

# Pace opens expanded university health care center in Pleasantville

BY RYAN DEFFENBAUGH

rdeffenbaugh@westfairinc.com

**P**ace University made history in 1978 when it opened the first-ever nurse-managed medical facility on the campus of a U.S. college. Forty years later, the school celebrated the anniversary and renewed its commitment to the program with the completion of a new and expanded health care center.

Pace held a ribbon cutting on April 5 for the new 2,000-square-foot health center space inside the Paton House, which also hosts Pace's career services office. The health care center features four patient exam rooms, a procedure room and lab. It



From left: Pace College of Health Professions Dean Harriet R. Feldman, Associate Director of Pace University Health Care Karen Martin, Ellen Rich, Jamie Newland and Andréa Sonenberg. In back: Lillie M. Shortridge-Baggett, university health care Director Audrey Hoover and Marykate Aquisto, state Sen. Terrence Murphy's office.

also has a larger reception area than the previous location, which was in the college's Goldstein Fitness Center.

About 1,700 patients – a mix that is mostly students but also includes staff, faculty and even alumni – are treated by the school's health center annually. With that number growing, Pace College of Health Professions Dean Harriet R. Feldman, said it was time to expand.

"We needed a lot more space because we were seeing a lot more students," Feldman said. "This space is about three times the size of what we had before, and we're already starting to see more students show up at the door."

The previous location had also become a bit too noisy for a health care facility, she said. Renovations to the fitness center last year placed a weight room directly above the health center, requiring staff to work through barbell-induced thuds.

The new location puts the health center near three residence halls. "It's easy access for the students," Feldman said. "They don't have to go down the hall and through the gym. They're right next door."

The health center is staffed by three nurses, including two nurse practitioners who receive assistance primarily from student employees. The staff can treat most common illnesses, prescribe or refill medications, order lab and radiology tests and refer students to specialty care.

"It's pretty much all of your primary care services," Feldman said.

The health center also acts as a clinical setting for nursing students in the Pace College of Health Professions.

Feldman said students typically have insurance through family plans or through the school. The university opened the health center as part of its celebration of 40 years on campus. Pace was the first in the country to use nurse practitioners to operate its health center, which Feldman said has become a model for the rest of the country.

Pace also plans to open a new health center on its New York City campus later this year.