

## The Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences

# Levy Family Fire Investigation Lab Helps Students Sharpen Skills

**M**ark S. Levy isn't in the habit of setting fires. But on Monday, May 4, he set one on the campus of the University of New Haven, and he was glad to do it.

Levy, president and CEO of Honeywell Life Safety in Northford, flicked a lighter in the kitchens of the Levy Family Fire Investigation Laboratory behind Echlin Hall to set the room ablaze as dozens of students, faculty, staff, and media watched from a distance.

Levy's gift to the University, three 10 foot by 10 foot rooms, will help Fire Science students sharpen their arson investigation skills right on campus, and to address what has been a major challenge to the arson investigation section of the program. Says Christopher Rinck '11, a Fire Science major, "We don't have to rely on fires happening in the community, as I did

when I was a freshman and a sophomore. This lab is 100 percent safe and is here 24 hours a day."

The National Insurance Crime Bureau has reported that questionable fire claims increased in 2008 as the economy faltered, inevitably increasing the demand for trained arson investigators.

"The students can do everything in the new fire investigation lab, in terms of investigating and documenting a fire scene, taking evidence, and putting together a final report," says UNH Fire/Arson Investigation coordinator Bruce Varga.

"True fire scenes can be really dangerous. We've created a safe environment for the students to investigate a fire."

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Bruce Varga, UNH Fire/Arson Investigation coordinator

**A throng of students, alumni, staff, and media gathered for the inaugural burning of the Levy Family Fire Investigation Laboratory. University donor Mark Levy started the blaze.**

