



## Scientist Sylvia Earle speaks at Science and Math Building dedication

### Afternoon highlights Science and Math Building and scientific achievements

REBECCA BARRINGER  
Staff Reporter

The Opening Ceremony for the Science and Mathematics Building took place this past Friday from 3 to 6 p.m.

"This day is a wonderful opportunity for us to celebrate a new beginning in this building," said sophomore Caroline Johnson. "The building adds so much to the school and exemplifies Meredith's commitment to seeing women excel in all fields."

The celebration of the building featured a variety of events, including a speech from Sylvia Earle, a world-renowned oceanographer, a dazzling Puzzle of Light performance, a tribute to the donors, and an open house in the newly-completed building.

Keynote speaker Earle first spoke in Jones Auditorium about the importance of science and its application in real world

situations.

Earle discussed her experiences as an explorer and researcher and showed video clips illustrating important environmental issues.

"Meredith College was fortunate to host such a speaker," said junior Mary Heather Swink.

Swink also said that she admired Earle's efforts to "protect the ocean from continued pollution by toxic chemicals, oil, sewage and other harmful substances."

Earle is currently serving as a National Geographic explorer-in-residence, joining the ranks of noted individuals such as Jane Goodall. She is a former chief scientist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and has authored more than 125 scientific and popular publications.

Following Earle's speech, the audience was invited to attend the dedication ceremony at the Science and Mathematics Building.

The ceremony began with a taste of the Puzzle of Light performance, which included performers playing self-made instruments.

According to Assistant Art Professor Blair Ligon, the performers create sound sculptures and play them.

"Puzzle of Light uses unique instruments to make unique sounds. The effect is amazing," he said.

Mathematics professor Virginia Knight agreed.

"Puzzle of Light is per-

fect for today's event," she said. "It is the combination of music and science. It helps to emphasize the interdisciplinary purpose of this building and the studies we hope to do."

The dedication ceremony also included speeches from Michelle Rich, the chairperson of the Meredith College Board of Trustees, and President Maureen Hartford.

Knight expressed the importance of this ceremony. "We are thanking those who have supported us and worked so hard to make this building possible," she said.

"In a sense, this ceremony is the completion of the building phase of the Science and Math Building," she said. "Now we can officially move into the next phase of using it!"

At the ceremony, three symbolic bricks were presented to symbolize acceptance of the building. SGA President Lora Tillman accepted a brick for the student body, Knight accepted one on behalf of the faculty, and Hartford accepted one on behalf of the Meredith community at large.

"I was honored to accept the brick on behalf of the faculty. We are all very excited about this building," Knight said.

She emphasized the positive impact the building would have on the entire school.

"We want this building to belong to everyone," Knight said.

The ceremony concluded with a well-attended open house in the new Science and Mathematics Building.

Activities were located throughout the different classrooms and included a look at various ecology and biology experiments in the laboratories, a look at the instructional classrooms and a book signing by Sylvia Earle.



Sylvia Earle signs copies of her books in the Science and Math Building after her speech.  
Photo by Julie Stansbury

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