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“RESTORATION CELEBRATION” AT UF’S WOMEN’S GYM/ KATHRYN CHICONE USTLER HALL

MONDAY, MARCH 1 at 1:00 P.M.

WHAT: A celebration honoring the beginning of a restoration project of the Women’s Gymnasium at the University of Florida to commemorate the significance of this historic building which has been named Kathryn Chicone Ustler Hall. The restoration will start in June and is expected to be completed in 2005.

WHERE: The ceremony will take place inside of the Women’s Gym, located immediately south of the Murphree dormitory off of Fletcher Drive and next to the recreation and fitness center. Parking will be available in the Orange Decal lot just west of Murphree. The entrance to the building is located on the east side.

WHEN: Monday, March 1 at 1:00 p.m. (ceremony will last approx. 15 minutes, followed by tours of the building)

WHO: The ceremony will feature the following speakers:

- **Bernie Machen**, President of the University of Florida
- **Neil Sullivan**, Dean of UF’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- **Kathryn Ustler**, Benefactor and UF alumna

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: There will be an official “hammering” ceremony at the conclusion of the speaking program, where the speakers and several other officials will use gold-colored hammers to drive the “first nails of the restoration project.”

BACKGROUND:

The Women’s Gym was the first permanent structure at the University of Florida intended for campus-wide use. “The New Gym,” as it was called, opened in 1919 after Gainesville citizens donated funds to overcome a budgetary shortfall. The excitement generated by the community effort led then UF President A.A. Murphree and the mayor of Gainesville to invite the New York Giants baseball team to use the new gym for spring training, and the team accepted. The auditorium and gym became a focal point of campus activity.

The building was designated the Women’s Gymnasium in 1948 when UF officially became coeducational. The university received state funds to demolish the Women’s Gym, but an interest in preserving original campus structures prevailed. In 1988, the building was granted protection under the National Register of Historic Places.

As a result of a generous gift from UF alumna Kathryn Chicone Ustler in May 2000, and matching funds from the state of Florida, the restoration project is able to begin. The university has been authorized to rename the building Kathryn Chicone Ustler Hall, making it the first UF academic building named solely after a woman.

The 14,700 square-foot, three-level Ustler Hall will house classrooms, seminar rooms, and faculty and administrative offices for the Women’s Studies program. The project is budgeted to cost approximately \$4 million.

This will be the only freestanding campus building devoted solely to Women’s Studies in the U.S. **Angel Kwolek-Folland** is the director of the UF program.

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