changes in archaeology and anthropology is to take our programs to a new level of excellence, enabling them to serve as a model for undergraduate institutions across the nation," adds Weissman.

unfolded was that we wanted to have more lab space for innovative and experiential learning."

The concept has evolved gradually, Enge explains. "Over the years, we've tried numerous times to get a wet lab, where you can actually work with the fossils," he says.

In January, Enge, Weinstein and Maggidis received the Keck grant—funding for creation of the W. M. Keck Center for Human Origins, which will be equipped with modern technology for anthropological and archaeological studies. "The purpose is to prepare students to do anthropological field work," says Weinstein. "We're purchasing a fossil cast system for biological anthropology. With this money we also can buy digital cameras, scanners, anything involving field work."

"The Keck Foundation recognizes Dickinson College as a leader in developing innovative, hands-on learning opportunities for students," says Provost and Dean Neil Weissman. "Biological anthropology and archaeology offer opportunities for new pedagogy that brings together students from the sciences, humanities and social sciences. This initiative continues Dickinson's mission of bringing education in the arts and sciences to bear on com-